

predicted to experience changes in their hearing sensitivity (either temporary or permanent) for all underwater anthropogenic sound sources. This Guidance is intended to be used by NOAA analysts and managers and other relevant user groups and stakeholders, including other federal agencies, when seeking to determine whether and how their activities are expected to result in particular types of impacts to marine mammals via acoustic exposure. The document outlines NOAA's updated acoustic threshold levels, describes in detail how the thresholds were developed, and explains how we intend to update them in the future.

NOAA first published a **Federal Register** Notice on December 27, 2013, announcing the availability of the Draft Guidance and a 30-day public comment period (78 FR 78822), which was extended another 45 days based upon public request (79 FR 4672; January 29, 2014). While NOAA was in the process of evaluating and addressing public comments, the U.S. Navy updated its methodology for the development of marine mammal auditory weighting functions and acoustic threshold levels. NOAA evaluated the proposed methodology and determined that it reflected the best available science. As a result, NOAA incorporated the Navy's methodology into our Draft Guidance and conducted another 45-day public comment period (80 FR 45642; July 31, 2015). Please refer to these **Federal Register** Notices for additional background about the 2013 and 2015 Draft Guidance.

While NOAA was working to address public comments from the second public comment period and finalize the Guidance, NOAA and the Navy (SPAWAR Systems Center Pacific) further evaluated certain aspects of the U.S. Navy's methodology. As a result, several recommendations/modifications were suggested.

The recommendations include: An updated methodology for predicting a composite audiogram for LF cetaceans; modification of the methodology used to establish auditory threshold levels for LF cetaceans; movement of the white-beaked dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus albirostris*) from mid-frequency (MF) to high-frequency (HF) cetaceans; the inclusion of a newly published harbor porpoise (HF cetacean) audiogram (Kastelein et al. 2015); the exclusion of multiple data sets from the phocid pinniped weighting function; removal of peak sound pressure level (PK) acoustic threshold levels for non-impulsive sounds; and updated methodology for deriving PK acoustic threshold levels for

functional hearing groups where no data are available.

After consideration of these recommendations, NOAA has updated the Draft Guidance to reflect the suggested changes and is soliciting public comment on those revisions, which have been placed in a stand-alone document, via a focused 14-day public comment period. As the Guidance is finalized, NOAA will address *all* substantive public comments on the Guidance (*i.e.*, from the first and second public comment periods, as well as those from this focused third public comment period). Accordingly, there is no need to reiterate or resubmit comments made during the first and second public comment period on other sections of the Draft Guidance. NOAA encourages the public to focus comment on the document containing the proposed changes to the Guidance.

The Guidance is classified as a Highly Influential Scientific Assessment by the Office of Management and Budget. As such, independent peer review is required prior to broad public dissemination by the Federal Government. As part of this process, NOAA has conducted three independent peer reviews in association with the Guidance. Details of all peer reviews can be found within the Guidance and at the following Web site: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/acoustics/>. Concurrent with this third public comment period, NOAA requested that the peer reviewers of the Navy's methodology review the document containing the proposed changes to the Draft Guidance and indicate whether the revisions would significantly alter any of the comments made during their original review.

Dated: March 10, 2016.

Donna S. Wieting,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2016-05886 Filed 3-15-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE407

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We have made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit application contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This EFP would allow two commercial fishing vessels to trawl for summer flounder using an experimental Turtle Excluder Device to test target species catch retention rates, and exempt the vessels from minimum size requirements and possession limits found at 50 CFR part 648 in order to sample the catch for scientific purposes.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires publication of this notice to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed Exempted Fishing Permit.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before March 31, 2016.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by any of the following methods:

- *Email:* NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on CFF Fluke Cable TED EFP."

- *Mail:* John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on CFF Fluke Cable TED EFP."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Elizabeth Scheimer, Fisheries Management Specialist, 978-281-9236, Elizabeth.scheimer@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Coonamessett Farm Foundation (CFF) submitted a complete application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) on December 15, 2015, to conduct commercial fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize two vessels to temporarily retain undersized and prohibited catch for biological sampling during experimental Turtle Excluder Device (TED) testing in the summer flounder fishery.

Currently approved TEDs have been shown to reduce summer flounder targeted catch at a level that is of concern to the industry, and the objective of this research is to find TED gear configurations that exclude sea turtles while maintaining target catch. The CFF would test an experimental TED made of flexible cable instead of aluminum or steel pipe in bottom trawl gear directed on summer flounder. The TED was already tested in 2015 for its ability to exclude sea turtles, but is not yet certified, and this research will quantify catch retention. This TED would be attached in a 3-inch mesh TED

extension which meets applicable gear requirements. All fishing would occur north of the Summer Flounder Fishery Sea Turtle Exemption Area (37°05' N latitude), in waters where approved TEDs are not required, and no Endangered Species Act (ESA) research permit would be required.

Eighty tows would be conducted between March and October 2016, in southern New England and mid-Atlantic waters. A trawl net with the modified TED would be compared against a control net of the vessels' standard bottom trawl gear. Paired tows would be conducted across multiple strata with trawl times of 60–90 minutes. Data collected on total catch would include total weight and length measurements on all summer flounder. Other landed species will be sampled if conditions permit, or a representative subsample will be taken. Underwater camera equipment would be installed in the net to investigate the performance of the cable TED, the fishing gear, and any potential problems in the rigging of the TED. All participating vessels would have permits and quota to target summer flounder, which would be kept and sold consistent with applicable regulations. All bycatch would be returned to the sea as soon as practicable following data collection.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 10, 2016.

Emily H. Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016–05823 Filed 3–15–16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Air Force

U.S. Air Force Academy Board of Visitors Notice of Meeting; Withdrawal

AGENCY: U.S. Air Force Academy Board of Visitors, DoD.

ACTION: Meeting notice; withdrawal.

SUMMARY: The document titled “U.S Air Force Academy Board of Visitors Notice of Meeting”, which published in the **Federal Register** on March 7, 2016 (81 FR 11764), is withdrawn. Due to circumstances beyond the Air Force's control, the meeting notice for the upcoming USAF BoV meeting was published in the **Federal Register** with less than 15 days' notice to the public and therefore has to be revised to include a waiver notice. The revised document will be published in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information or to attend this BoV meeting, contact Major Jennifer Hubal, Accessions and Training Division, AF/A1PT, 1040 Air Force Pentagon, Washington, DC 20330, (703) 695–4066, *Jennifer.M.Hubal.mil@mail.mil*.

Henry Williams,

Acting Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016–05947 Filed 3–15–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–10–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Air Force

U.S. Air Force Exclusive Patent License

AGENCY: Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate, Rome, New York, Department of the Air Force, DOD.

ACTION: Notice of intent to issue an exclusive patent license.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the provisions of part 404 of Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, which implements Public Law 96–517, as amended, the Department of the Air Force announces its intention to grant Lilo Life LLC, a corporation of New York, having a place

of business at 106 Genesee St., Utica, New York 13413, an exclusive license in any right, title and interest the United States Air Force has in: In U.S. Patent No. 8,317,058 entitled “Bicyclists' Water Bottle with Bottom Drinking Valve”, issued on November 27th, 2012, U.S. Design Patent No. D588,856 issued on March 24th, 2009, and U.S. Design Patent D583,626 issued on December 20th, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: An exclusive license for this patent will be granted unless a written objection is received within fifteen (15) days from the date of publication of this Notice. Written objections should be sent to: Air Force Research Laboratory, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, AFRL/RIJ, 26 Electronic Parkway, Rome, New York 13441–4514. Telephone: (315) 330–2087; Facsimile (315) 330–7583.

Henry Williams,

Acting Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016–05946 Filed 3–15–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–10–P

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

[Transmittal No. 15–81]

36(b)(1) Arms Sales Notification

AGENCY: Department of Defense, Defense Security Cooperation Agency.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Defense is publishing the unclassified text of a section 36(b)(1) arms sales notification. This is published to fulfill the requirements of section 155 of Public Law 104–164 dated July 21, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Heather N. Harwell, DSCA/LMO, (703) 697–9217.

The following is a copy of a letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Transmittal 15–81 with attached Policy Justification.

Dated: March 10, 2016.

Aaron Siegel,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

BILLING CODE 5001–06–P