

account late renewal form—15 minutes; QS transfer—10 minutes; QP transfer from QS account to vessel account—8 minutes; vessel account registration request—15 minutes; vessel account online renewal—10 minutes; vessel account late renewal form—15 minutes; QP transfer from vessel account to another vessel account—8 minutes; trawl identification of ownership interest form for new entrants—45 minutes; trawl identification of ownership interest form for renewals—5 minutes; first receiver site license application form for new entrants—210 minutes; first receiver site license application form for re-registering license holders—110 minutes; mothership permit renewal form—20 minutes; mothership permit change of vessel registration, permit owner, or vessel owner application form—45 minutes; mothership cooperative permit application form—240 minutes; change of mothership catcher vessel endorsement and catch history assignment registration form—45 minutes; mutual agreement exception—60 minutes; mothership withdrawal—120 minutes; catcher/processor cooperative permit application form—120 minutes; QS abandonment request—10 minutes.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 640.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$12,475.

#### IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: June 7, 2016.

**Sarah Brabson,**

*NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2016-13748 Filed 6-9-16; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XE614**

#### Endangered Species; File No. 20114

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

**ACTION:** Notice; receipt of application.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands Department of Lands & Natural Resources, Sea Turtle Program, Caller Box 10007 Saipan, MP 96950 Northern Mariana Islands [Responsible Party: Richard B. Seman.], has applied in due form for a permit to take green (*Chelonia mydas*) and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) sea turtles for purposes of scientific research.

**DATES:** Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before July 11, 2016.

**ADDRESSES:** The application and related documents are available for review by selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the "Features" box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 20114 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 713-0376, or by email to [NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov). Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Arturo Herrera or Amy Hapeman (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations

governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

The applicant requests a five-year permit to research green and hawksbill sea turtles within the U.S. CNMI. The purpose of the project is to characterize the population structure, size class composition, foraging ecology, health, and migration patterns of green and hawksbill turtles in the region. Researchers would be authorized to capture 265 green and 40 hawksbill sea turtles annually by hand-capture and perform the following procedures: Examine; measure; photograph; video; weigh; flipper and Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag; temporary carapace mark; oral swab, tissue, and blood sample. 235 green and 20 hawksbill sea turtles will receive scute sampling, while 30 captured hawksbills and 20 greens will have satellite transmitters attached by epoxy. In addition, dead carcasses, tissues and parts may be salvaged from up to 15 greens and 10 hawksbills annually.

Dated: June 6, 2016.

**Julia Harrison,**

*Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2016-13713 Filed 6-9-16; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-BA21**

#### Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Expansion for the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary; Announcement of Public Meetings

**AGENCY:** Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has prepared a draft environmental impact statement for the proposed actions of boundary expansion, and application of existing regulations and management plan actions to new geographic areas of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS or sanctuary). The purpose of this action is to provide sanctuary

protection for a number of nationally significant reefs and banks in the northcentral Gulf of Mexico. Five alternatives to implement these proposed actions are analyzed for potential effects on the human environment. NOAA is soliciting public comment on the draft environmental impact statement.

**DATES:** Comments on this draft environmental impact statement will be considered if received by August 19, 2016. Public meetings will be held in the following locations and times as indicated below:

**(1) Galveston, Texas**

*Date:* July 12, 2016  
*Location:* Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Office  
*Address:* 4700 Avenue U, Building 216, Galveston, TX 77551  
*Time:* 5:30–7:30 p.m.

**(2) Houston, Texas**

*Date:* July 13, 2016  
*Location:* Trini Mendenhall Community Center  
*Address:* 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, TX 77055  
*Time:* 5:30–7:30 p.m.

**(3) New Orleans, Louisiana**

*Date:* July 19, 2016  
*Location:* Hilton New Orleans Airport, Segnette Room  
*Address:* 901 Airline Drive, Kenner, LA 70062  
*Time:* 5:30–7:30 p.m.

**(4) Mobile, Alabama**

*Date:* July 20, 2016  
*Location:* Five Rivers Delta Center  
*Address:* 30945 Five Rivers Blvd., Spanish Fort, AL 36527  
*Time:* 5:30–7:30 p.m.

**(5) Lafayette, Louisiana**

*Date:* July 21, 2016  
*Location:* Estuarine Habitats and Coastal Fisheries Center  
*Address:* 646 Cajundome Blvd., Lafayette, LA 70506  
*Time:* 5:30–7:30 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA–NOS–2016–0059, by any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to [www.regulations.gov/#/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NOS-2016-0059](http://www.regulations.gov/#/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NOS-2016-0059), click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- *Mail:* Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, NOAA, 4700 Avenue U, Building 216,

Galveston, TX 77551, Attn: George Schmahl, Superintendent.

*Instructions:* Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NOAA. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NOAA will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kelly Drinnen, Education and Outreach Specialist, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary at 409–621–5151 ext. 102 or via email at [fgbexpansion@noaa.gov](mailto:fgbexpansion@noaa.gov).

Copies of the draft environmental impact statement can be downloaded or viewed on the internet at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) (search for docket #NOAA–NOS–2016–0059) or at <http://flowergarden.noaa.gov>. Copies can also be obtained by contacting the person identified under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Background**

*Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary*

Located in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico, 70 to 115 miles off the coasts of Texas and Louisiana, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS or sanctuary) currently includes three separate undersea features: East Flower Garden Bank; West Flower Garden Bank; and Stetson Bank. The banks range in depth from 55 feet to nearly 500 feet and provide a wide range of habitat conditions that support several distinct biological communities, including the northernmost coral reefs in the continental United States. These and similar formations throughout the north central Gulf of Mexico provide the foundation for significant habitat for a variety of species. The combination of location and geology makes FGBNMS extremely productive and diverse, and presents a unique set of challenges for managing and protecting its natural wonders. East and West Flower Garden Banks were designated a national marine sanctuary in 1992 for purposes of protecting and managing the conservation, ecological, recreational, research, education, historic and aesthetic resources and qualities of

these areas. Stetson Bank was added to the sanctuary by Congress in 1996 (Pub. Law 104–283).

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) is required to periodically review sanctuary management plans to ensure that sanctuary sites continue to best conserve, protect and enhance their nationally significant living and cultural resources. In 2012 NOAA updated and revised the 1991 Flower Garden Banks Management Plan to address recent scientific discoveries, advancements in managing marine resources, and new resource management issues. As a result of this review, the FGBNMS Advisory Council recommended expanding the sanctuary to provide similar protections to additional banks in the north central Gulf of Mexico.

On February 3, 2015 NOAA initiated the public scoping process (80 FR 5699) to consider expanding FGBNMS to include additional areas in the Gulf of Mexico. The public scoping period ended on April 6, 2015, during which time three public hearings were held and NOAA received both written and oral comments on the concept of expanding the boundaries of the sanctuary. NOAA received approximately 200 comments during that scoping period, generally supportive of the concept to expand the sanctuary boundary. Some comments were supportive with conditions tied to specific issues such as access to oil and gas resources and fisheries concerns. This information was considered during the development of the range of alternatives in the expansion proposal.

The expansion of the sanctuary to include additional nationally significant habitat is supported for a number of reasons. In general, the northern Gulf of Mexico is a heavily utilized and industrialized region, and there is a significant concern about impacts from bottom-disturbing activities (e.g. some activities related to oil and gas exploration and production, fishing with bottom tending gear, vessel anchoring, and salvage activities) on the sensitive biological resources and geological features associated with many reefs and banks in the area. Additional opportunities for research, exploration, and education related to these significant ocean resources is critical for understanding changes occurring in the environment, fostering a stewardship ethic, and developing an understanding of the ecosystem services these resources provide for communities throughout the Gulf of Mexico region.

## II. NOAA Proposed Action

NOAA is releasing for public comment a DEIS that analyzes a proposed action to expand the FGBNMS boundary to include additional bank and reef areas in the northcentral Gulf of Mexico and to apply the existing sanctuary regulations and management regime to the expanded area. NOAA developed five alternatives for expanding the FGBNMS boundary. The alternatives range from taking no action to adding as much as an additional approximate 880 square miles.

NOAA's preferred alternative (Alternative 3) is the expansion of the existing boundaries from ~56 square miles to an area that encompasses ~383 square miles of waters in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico. This alternative would add 15 additional banks ranging from 70 to 120 miles offshore that are comprised of reefs and bottom features that provide habitat for fish and other biological resources that serve as engines of sustainability for much of the Gulf of Mexico.

The proposed sanctuary expansion advances NOAA's mission to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources and furthers the FGBNMS mission to identify, protect, conserve, and enhance the natural and cultural resources, values, and qualities of FGBNMS and its regional environment for this and future generations. The need for the proposed sanctuary expansion is informed by widespread acute and chronic threats to marine habitat in the north central Gulf of Mexico that can most effectively be addressed through NOAA's evaluation and implementation of the comprehensive suite of habitat conservation and management actions made possible by FGBNMS expansion to ensure that valuable natural resources are available to future generations of Americans.

NOAA is seeking public comment on the DEIS which is available at <http://flowergarden.noaa.gov/> or may be obtained by contacting the individual listed under the heading **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*

Dated: June 1, 2016.

**John Armor,**

*Acting Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries.*

[FR Doc. 2016-13661 Filed 6-9-16; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-NK-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XE404 and 0648-XE486**

### Marine Mammals; File Nos. 18978 and 19768

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

**ACTION:** Notice; issuance of permits.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that permits have been issued to the following entities for research on marine mammal parts:

File No. 18978: Pam Miller, Alaska Community Action on Toxics, 505 West Northern Lights Blvd., Suite 205, Anchorage, AK 99503; and

File No. 19768: Evin Hildebrandt, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts Medical School, 55 Lake Avenue, S3-221, Worcester, MA 01655.

**ADDRESSES:** The permits and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jennifer Skidmore or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On March 8, 2016 (File No. 18978; 81 FR 12075) and March 11, 2016 (File No. 19768; 81 FR 12879), notices were published in the **Federal Register** that requests for permits to conduct research on marine mammal parts had been submitted by the above-named applicants. The requested permits have been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

File No. 18978 (Miller) authorizes the receipt and export of subsistence hunted marine mammal parts. Researchers will work with Yupik households and local hunters on St. Lawrence Island, Alaska, to obtain samples from up to 8 animals per year from ringed seal (*Pusa hispida*); bearded seal (*Erignathus barbatus*); and ribbon seal (*Histiophoca fasciata*) and 9 animals per year from bowhead whale

(*Balaena mysticetus*) and spotted seal (*Phoca largha*). Samples would be measured for contaminant levels to determine marine mammal exposure to polybrominated diphenyl ethers and perfluorinated compounds. No live animals would be affected. The permit is valid through April 30, 2021.

File No. 19768 (Hildebrandt) authorizes the receipt of cell lines from other researchers and the creation of cell lines from animal tissues obtained from the stranding network under a regional authorization letter for scientific research purposes. Up to 15 cell lines would be received or created annually from certain cetacean species. These cell lines would be used to study the evolution of endogenous viruses (viruses that integrate into the genome of the host) using the DNA and RNA sequencing. No live animals would be affected. The permit is valid through May 31, 2021.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), a final determination has been made that the activities proposed are categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

As required by the ESA, issuance of these permits was based on a finding that such permits: (1) Were applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: June 6, 2016.

**Julia Harrison,**

*Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2016-13714 Filed 6-9-16; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XE619**

### 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:** The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS