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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS—R7--MM--2013—N229]

[FF07CMM00 FXFR133707PB000]

Proposed Information Collection; Incidental Take of Marine Mammals during Specified Oil and Gas Industry Activities

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) will ask the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve the information collection (IC) described below. As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and as part of our continuing efforts to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, we invite the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on this IC. This IC is scheduled to expire on January 31, 2014. We may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

DATES: To ensure that we are able to consider your comments on this IC, we must receive them by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Send your comments on the IC to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS 2042--PDM, 4401 North

Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203 (mail); or hope_grey@fws.gov (email). Please include "1018--0070" in the subject line of your comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request additional information about this IC, contact Hope Grey at hope_grey@fws.gov (email) or 703--358--2482 (telephone).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract. This information collection includes requirements associated with specified oil and gas industry activities and their incidental taking of polar bears and Pacific walrus in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.) imposed, with certain exceptions, a moratorium on the taking of marine mammals. Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA directs the Secretary of the Interior to allow, upon request by citizens of the United States, the taking of small numbers of marine mammals incidental to specified activities (other than commercial fishing) if the Secretary makes certain findings and prescribes specific regulations that, among other things, establish permissible methods of taking.

Applicants seeking to conduct activities must request a Letter of Authorization (LOA) for the specific activity and submit onsite monitoring reports and a final report of the activity to the Secretary. This is a nonform collection. Regulations at 50 CFR 18.27 outline the procedures and requirements for submitting a request. Specific regulations governing authorized activities in the Beaufort Sea are in 50 CFR 18, subpart J. Regulations governing authorized activities in the Chukchi Sea are in 50 CFR 18, subpart I. These regulations provide the applicant with a detailed

description of information that we need to evaluate the proposed activity and determine whether or not to issue specific regulations and, subsequently, LOAs.

We use the information to verify the finding required to issue incidental take regulations, to decide if we should issue an LOA, and, if issued, what conditions should be in the LOA. In addition, we analyze the information to determine impacts to polar bears and Pacific walruses and the availability of those marine mammals for subsistence purposes of Alaska Natives.

II. Data

OMB Control Number: 1018-0070.

Title: Incidental Take of Marine Mammals During Specified Oil and Gas Industry Activities, 50 CFR 18.27 and 50 CFR 18, Subparts I and J.

Service Form Number: None.

Type of Request: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Description of Respondents: Oil and gas industry companies.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain a benefit (incidental take regulations and/or a LOA).

Estimated Number of Respondents. 20.

Frequency of Collection: On occasion.

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF ANNUAL RESPONSES	COMPLETION TIME PER RESPONSE (HOURS)	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS
Application for procedural regulations ¹	2	125	250
LOA Requests	30	8	240
Onsite Monitoring and Observation Reports	300	1.5	450
Final Monitoring Report	30	10	300
Polar Bear Den Report	4	40	160
TOTALS	366		1,400

¹ Occurs once every 5 years.

III. Comments

We invite comments concerning this information collection on:

- Whether or not the collection of information is necessary, including whether or not the information will have practical utility;
- The accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information;
- Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this IC. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Dated: September 27, 2013.

Tina A. Campbell,
Chief, Division of Policy and Directives Management,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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