



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R4-ES-2024-N019; FXES11140400000-256-FF04E00000]

Marine Mammal Protection Act; Receipt of Permit Applications

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of permit applications; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), have received applications for permits to conduct activities with marine mammal species for which the Service has jurisdiction under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). We invite the public and local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies to comment on these applications. Before issuing any of the requested permits, we will take into consideration any information that we receive during the public comment period.

DATES: We must receive written data or comments on the applications by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: *Reviewing Documents:* Submit requests for copies of applications and other information submitted with the applications to Karen Marlowe (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**). All requests and comments should specify the applicant name and application number (e.g., Mary Smith, ESPER0001234).

Submitting Comments: If you wish to comment, you may submit comments by one of the following methods:

- *Email (preferred method):* permitsR4ES@fws.gov. Please include your name and return address in your email message. If you do not receive a confirmation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that we have received your email message, contact us directly at the telephone number

listed in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.**

- *U.S. mail:* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Office, Ecological Services, 1875 Century Boulevard, Atlanta, GA 30345 (Attn: Karen Marlowe, Permit Coordinator).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karen Marlowe, Permit Coordinator, 404–679–7097 (telephone) or karen_marlowe@fws.gov (email). Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services.

Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, invite review and comment from the public and local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies on applications we have received for permits to conduct certain activities with marine mammals under section 104 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.), and our regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 50 CFR part 18. Documents and other information submitted with the applications are available for review, subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a), and the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

Background

To help us carry out our conservation responsibilities for affected species, and in consideration of section 104(c) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.), we invite public comments on permit applications before final action is taken. With some exceptions, the MMPA prohibits certain activities with listed species unless Federal authorization is issued that allows such activities. Service regulations regarding permits for any activity otherwise prohibited by the MMPA with respect to any marine mammals are available in title 50 of

the Code of Federal Regulations in part 18.

Permit Applications Available for Review and Comment

The MMPA requires that we invite public comment before issuing these permits. Accordingly, we invite local, State, Tribal, and Federal agencies, and the public to submit written data, views, or arguments with respect to these applications. The comments and recommendations that will be most useful and likely to influence agency decisions are those supported by quantitative information or studies.

Permit Application Number	Applicant	Species	Location	Activity	Type of Take	Permit Action
PER9200956	Caribbean Stranding Network; Bayamon, PR	West Indian manatee (<i>Trichechus manatus</i>)	Puerto Rico	Scientific research and population monitoring	Capture; handle; photograph; measure; radio tag; collect blood and tissue samples; PIT-tag; tail-notch biopsy mark; release; and necropsy and post-mortem tissue analysis	New
MA773494-12	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; St. Petersburg, FL	West Indian manatee (<i>Trichechus manatus</i>)	Florida	Scientific research and population monitoring	Capture, handle, PIT-tag, freeze brand, and attach external tracking and monitoring equipment; take blood, milk, and tissue samplings; ultrasound, swab, take measurements and temperatures, photograph, restrict small seagrass plots with	Renewal

					exclosures, replace external equipment, and salvage carcasses	
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Public Availability of Comments

Written comments we receive become part of the administrative record associated with this action. 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. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Next Steps

If we decide to issue a permit to an applicant listed in this notice, we will publish a notice in the *Federal Register*.

Authority

We publish this notice under section 104(d) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.), and its implementing regulations.

Mike Oetker,
Regional Director,
Southeast Region.

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