

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 031003F]

**Endangered and Threatened Species; Take of Anadromous Fish**

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

**ACTION:** Applications for scientific research permits (1140, 1156, 1205, 1410) and permit modifications (1309, 1315).

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that NOAA Fisheries received four scientific research permit applications and two applications to modify existing permits related to Pacific salmon and steelhead. All of the proposed research is intended to increase knowledge of species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and to help guide management and conservation efforts.

**DATES:** Comments or requests for a public hearing on the applications or modification requests must be received no later than 5 p.m. Pacific daylight savings time on April 14, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments on the applications or modification requests should be sent to Protected Resources Division, NOAA Fisheries, F/NWO3, 525 NE Oregon Street, Suite 500, Portland, OR 97232-2737. Comments may also be sent via fax to 503-230-5435. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the internet.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Garth Griffin, Portland, OR (ph: 503-231-2005, Fax: 503-230-5435, e-mail: Garth.Griffin@noaa.gov). Permit applications are available at <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Species Covered in This Notice**

The following listed species and evolutionarily significant units (ESUs) are covered in this notice:

Sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*): endangered Snake River (SnR); threatened Ozette Lake.

Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*): endangered naturally produced and artificially propagated upper Columbia River (UCR) spring-run; threatened naturally produced and artificially propagated SnR spring/summer (S/S); threatened SnR fall; threatened lower Columbia River (LCR); threatened upper Willamette River (UWR); threatened naturally produced and artificially propagated Puget Sound.

Chum salmon (*O. keta*): threatened Columbia River (CR); threatened Hood Canal summer-run.

Steelhead (*O. mykiss*): endangered naturally produced and artificially propagated UCR; threatened SnR; threatened middle Columbia River (MCR); threatened LCR.

**Authority**

Scientific research permits are issued in accordance with section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 et. seq) and Federal regulations governing listed fish and wildlife permits (50CFR 222-226). NOAA Fisheries issues permits and modifications based on findings that such permits and modifications: (1) are applied for in good faith; (2) if granted and exercised, would not operate to the disadvantage of the listed species that are the subject of the permit; and (3) are consistent with the purposes and policy of section 2 of the ESA. Authority to take listed species is subject to conditions set forth in the permits and modifications.

Anyone requesting a hearing on an permit or modification application listed in this document should set out the specific reasons why a hearing would be appropriate (see **ADDRESSES**). The holding of such hearing is at the discretion of the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA.

**Permit Applications Received****Permit 1140**

The Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC), NOAA Fisheries in Seattle, WA requests a 5-year permit for three studies that will have annual take of juvenile threatened OC coho salmon; juvenile threatened CR chum salmon; juvenile endangered SnR sockeye salmon; juvenile threatened naturally produced and artificially propagated SnR S/S chinook salmon; juvenile threatened SnR fall chinook salmon; juvenile threatened LCR chinook salmon; juvenile threatened UWR chinook salmon; juvenile endangered naturally produced and artificially propagated UCR spring chinook salmon; juvenile threatened naturally produced and artificially propagated PS chinook salmon; juvenile threatened SnR steelhead; juvenile threatened LCR steelhead; juvenile threatened MCR steelhead; juvenile endangered naturally produced and artificially propagated UCR steelhead; and juvenile threatened UWR steelhead.

**Study 1.** The NWFSC would take listed juvenile salmon and steelhead while conducting research that will assess the relationship between environmental variables, selected

anthropogenic stresses, and bacterial and parasitic pathogens on disease-induced mortality in juvenile salmon in selected coastal estuaries and nearshore areas in Oregon and Washington. In addition, the NWFSC proposes to gather additional site-specific information in the Lower Columbia River to (1) determine contaminant concentrations in fish, (2) understand bioaccumulation in juvenile salmon and determine site-specific factors, (3) analyze for the presence of physiological biomarkers, and to (4) investigate the presence of indicators of exposure to environmental estrogens. The NWFSC would collect samples with seines or high speed rope trawls, and requests authorization to lethally take salmon for pathogen prevalence and intensity, biochemical composition, histopathological attributes, and stomach content analyses.

**Study 2.** The NWFSC would take listed juvenile PS chinook salmon while conducting research activities in the Duwamish waterway in the state of Washington. The NWFSC will investigate salmon exposure to contaminants and evaluate the extent of river contamination to determine what actions will be necessary to mitigate future exposure. Beach seines will be used to catch juvenile threatened PS chinook salmon. The NWFSC also would collect samples with high speed rope trawls and it requests authorization to lethally take salmon for contaminant analysis.

**Study 3.** The NWFSC would take juvenile PS chinook salmon associated with an assessment and monitoring program designed to (1) characterize the estuarine ecology of existing life history types of chinook salmon, (2) evaluate the performance of estuarine habitat restoration actions, and (3) evaluate the effects of shoreline alterations on nearshore fishes. Sampling will occur in Seattle, WA estuarine nearshore areas. The NWFSC would collect listed salmon with beach seines, enclosure nets, surface trawl nets, and block/fyke nets, sample the fish for biological data and stomach contents using non-lethal evacuation, and then release them. In addition, the NWFSC requests authorization to lethally take salmon for histopathological attributes and otolith stomach content analyses.

**Permit 1156**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Corvallis, Oregon (OR) requests a 5-year permit for annual take of juvenile and adult threatened LCR steelhead; threatened MCR steelhead; endangered naturally-produced and artificially propagated UCR steelhead;