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Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213; phone (562)980-4001; fax (562)980-4018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jennifer Jefferies or Ruth Johnson, (301)713-2289.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 26, 2003, notice was published in the *Federal Register* (68 FR 38011) that a request for a photography permit to take several species of non-listed marine mammals for purposes of commercial/educational photography had been submitted by the above-named individual. A correction to the first Notice was published on July 9, 2003 (68 FR 40911) in order to correct an erroneous statement as stated in the first Notice. The original Notice stated that NMFS was unable to issue photography permits for depleted marine mammal species but the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) does not prohibit these activities for depleted species. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), and the Regulations Governing the Taking and Importing of Marine Mammals (50 CFR part 216).

The purpose of the proposed project is to film several species of non-listed marine mammals for an ongoing project that is tentatively titled "Death of an Ecosystem?". While this project has been ongoing for several years, Mr. McLaughlin desires to film from a closer vantage point, i.e. within 100 yards of an individual animal. The closeness of filming would be considered Level B harassment and therefore would require a permit under the MMPA. The photographers intend to attempt to document marine mammal movement and aggregation under varying conditions including the presence of boat traffic. This will be done using a fusion of passive acoustic recording equipment with different filming equipment, including still and video, as well as different filming platforms, including elevated filming platforms. The action area will include waters off the coasts of California, Oregon, Washington and Alaska. The resulting film footage will be dispensed in part

for print and broadcast media, to researchers as well as for educational purposes. The Permit will expire on October 31, 2005.

Dated: October 17, 2003.

Stephen L. Leathery,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

[Docket No. 031016259-3259-01]

Request for Comment on Improvements to the U.S. Preparation Process for World Radiocommunication Conferences

AGENCY: National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

ACTION: Notice, Request for Comments.

SUMMARY: The General Accounting Office (GAO) in *Telecommunications: Better Coordination and Enhanced Accountability Needed to Improve Spectrum Management* (GAO-02-096), recommends that the State Department, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) "jointly review the adequacy of the preparation process following the 2003 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) and develop recommendations for improvements."¹ Since the conclusion of the 2003 WRC, NTIA has held meetings with the FCC and the State Department to discuss GAO's recommendations. NTIA initiated staff review and Federal agency review of its own internal WRC preparatory process, including the Radio Conference Subcommittee (RCS) of the Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee (IRAC). Similarly, the FCC initiated a review of its internal processes used to prepare for the 2003 WRC and assessed whether the process could be improved.² NTIA is currently conducting an overall review of the entire conference preparatory process and how the current process can be

¹ See U.S. General Accounting Office, *Telecommunications—Better Coordination and Enhanced Accountability Needed to Improve Spectrum Management*, GAO-02-906 at pg. 35 (September 30, 2002).

² See Public Forum to Assess FCC's Preparatory Process for World Radiocommunication Conferences, *Public Notice*, DA-03-02858 (rel. September 10, 2003).

improved or modified. By this notice and request for comments, NTIA is soliciting the views of the industry and the public on these issues.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than November 24, 2003.

ADDRESSES: The National Telecommunications and Information Administration invites the public to submit written comments in paper or electronic form. Comments may be mailed to Darlene A. Drazenovich, International Spectrum Plans and Policy Division, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Room 4076, 1401 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230 or e-mailed to ddrazenovich@ntia.doc.gov. Paper submissions should include an electronic version on diskette in ASCII, WordPerfect (please specify version) or Microsoft Word (please specify version) format.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Darlene A. Drazenovich, (202) 482-3480, ddrazenovich@ntia.doc.gov, or James Vorhies, (202) 482-3590, jvorhies@ntia.doc.gov, International Spectrum Plans and Policy Division, Office of Spectrum Management, NTIA.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is an intergovernmental organization within the United Nations that specializes in the field of telecommunications. The ITU brings together international governments and private industries to coordinate the establishment and operation of global telecommunication networks and services. Every three to four years, the ITU convenes World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRCs)—an international forum for world agreement, to review and revise the International Radio Regulations. The Radio Regulations constitute an international treaty on radiocommunications covering the use of the radio-frequency spectrum by radiocommunication services. These conferences set the world stage for future technological development by allocating radio frequency spectrum to radio services, establishing spectrum use coordination methods, setting international rules for radio equipment operation, and identifying spectrum for specific uses such as Third Generation (3G) wireless systems.

The United States is a key player in this important global endeavor because it brings new and innovative technologies to the world community while balancing global security, national