However, because the potential exists that the survey schedule could be delayed and overlap with the southbound gray whale migration, some or all of the survey could also potentially result in harassing gray whales. To cover that possibility, a proposed authorization for harassment takes of gray whales has been included. Applying Forney et al.'s (1995) gray whale density from the winter/spring surveys (0.014) to the ZPD (773 km² indicates that 11 gray whales could

potentially be subject to acoustic harassment.

Also, while the assumption can be made that a population of 70–81 cetaceans may be harassed during the SYU survey, because the 160 dB ZPH at any one instant of time is only a portion of the entire 773 km² ZPD, and because the seismic array is turned off while repositioning on the succeeding transect, these cetaceans, at least theoretically, may be harassed more than once during the course of the survey, unless they leave the area as a

result of either normal transitting (migration) or seismic noise.

NMFS estimates that each east-west and south-north transect would have a ZPH approximately 344 km² and 147.3 km², respectively and each of the 64 east-west or 6 south-north transects comprise approximately 45 percent or 19 percent respectively, of the total ZPD. As a result, theoretically there is the potential for the SYU seismic survey to result in 2,360 harassment takings proportionally divided as follows:

Whale species	Density (No./km ²	Total ZPD (km²)	Total number of harassment takes
Blue whale	0.033	22,900	756
Fin whale	0.013	22,900	298
Humpback whale	0.009	22,900	206
Minke whale	0.008	22,900	183
Sperm whale	0.011	22,900	252
Pygmy sperm whale	0.013	22,900	298
Sei whale	0.001	22,900	23
Bryde's whale	0.001	22,900	23
Gray whale	0.014	22,900	5 321

⁵As gray whales generally migrate from feeding grounds to breeding lagoons offshore Baja California from November–December, if the seismic survey is delayed from its anticipated commencement date, some harassment of this species may occur.

Mitigation

To avoid potential injury to marine mammals, NMFS proposes to: (1) Require airguns to be ramped-up to operating levels over a 5-minute period at the commencement of operations, when beginning a new trackline or anytime that the array is powered down; (2) recommend not turning the array off at times when restarting the array would occur during nighttime hours; and (3) if marine mammals are observed within the 195 dB isopleth (91.5 m (300 ft) of the source), starting operations must be delayed until all marine mammals are outside the 195 dB zone. It is proposed that NMFS-approved observers be required to make these observations.

Monitoring

NMFS proposes that the holder of the Incidental Harassment Authorization will monitor the impact of seismic activities on the marine mammal populations within the SYU. Monitoring will be conducted during daylight hours by NMFS-approved observers. In addition, monitoring will begin 30 minutes prior to any time the seismic array is turned on and will continue until turned off. Monitoring will consist of noting the numbers and species of all marine mammals seen within the ZPH, and any behavioral responses or modifications due either to the seismic array or by the vessel. A report on this monitoring program will be required to be submitted to NMFS within 90 days

of completion of the survey. Specific monitoring and reporting requirements will be specified in the Incidental Harassment Authorizaion, if issued.

Consultation

Under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, NMFS has begun consultation on the proposed issuance of this authorization. Consultation will be concluded upon completion of the comment period and consideration of those comments in the final determination on issuance of an authorization.

Conclusions

NMFS has determined preliminarily that the short-term impact from conducting a 3–D seismic survey within the SYU may result in a temporary modification in behavior by certain species of cetaceans. While behavioral modifications may be made by these species of cetaceans to avoid seismic noise, this behavioral change is expected to have only a negligible impact on the animals.

There is no known recent subsistence use of marine mammals in southern California.

Proposed Authorization

NMFS proposes to issue an incidental harassment authorization for 1 year for a 3–D seismic survey within the SYU provided the above mentioned monitoring and reporting requirements are incorporated. NMFS has preliminarily determined that the proposed seismic activity would result in the harassment of only small numbers of mysticete cetaceans, sperm whales, and possibly pygmy sperm whales; will have a negligible impact on these cetacean stocks; and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of this stock for subsistence uses.

Information Solicited

NMFS requests interested persons to submit comments, information, and suggestions concerning this request (see ADDRESSES).

Dated: June 2, 1995.

William W. Fox, Jr.,

Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service. [FR Doc. 95–13966 Filed 6–6–95; 8:45 am] BILLING CODE 3510–22–W

[I.D. 060195A]

Shark Operations Team; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Shark Operations Team (OT) will hold a meeting on June 8, 1995, at NMFS in Silver Spring, MD.