would require that the original permit be in the possession of the person to whom it is issued, or his agent, at the time of importation and that a duplicate copy of the issued permit be physically attached to the container in which the polar bear specimen is placed while in storage or transit.

Paragraph (g) Duration of Permits

The duration of a permit is designated on the face of the permit. The permit will be valid for no longer than one year, a timeframe that should allow for the importation to occur.

Paragraph (h) Fees

The Act requires the Director to establish and charge a reasonable fee for polar bear trophy import permits that are issued. This issuance fee is over and above the standard permit processing fee of \$25.00 that is required at the time of application in accordance with 50 CFR 13.11(d). The permit issuance fee is to be paid after notice that the application has been approved but before the permit is issued. The Committee Report outlined that the Committee considered a reasonable fee to range from \$250 to \$1,000 for each permit depending on the administrative work involved. The 1994 Amendments require all of the issuance fee be made available for polar bear conservation programs being conducted in Alaska and Russia pursuant to section 113(d) of the Act. Based on the amount of information that needs to be collected and evaluated and the need for periodic review of information, the Service is proposing to charge a fee of \$1,000 for each import permit issued. The Service believes setting the fee at this level is appropriate given the level of administrative work involved and as the monies generated will be used for polar bear conservation.

Paragraph (i) Scientific Review

The language of the law requires that a scientific review of the impact of permits issued on the polar bear population stocks be undertaken within 2 years after enactment, that is by April 30, 1996. This review is to provide an opportunity for public comment and the final report shall include a response to such public comment. The Director shall not issue permits to allow for the import of polar bears taken in Canada after September 30, 1996, if the Service determines that the issuance of permits is having a significant adverse impact on the polar bear population stocks in Canada. The Director is further authorized to conduct an annual review of this determination. The review provides for the monitoring of the

effects of permit issuance on Canada's polar bear population stocks and a means to guarantee the cessation of imports should there be an indication of an adverse impact on the sustainability of the Canadian population stocks. These reviews are to be based on the best scientific information available. If the Director does undertake a review, the Act requires that the review be completed by January 31 of the year in which the review was undertaken. The Director may not, however, refuse to issue permits solely on the basis that the review has not been completed by January 31.

Congressman Jack Fields, during the House of Representatives floor debate on the 1994 Amendments stated, "A significant adverse impact means more than a simple decrease, ordinary fluctuation, or normal change in the population cycle. A decline should not be considered significant if the decline is of short duration, affects a minuscule percentage of the population, or does not jeopardize the sustainability of the species in the long term. The decrease must be proven to be directly related to the trophy imports by sport hunters and of such a magnitude as to warrant suspension of those imports. Even so, the issuance of permits should not be suspended unless Canada does not reduce the harvest quota in response to this decline." (140 Cong. Rec. H2725, April 26, 1994)

Public Comments Solicited

The Service intends that any final action resulting from this proposal will be as accurate and as effective as possible. Therefore, any comments or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific or conservation communities, trade organizations or any other interested party concerning any aspect of this proposal are hereby solicited.

Required Determinations

This proposed rule was not subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Executive Order 12866. The Department of the Interior (Department) has determined that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic effect on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.). The proposal will affect only those in the United States who have hunted polar bear in Canada. This action is not expected to have significant taking implications, as per Executive Order 12630.

The information collection requirement contained in this section has been approved by OMB as required

by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq., and assigned clearance number 1018–0022. Since the proposed rule would apply to importation of polar bear trophies into the United States, it does not contain any Federalism impacts as described in Executive Order 12612.

The Service has determined that this proposed rule is categorically excluded under Departmental procedures from complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (516 Departmental Manual, Ch. 2, Appx. 1, Para. 1.10) An Environmental Action Memorandum is on file at the Service's Office of Management Authority in Arlington, Virginia. The permits authorized under the Act and regulations, as well as the scientific findings required by the Act, may be subject to NEPA documentation requirements, on a case-by-case basis.

The Department has certified to OMB that these regulations meet the applicable standards provided in Sections 2(a) and 2(b)(2) of Executive Order 12778.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 18

Administrative practice and procedures, Imports, Indians, Marine mammals, Transportation.

Proposed Regulation Promulgation

Accordingly, the Service hereby proposes to amend part 18 of chapter I of title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations by adding sections 18.4 and 18.30 to read as follows:

PART 18—MARINE MAMMALS

1. The authority citation for part 18 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.

2. A new § 18.4 is added to subpart A of part 18 to read as follows:

§18.4 Information collection requirements.

(a) The information collection requirements contained in subpart D has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seg. and assigned clearance number 1018–0022. The information is being collected because it is necessary for the evaluation of permit applications. The information will be used to review permit applications and make decisions, according to criteria established in various Federal wildlife conservation statutes and regulations, on the issuance or denial of permits. The obligation to respond is required to obtain or retain a permit.

(b) Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to vary from 15 minutes to 4 hours per