



JUL 26 2010

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Environmental Assessment on the Issuance of **Incidental Harassment Authorizations to Take Marine Mammals by Harassment Incidental to Conducting Open Water Seismic and Marine Surveys in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas**

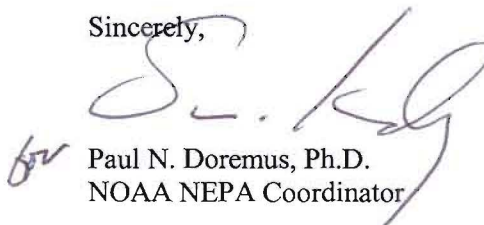
LOCATION: Chukchi and Beaufort Seas, Alaska

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service proposes to issue an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) to Statoil USA E&P Inc. (Statoil) for the taking, by Level B harassment, of small numbers of marine mammals incidental to open water seismic surveys in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. NMFS proposes to issue an IHA with mitigation measures, as described in Alternative 2 of the Environmental Assessment.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: James H. Lecky, Director, Office of Protected Resources

The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI) including the supporting environmental assessment (EA) is enclosed for your information. Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the responsible official named above.

Sincerely,


for Paul N. Doremus, Ph.D.
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

