UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups: APR 17 2013

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

TITLE: Environmental Assessment on the Issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization to the Washington State Department of Transportation to Take Marine Mammals by Harassment Incidental to Dolphin Replacement Project at Orcas Island and Friday Harbor Ferry Terminals, Washington

LOCATION: Bremerton, Washington

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to issue an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for the taking, by Level B harassment, of small numbers of marine mammals incidental to construction associated with the replacement of dolphin structures (offshore structures used to guide the ferry into the terminal and hold it in place while docked) at the Orcas Island and Friday Harbor ferry terminals in Washington State. WSDOT seeks an IHA because underwater construction noise and the increase of human activities and vessel traffic could adversely affect marine mammal species and stocks in the proposed action area. NMFS proposes to issue an IHA with mitigation measures, as described in Alternative 2 of its Environmental Assessment (EA).

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Helen Golde, Acting 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 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,

Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

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