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:

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

TITLE: Marine Seismic Survey in the Atlantic Ocean, September-October, 2014.

LOCATION: The Atlantic Ocean, approximately 17 to 422 kilometers (10 to 262 miles off the coast of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina.

SUMMARY: We, the National Marine Fisheries Service, propose to issue an Incidental Harassment Authorization (Authorization) to the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory for the taking, by Level B harassment, of small numbers of marine mammals, incidental to conducting a marine geophysical (seismic) survey in the Atlantic Ocean, September - October, 2014.

We prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) titled, *Issuance of an Incidental Harassment Authorization to Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory to Take Marine Mammals by Harassment Incidental to a Marine Geophysical Survey in the Atlantic Ocean Offshore North Carolina, September through October, 2014*, and prepared an independent Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). We determined that the impact of conducting the seismic survey in the Atlantic Ocean may result, at worst, in a temporary modification in behavior of small numbers of several species of marine mammals. Based on its review of the record, including the EA and FONSI, we determined that issuance of the Authorization will not result in any significant direct, indirect, or cumulative impact to any element of the human environment. We do not anticipate that take by injury (Level A harassment), serious injury, or death will occur; nor have we authorized take by Level A harassment. We have further determined that this activity will result in a negligible impact on the affected species or stocks.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Donna S. Wieting
Director
Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1315 East-West Highway, Room 13821
Silver Spring, MD 20910
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All beneficial and adverse impacts of the action have been addressed to reach the conclusion of no significant impacts. Accordingly, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for this action is not necessary. We enclose for your information a copy of the FONSI prepared by us and supporting documentation.

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this 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,

TRONVIG.KRISTEN.A.1365886012

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for Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure