

Science, Service, Stewardship



2012 Open Water Meeting

- 1) Comprehensive Strategy for MMPA
Monitoring of Arctic O&G Impacts
- 2) Examination of the CAA and POC Processes

March 6th, 2012

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MMPA Monitoring Requirement

Broadly, the MMPA requires that applicants for incidental take authorizations provide a Monitoring Plan that will result in:

- an increased knowledge of the affected species, and;
- a better understanding of the impacts of the proposed activity on marine mammals.



Broad Goals of Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy

Develop a planning and prioritization framework for monitoring the effects of Arctic oil and gas development in on marine mammals that will:

- Guide and support agency recommendations and decisions related to monitoring, including consideration of
 - Effects from multiple activities in a given season
 - Effects of authorized activities across multiple years
- Assist industry applicants (early) in development of monitoring plans



Some Specific Goals

This comprehensive framework would include an iterative and adaptive process for:

- Identifying highest priority marine mammal data needs
- Identifying most effective methods for gathering needed data in consideration of past successes and resource availability
- Facilitating collaborative monitoring that takes advantage of existing infrastructure, builds on past work, and encourages meta-analyses



Specific Goals Cont.

Implementation of a comprehensive monitoring strategy would include both:

- Solicitation of stakeholder input, and
- Organized and easily accessible presentation of information and data related to:
 - past monitoring,
 - ongoing monitoring, and
 - recommendations for the future



Existing Tools and Future Implementation

Some Existing Tools:

- Open Water Meeting
- Independent peer review
- Public review of MMPA and NEPA documents

Potential Future Mechanisms:

- Convene a longer-term group to design strategy/framework and facilitate implementation
- Develop a permanent webpage to consolidate and disseminate monitoring results and recommendations



CAAs and POCs

NMFS has responsibility to ensure that activity will not have an “unmitigable adverse impact” on subsistence uses of the affected marine mammals.

—Conflict Avoidance Agreement – Independent agreement between AEWC and company(ies) that contains measures to mitigate industrial interference with bowhead hunt.

—Plan of Cooperation

- Required by MMPA if activity may affect subsistence uses of any affected species.
- Includes: measures to ensure activity does not interfere with hunt; indication that communities have been notified of activities; and plans for meetings and continued communication during the activity to resolve conflict



CAAs and POCs

NMFS is currently evaluating these two processes in the context of:

- NMFS' use of these processes to support decisions regarding impacts to subsistence uses of multiple species by multiple native communities
- Effectiveness for identification of appropriate measures to mitigate subsistence impacts, and
- Streamlining implementation efforts for subsistence communities, as well as industry applicants



Possible Tools and Directions

- Stakeholder Input: strengths/weaknesses of existing processes and creative ideas for improvement.
- Development of an iterative, open, and adaptive process that builds on past success and makes successful implementation easier for all

Some potential mechanisms for improvement:

- Increased NMFS involvement in Arctic coordination
- Website that clearly identifies areas/times of concern, species/community/industry contacts, past successful measures, meeting times

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Questions / Input?