TABLE 2—U.S. DISTRIBUTION OF FIVE NEWLY-LISTED CARIBBEAN CORALS

	Florida—Atlantic	Puerto Rico	U.S. Virgin Islands	Gulf of Mexico
Mycetophyllia ferox	X	X	X	
Dendrogyra cylindrus	X	X	X	
Orbicella annularis	X	X	X	X
Orbicella faveolata	X	X	X	X
Orbicella franksi	X	X	X	X

Request for Information

We are soliciting information from other agencies and the public that will help us determine what, if any, protective regulations are necessary and advisable for the conservation of these 20 newly listed coral species. This includes information that will help us understand and analyze impacts of various activities, the existence and efficacy of ongoing conservation activities, and prohibitions that are both necessary and advisable to reduce threats and amenable to management for the conservation of these 20 species. Specifically, we are soliciting information including the following: (1) Current or planned activities within the range of these species and their possible impact on these species; (2) impacts within the species' ranges that fall within any of the nine major threat categories: Ocean warming, disease, ocean acidification, sea-level rise, nutrient enrichment, sedimentation, predation, trophic effects of fishing, and collection and trade; (3) information on which of the section 9(a)(1) prohibitions on take are necessary and advisable for the conservation of these species, with associated justification; (4) specific activities that should be prohibited for the conservation of the 20 coral species, with associated justification; (5) specific activities that should be excepted from any prohibitions that may be applied because they either provide a conservation benefit or do not detract from the conservation of these species, with associated justification; (6) existing permitting programs that may already provide for the conservation of listed corals through their activity evaluation and permitting process, with associated justification; and (7) the economic costs and benefits likely to result from protective regulations (see **DATES** and **ADDRESSES**).

We will fully consider all relevant information received in our determination of what protective regulations are necessary and advisable for the conservation of the species.

References Cited

A complete list of references is available at *http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_coral.html and* upon request (see **ADDRESSES**).

Authority

The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: January 2, 2015.

Eileen Sobeck,

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2015–00366 Filed 1–12–15; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 226

RIN 0648–BC56

Endangered and Threatened Species; Proposed Designation of Critical Habitat for the Arctic Ringed Seal; Public Hearings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public hearings.

SUMMARY: We, NMFS, announce the specific dates and locations for four public hearings in Alaska, one each in Nome, Anchorage, Kotzebue, and Barrow, on our proposed rule to designate critical habitat for the threatened Arctic subspecies (*Phoca hispida hispida*) of the ringed seal (*Phoca hispida*) under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which published in the **Federal Register** on December 9, 2014. We also announce that a hearing will be held in Bethel, AK.

DATES: Written comments on the proposed rule must be received by March 9, 2015. For specific dates of the public hearings, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION.**

ADDRESSES: Five public hearings will be held in Alaska, one each in Nome, Anchorage, Kotzebue, Barrow, and Bethel: For specific locations of these hearings, see **SUPPLMENTARY INFORMATION.**

You may submit written comments on the proposed rule, identified by NOAA–NMFS–2013–0114, by any one of the following methods:

- Electronic Submission: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to *http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0114*, click the ''Comment Now!'' icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
- Mail: Address written comments to Jon Kurland, Assistant Regional Administrator for Protected Resources, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Mail comments to P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802–1668.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on *http://www.regulations.gov* without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.,* name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter ''N/A'' in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

Electronic copies of the proposed rule, list of references and supporting documents, and the draft economic report (*i.e.,* Regulatory Impact Review (RIR)/4(b)(2) Preparatory Assessment/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Act (IRFA) report) prepared for this action are available from *http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0114* or from the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at *http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tamara Olson, NMFS Alaska Region, (907) 271–2373; Jon Kurland, NMFS Alaska Region, (907) 586–7638; or Marta

Nammack, NMFS Office of Protected Resources, (301) 427–8469.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On December 9, 2014, we published a proposed rule to designate critical habitat for the threatened Arctic ringed seal under the ESA (79 FR 73010). At that time, we opened a public comment period on the proposed rule through March 9, 2015, and announced that four public hearings will be held on the proposed rule in Alaska, one each in Anchorage, Barrow, Kotzebue, and Nome. In this notice, we announce the specific dates and locations for these four public hearings (see Public Hearing Schedule). We also announce that a fifth public hearing will be held in Bethel, AK.

Public Hearings

During each public hearing, a brief opening presentation on the proposed rule will be provided before accepting public testimony. Written comments may be submitted at the hearing or via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal (see **ADDRESSES**) until the scheduled close of the comment period on March 9, 2015. In the event that attendance at the public hearings is large, the time allotted for oral statements may be limited. Oral and written statements receive equal consideration. There are no limits on the length of written comments submitted to us.

Public Hearing Schedule

The specific date and location for the hearing in Bethel, AK, will be announced in a subsequent **Federal Register** notice. The dates and locations for the other four hearings are as follows:

1. Nome: January 28, 2015, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Old St. Joe's, 407 Bering Street, Nome, AK.
2. Anchorage: February 2, 2015, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Z. J. Loussac Public Library, Wilda Marston Theatre, 3600 Denali Street, Anchorage, AK.
3. Kotzebue: February 17, 2015, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., at the Northwest Arctic Borough Assembly Chambers, 163 Lagoon Street, Kotzebue, AK.
4. Barrow: February 23, 2015, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., at the Iñupiat Heritage Center, 5421 North Star Street, Barrow, AK.

Special Accommodations

These hearings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other accommodations should be directed to Tamara Olson (see **ADDRESSES**) as soon as possible, but no later than 7 business days prior to the hearing date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Dated: January 7, 2015.

Donna S. Wieting,

Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2015–00368 Filed 1–12–15; 8:45 am]

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