

such species if the Office Director determines that such release will further the conservation of such species.

[61 FR 21938, May 10, 1996]

**§ 216.42 Photography. [Reserved]**

**§ 216.43 Public display. [Reserved]**

**§ 216.44 Applicability/transition.**

(a) *General.* The regulations of this subpart are applicable to all persons, including persons holding permits or other authorizing documents issued before June 10, 1996, by NMFS for the take, import, export, or conduct of any otherwise prohibited activity involving a marine mammal or marine mammal part for special exception purposes.

(b) *Scientific research.* Any intrusive research as defined in § 216.3, initiated after June 10, 1996, must be authorized under a scientific research permit. Intrusive research authorized by the Office Director to be conducted on captive marine mammals held for public display purposes prior to June 10, 1996, must be authorized under a scientific research permit one year after June 10, 1996.

[61 FR 21939, May 10, 1996]

**§ 216.45 General Authorization for Level B harassment for scientific research.**

(a) *General Authorization.* (1) Persons are authorized under section 104(c)(3)(C) of the MMPA to take marine mammals in the wild by Level B harassment, as defined in § 216.3, for purposes of bona fide scientific research *Provided*, That:

(i) They submit a letter of intent in accordance with the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section, receive confirmation that the General Authorization applies in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section, and comply with the terms and conditions of paragraph (d) of this section; or

(ii) If such marine mammals are listed as endangered or threatened under the ESA, they have been issued a permit under Section 10(a)(1)(A) of the ESA and implementing regulations at 50 CFR parts 217–227, particularly at § 222.23 through § 222.28, to take marine mammals in the wild for the purpose of scientific research, the taking author-

ized under the permit involves such Level B harassment of marine mammals or marine mammal stocks, and they comply with the terms and conditions of that permit.

(2) Except as provided under paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this section, no taking, including harassment, of marine mammals listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA is authorized under the General Authorization. Marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the ESA may be taken for purposes of scientific research only after issuance of a permit for such activities pursuant to the ESA.

(3) The following types of research activities will likely qualify for inclusion under the General Authorization: Photo-identification studies, behavioral observations, and vessel and aerial population surveys (except aerial surveys over pinniped rookeries at altitudes of less than 1,000 ft).

(b) *Letter of intent.* Except as provided under paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this section, any person intending to take marine mammals in the wild by Level B harassment for purposes of bona fide scientific research under the General Authorization must submit, at least 60 days before commencement of such research, a letter of intent by certified return/receipt mail to the Chief, Permits Division, F/PR1, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1335 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910–3226.

(1) The letter of intent must be submitted by the principal investigator (who shall be deemed the applicant). For purposes of this section, the principal investigator is the individual who is responsible for the overall research project, or the institution, governmental entity, or corporation responsible for supervision of the principal investigator.

(2) The letter of intent must include the following information:

(i) The name, address, telephone number, qualifications and experience of the applicant and any co-investigator(s) to be conducting the proposed research, and a curriculum vitae for each, including a list of publications by each such investigator relevant to the