

(i) The activity is conducted pursuant to a watershed protection plan that CDFG has affirmed, in writing, is consistent with NMFS' approved state watershed plan guidelines set forth in § 222.307(c) of this chapter for California's Watershed Protection Program. NMFS must concur, in writing, that the plan is consistent with those guidelines; or

(ii) Until a watershed protection or restoration plan is certified by the State of California and NMFS as described in paragraph (a)(6)(i) of this section, or until August 18, 1999, whichever occurs first, when NMFS has made a written finding that the activity is consistent with State of California conservation guidelines previously found to meet the standards set forth in § 222.307(c) of this chapter by NMFS.

[64 FR 14069, Mar. 23, 1999]

**§ 223.205 Sea turtles.**

(a) The prohibitions of section 9 of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1538) relating to endangered species apply to threatened species of sea turtle, except as provided in § 223.206.

(b) Except as provided in § 223.206, it is unlawful for any person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to do any of the following:

(1) Own, operate, or be on board a vessel, except if that vessel is in compliance with all applicable provisions of § 223.206(d);

(2) Fish for, catch, take, harvest, or possess, fish or wildlife while on board a vessel, except if that vessel is in compliance with all applicable provisions of § 223.206(d);

(3) Fish for, catch, take, harvest, or possess, fish or wildlife contrary to any notice of tow-time or other restriction specified in, or issued under, § 223.206(d)(3) or (d)(4);

(4) Possess fish or wildlife taken in violation of paragraph (b) of this section;

(5) Fail to follow any of the sea turtle handling and resuscitation requirements specified in § 223.206(d)(1);

(6) Possess a sea turtle in any manner contrary to the handling and resuscitation requirements of § 223.206(d)(1);

(7) Fail to comply immediately, in the manner specified at § 600.730 (b) through (d) of this Title, with instruc-

tions and signals specified therein issued by an authorized officer, including instructions and signals to haul back a net for inspection;

(8) Refuse to allow an authorized officer to board a vessel, or to enter an area where fish or wildlife may be found, for the purpose of conducting a boarding, search, inspection, seizure, investigation, or arrest in connection with enforcement of this section;

(9) Destroy, stave, damage, or dispose of in any manner, fish or wildlife, gear, cargo, or any other matter after a communication or signal from an authorized officer, or upon the approach of such an officer or of an enforcement vessel or aircraft, before the officer has an opportunity to inspect same, or in contravention of directions from the officer;

(10) Assault, resist, oppose, impede, intimidate, threaten, obstruct, delay, prevent, or interfere with an authorized officer in the conduct of any boarding, search, inspection, seizure, investigation, or arrest in connection with enforcement of this section;

(11) Interfere with, delay, or prevent by any means, the apprehension of another person, knowing that such person committed an act prohibited by this section;

(12) Resist a lawful arrest for an act prohibited by this section;

(13) Make a false statement, oral or written, to an authorized officer or to the agency concerning the fishing for, catching, taking, harvesting, landing, purchasing, selling, or transferring fish or wildlife, or concerning any other matter subject to investigation under this section by such officer, or required to be submitted under this part 223;

(14) Sell, barter, trade or offer to sell, barter, or trade, a TED that is not an approved TED;

(15) Fail to comply with the restrictions set forth in § 223.206(d)(2)(v) regarding pound net leaders; or

(16) Attempt to do, solicit another to do, or cause to be done, any of the foregoing.

(c) In connection with any action alleging a violation of this section, any person claiming the benefit of any exemption, exception, or permit under this subpart B has the burden of proving that the exemption, exception, or

permit is applicable, was granted, and was valid and in force at the time of the alleged violation. Further, any person claiming that a modification made to a TED that is the subject of such an action complies with the requirements of § 223.207 (c) or (d) has the burden of proving such claim.

[64 FR 14069, Mar. 23, 1999, as amended at 67 FR 41203, June 17, 2002]

**§ 223.206 Exceptions to prohibitions relating to sea turtles.**

(a) *Permits*—(1) *Scientific research, education, zoological exhibition, or species enhancement permits.* The Assistant Administrator may issue permits authorizing activities which would otherwise be prohibited under § 223.205(a) for scientific or educational purposes, for zoological exhibition, or to enhance the propagation or survival of threatened species of sea turtles, in accordance with and subject to the conditions of part 222, subpart C—General Permit Procedures.

(2) *Incidental-take permits.* The Assistant Administrator may issue permits authorizing activities that would otherwise be prohibited under § 223.205(a) in accordance with section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1539(a)(1)(B)), and in accordance with, and subject to, the implementing regulations in part 222 of this chapter. Such permits may be issued for the incidental taking of threatened and endangered species of sea turtles.

(b) *Exception for injured, dead, or stranded specimens.* If any member of any threatened species of sea turtle is found injured, dead, or stranded, any agent or employee of the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, or any other Federal land or water management agency, or any agent or employee of a state agency responsible for fish and wildlife who is designated by his or her agency for such purposes, may, when acting in the course of his or her official duties, take such specimens without a permit if such taking is necessary to aid a sick, injured, or stranded specimen or dispose of a dead specimen or salvage a dead specimen which may be useful for scientific study. Whenever possible, live specimens shall be returned to their aquatic

environment as soon as possible. Every action shall be reported in writing to the Assistant Administrator within 30 days, and reports of further occurrence shall be made as deemed appropriate by the Assistant Administrator until the specimen is either returned to its environment or disposed of. Reports shall be mailed by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, to the Assistant Administrator and shall contain the following information:

- (1) Name and position of the official or employee involved;
- (2) Description of the specimen(s) involved;
- (3) Date and location of disposal;
- (4) Circumstances requiring the action;
- (5) Method of disposal;
- (6) Disposition of the specimen(s), including, where the specimen(s) has been retained in captivity, a description of the place and means of confinement, and the measures taken for its maintenance and care; and
- (7) Such other information as the Assistant Administrator may require.

(c) *Exception for research or conservation.* Any employee or agent of the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, or a state fish and wildlife agency operating a conservation program pursuant to the terms of a Cooperative Agreement with the National Marine Fisheries Service or the Fish and Wildlife Service in accordance with section 6(c) of the Act, designated by his or her agency for such purposes, may, when acting in the course of his or her official duties, take any threatened species to carry out scientific research or conservation programs. All such takings shall be reported within 30 days of the taking to the Assistant Administrator who may request additional reports of the taking and research at the Assistant Administrator's discretion.

(d) *Exception for incidental taking.* The prohibitions against taking in § 223.205(a) do not apply to the incidental take of any member of a threatened species of sea turtle (i.e., a take not directed toward such member) during fishing or scientific research activities, to the extent that those involved are in compliance with all applicable requirements of paragraphs (d)(1)