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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IAGC: New website, ModernizeMMPA.com, calls for common-sense regulatory reform

Houston, Texas, US – Friday, November 16th – The International Association of Geophysical Contractors (IAGC) has launched a new website, ModernizeMMPA.com to highlight the impacts of bureaucratic red tape and misapplication of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) on its members and the offshore energy industry at large.

The website identifies specific flaws in the MMPA, including overlapping and burdensome regulations, lack of regulatory accountability, vague language and exploitation by anti-energy opportunists. As a result of these systemic shortcomings, the MMPA functions as a de facto ban on geophysical seismic surveying in some U.S. waters.

“IAGC is disappointed by the extensive delays and hurdles our members face as a result of the MMPA’s outdated language and redundant, complicated review processes,” said Nikki Martin, President of the IAGC. “We are launching this new website to draw attention to these issues and highlight the impact they are having on our members and the U.S. energy industry overall. Steps must be taken to reduce bureaucratic delay and cut the burdensome regulatory red tape holding back the offshore energy exploration industry in the U.S. In the time that our members have been waiting for MMPA authorizations, the country of Mexico has transformed its entire energy sector.”

In January 2018, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a [report](#) on offshore seismic surveys which found that current delays in the issuance MMPA authorizations is a result of bureaucratic dysfunction and unnecessary stalling. Last week marked the 1,200th day of government delay and inaction on Atlantic Incidental Harassment Authorizations (IHAs) for seismic surveys off the U.S. East Coast, just one of the instances of extreme delays created by the MMPA.

Seismic surveying technology has been used extensively for over 50 years around the world, with no known detrimental impact to marine life, commercial fishing or tourism. Seismic surveying activity is a critical component of responsible energy resource development,

contributes to reducing the overall environmental footprint associated with energy exploration and provides valuable data on the dynamic processes that shape our coasts.

Now, the U.S. is falling behind in seismic information gathering, exploration activity and energy development due to the bureaucratic delays caused by the vague language and broken regulatory processes in the MMPA. Since 2014, Mexico has leased over 21,000,000 acres of offshore area for exploration and production in the Gulf of Mexico, more than four times the acreage leased by the U.S. Meanwhile, the U.S. is the only Atlantic margin country that is not exploring its shores for oil and gas resources.

The IAGC supports and fosters science- and risk-based regulations consistent with existing practices that are proven to be environmentally responsible, effective and operationally feasible. Through our Modernize MMPA site and campaign, the IAGC urges lawmakers and regulators to help bring the MMPA into the 21st Century by enacting common sense modifications.

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About the IAGC

The IAGC represents more than 110-member companies worldwide from all segments of the geophysical and exploration industry and is the only trade organization solely dedicated to representing the industry. It is the leader in geophysical technical and operations expertise. For more than 45 years, the IAGC has worked to optimize the business and regulatory climate, and enhances public understanding to support a strong, viable geophysical industry essential to discovering and delivering the world's energy resources.

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