

VI. Recommendation

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Northwest Region Federal Fisheries Permits

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of information collection, request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

DATES: To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before August 9, 2022.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at NOAA.PRA@noaa.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 0648-0203 in the subject line of your comments. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Matt Dunlap, Fishery Policy Analyst, NOAA Fisheries/West Coast Region, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Bldg. 1, Seattle, WA 98115, (206-316-7944), and matthew.dunlap@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Abstract**

This request is for extension of a currently approved information collection. The Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801) provides that the Secretary of Commerce is responsible for the conservation and management of marine fisheries resources in Exclusive Economic Zone (3-200 miles) of the

United States (U.S.). NOAA Fisheries manages the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) off Washington, Oregon, and California under the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan. The regulations implementing the Pacific Groundfish Fishery require that those vessels participating in the limited entry fishery be registered to a valid limited entry permit. Participation in the fishery and access to a limited entry permit has been restricted to control the overall harvest capacity.

NOAA Fisheries seeks comment on the extension of permit information collections required for: (1) renewal and transfer of Pacific Coast Groundfish limited entry permits; (2) implementation of certain provisions of the sablefish permit stacking program as provided for at 50 CFR 660.231 and 660.25; and (3) issuing and fulfilling the terms and conditions of certain exempted fishing permits (EFPs). The regulations implementing the limited entry program are found at 50 CFR part 660, subpart G.

In addition, NOAA Fisheries requires an information collection to implement certain aspects of the sablefish permit stacking program, which prevents excessive fleet consolidation. As part of the annual renewal process, NOAA Fisheries requires a corporation or partnership that owns or holds (as vessel owner) a sablefish endorsed permit to provide a complete ownership interest form listing all individuals with ownership interest in the entity. Similarly, any sablefish endorsed permit transfer involving registration of a business entity requires an ownership interest form if either the permit owner or vessel owner is a corporation or partnership. This information is used to determine if individuals own or hold sablefish permits in excess of the limit of three permits. Also, for transfer requests made during the sablefish primary season (April 1st through October 31st), the permit owner is required to report the remaining tier pounds not yet harvested on the sablefish endorsed permit at the time of transfer.

Applicants for an exempted fishing permit (EFP) must submit written information that allows NOAA Fisheries and the Pacific Fishery Management Council to evaluate the proposed exempted fishing project activities and weigh the benefits and costs of the proposed activities. The Council makes a recommendation on each EFP application and for successful applicants, NOAA Fisheries issues the EFPs that contains terms and conditions for the project including various

reporting requirements. The information included in an application is specified at 50 CFR 600.745(b)(2) and the Council Operating Procedure #19. Permit holders are required to file preseason harvest plans, interim and/or final summary reports on the results of the project, and in some cases individual vessels and other permit holders are required to provide data reports (*i.e.*, logbooks and/or catch reports). The results of EFPs are commonly used to explore ways to reduce effort on depressed stocks, encourage innovation and efficiency in the fishery, provide access to constrained stocks by directly measuring the bycatch associated with such strategies, and evaluate/revise current and proposed management measures.

Letters of Authorization (LOAs) and Exempted Educational Activity Authorizations (EEAAs) were historically collected under OMB control number 0648-0309. LOAs and EEAAs were combined into this collection (0648-0203) in 2019.

NMFS may grant exemptions from fishery regulations for educational or other activities (*e.g.*, using non-regulation gear). An EEA is a permit issued by the Regional Office to accredited educational institutions that authorize, for educational purposes, the target or incidental harvest of species managed under an FMP or fishery regulations that would otherwise be prohibited. EEAAs are generally of limited scope and duration, and authorize the take of the amount of fish necessary to demonstrate the lesson. Researchers are requested to submit reports of their scientific research activity after its completion.

LOAs are required under Section 101(a)(5)(A) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) of 1972 for the incidental take of marine mammals during fisheries surveys and related research activities conducted by the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFS), NMFS. Management of certain marine mammals falls under the jurisdiction of the NMFS under the MPA and Endangered Species Act (ESA) and mechanisms exist under both the ESA and MMPA to assess the effect of incidental takings and to authorize appropriate levels of take.

II. Method of Collection

Renewal forms are mailed to all permit owners. They can complete their renewals online, submit by mail, or in person. Ownership interest forms and permit transfer forms are available from the region's website but must be submitted to NOAA Fisheries by mail or in person. Applications for an exempted

fishing permit must be submitted in a written format. The exempted fishing permit data reports may be submitted in person, faxed, submitted by telephone or emailed by the monitor, plant manager, vessel owner or operator to NOAA Fisheries or the states of Washington, Oregon, or California.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0203.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (extension of a current information collection).

Affected Public: Individuals, Non-profit institutions, State, local, or tribal government; business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 539.

Estimated Time per Response: Permit renewals: 20 minutes; Permit transfers: 30 minutes; Sablefish ownership interest form: 10 minutes; EFP Applications: 32 hours; EFP Trip Notifications: 2 minutes; EFP Harvest Plans: 16 hours; EFP Data Reports: 2 hours; EFP Summary Reports: interim report, 4 hours; final report, 20 hours; Letters of Authorization: 6 hours; Exempted Educational Activities Authorizations, 6 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 2,011 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$56,468.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain Benefits.

Legal Authority: Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801).

IV. Request for Comments

We are soliciting public comments to permit NOAA Fisheries to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Evaluate ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your

comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Sheleen Dumas,

Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Commerce Department.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Solicitation for Applications for Advisory Councils Established Pursuant to the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and Executive Order

AGENCY: Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS), National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice of solicitation.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that ONMS will solicit applications to fill non-governmental seats on its 15 established national marine sanctuary advisory councils and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council (advisory councils), under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Executive Order, respectively. The list of 16 established advisory councils in the Contact Information for Each Site section includes the advisory council established for the Proposed Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary. Vacant seats, including positions (*i.e.*, primary and alternate), for each of the advisory councils will be advertised differently at each site in accordance with the information provided in this notice. This notice contains web page links and contact information for each site, as well as additional resources on advisory council vacancies and the application process.

DATES: Please visit individual site web pages, or reach out to a site as identified in this notice's **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section on Contact Information for Each Site, regarding the timing and advertisement of vacant seats, including positions (*i.e.*, primary or alternate), for each of the advisory

councils. Applications will only be accepted in response to current, open vacancies and in accordance with the deadlines and instructions included on each site's website.

ADDRESSES: Vacancies and applications are specific to each site's advisory council. Contact information for each site is contained in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information on a particular advisory council or available seats, please contact the site as identified in this notice's **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section on Contact Information for Each Site, below. For general inquiries related to this notice or ONMS advisory councils established pursuant to the National Marine Sanctuaries Act or Executive Order 13178, contact Katie Denman, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Policy and Planning Division (katie.denman@noaa.gov; 240–533–0702).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 315 of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) (16 U.S.C. 1445A) authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to establish advisory councils to advise and make recommendations regarding the designation and management of national marine sanctuaries. Executive Order 13178 similarly established a Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Council pursuant to the NMSA for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve. In this Supplementary Information section, NOAA provides details regarding the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, the role of advisory councils, and contact information for each site.

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS)

ONMS serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 620,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The network includes a system of 15 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll marine national monuments. National marine sanctuaries protect our Nation's most vital coastal and marine natural and cultural resources through active research, management, and public engagement. These activities sustain healthy environments that are the foundation for thriving communities and local economies.

One of the many ways ONMS ensures public participation in the designation and management of national marine sanctuaries is by convening advisory