

Average Hours per Response: 15 minutes.

Burden Hours: 63.

Needs and Uses: This request is for a new information collection.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes to collect landings and socioeconomic data from recreational anglers in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This data collection will assist in creating and utilizing an appropriate methodology for future sampling of this segment of these fisheries and to assist in the development of management proposals. In addition, the information will be used to satisfy legal mandates under Executive Order 12898, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act, and other pertinent statutes.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Frequency: One time.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

This information collection request may be viewed at reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to (202) 395-5806.

Dated: December 10, 2015.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE280

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; North Pacific Groundfish and Halibut Observer Program Standard Ex-Vessel Prices

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

ACTION: Notification of standard ex-vessel prices.

SUMMARY: NMFS publishes standard ex-vessel prices for groundfish and halibut for the calculation of the observer fee under the North Pacific Groundfish and Halibut Observer Program (Observer

Program). This notice is intended to provide information to vessel owners, processors, registered buyers, and other participants about the standard ex-vessel prices that will be used to calculate the observer fee liability for landings of groundfish and halibut made in 2016. NMFS will send invoices to processors and registered buyers subject to the fee by January 15, 2017. Fees are due to NMFS on or before February 15, 2017.

DATES: Effective January 1, 2016.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general questions about the observer fee and standard ex-vessel prices, contact Sally Bibb at 907-586-7389. For questions about the fee billing process, contact Kristie Balovich at 907-586-7419. Additional information about the Observer Program is available on NMFS Alaska Region's Web site at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Observer Program deploys NMFS-certified observers (observers) who collect information necessary for the conservation and management of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish and halibut fisheries. Fishery managers use information collected by observers to monitor quotas, manage groundfish and prohibited species catch, and document and reduce fishery interactions with protected resources. Scientists use observer-collected information for stock assessments and marine ecosystem research.

The Observer Program is divided into two observer coverage categories—the partial observer coverage category and the full observer coverage category. All groundfish and halibut vessels and processors are included in one of these two categories. The partial observer coverage category includes vessels and processors that are not required to have an observer at all times; the full observer coverage category includes vessels and processors required to have all of their fishing and processing operations off Alaska observed. Vessels and processors in the full coverage category arrange and pay for observer services from a permitted observer provider. Observer coverage for the partial coverage category is funded through a system of fees based on the ex-vessel value of groundfish and halibut.

Landings Subject to Observer Coverage Fee

The objective of the observer fee assessment is to levy a fee on all

landings accruing against a Federal total allowable catch (TAC) for groundfish or a commercial halibut quota made by vessels that are subject to Federal regulations and not included in the full coverage category. A fee is only assessed on landings of groundfish from vessels designated on a Federal Fisheries Permit or from vessels landing individual fishing quota (IFQ) or community development quota (CDQ) halibut or IFQ sablefish. Within the subset of vessels subject to the observer fee, only landings accruing against the Federal TAC are included in the fee assessment. A table with additional information about which landings are and are not subject to the observer fee is in NMFS regulations at § 679.55(c) and is on page 2 of an informational bulletin titled "Observer Fee Collection" on the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/observerfees.pdf>.

Fee Determination

A fee equal to 1.25 percent of the ex-vessel value is assessed on the landings of groundfish and halibut subject to the fee. Ex-vessel value is determined by multiplying the standard price for groundfish by the round weight equivalent for each species, gear, and port combination, and the standard price for halibut by the headed and gutted weight equivalent. NMFS will assess each landing report submitted via eLandings and each manual landing entered into the IFQ landing database and determine if the landing is subject to the observer fee and, if it is, which groundfish in the landing are subject to the observer fee. All IFQ or CDQ halibut in a landing subject to the observer fee will be assessed as part of the fee liability. For any groundfish or halibut subject to the observer fee, NMFS will apply the appropriate standard ex-vessel prices for the species, gear type, and port, and calculate the observer fee liability associated with the landing.

Processors and registered buyers access the landing-specific, observer fee liability information through NMFS Web Application (<https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/webapps/efish/login>) or eLandings (<https://elandings.alaska.gov/>). For IFQ halibut, CDQ halibut, and IFQ sablefish, this information is available as soon as the IFQ report is submitted. For groundfish and sablefish that accrue against the fixed gear sablefish CDQ reserve, the observer fee liability information is generally available within 24 hours of receipt of the report. The time lag on the groundfish and sablefish CDQ fee information is necessary because NMFS

must process the landings report through the catch accounting system computer programs to determine if all of the groundfish in the landings are subject to the observer fee. Information about which groundfish in a landing accrues against a Federal TAC is not immediately available from the processor's data entry into eLandings.

The intent of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and NMFS is for vessel owners to split the fee liability 50/50 with the processor or registered buyer. While vessels and processors are responsible for their portion of the fee, the owner of a shoreside processor or a stationary floating processor and the registered buyer are responsible for collecting the fee, including the vessel's portion of the fee, and remitting the full fee liability to NMFS.

NMFS will send invoices to processors and registered buyers for their total fee liability, which is determined by the sum of the fees reported for each landing for that processor or registered buyer for the prior calendar year, by January 15, 2017. Processors and registered buyers must pay the fees to NMFS using NMFS Web Application by February 15, 2017. Processors and registered buyers have access to this system through a User ID and password issued by NMFS. Instructions for electronic payment will be provided on the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov> and on the observer fee liability invoice to be mailed to each permit holder.

Standard Prices

This notice provides the standard ex-vessel prices for groundfish and halibut species subject to the observer fee in 2016. Data sources for ex-vessel prices are:

- For groundfish other than sablefish IFQ and sablefish accruing against the fixed gear sablefish CDQ reserve, the State of Alaska's Commercial Fishery Entry Commission's (CFEC) gross revenue data, which are based on the Commercial Operator Annual Report (COAR) and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) fish tickets; and
- For halibut IFQ, halibut CDQ, sablefish IFQ, and sablefish accruing against the fixed gear sablefish CDQ reserve, the IFQ Buyer Report that is

submitted annually to NMFS under § 679.5(l)(7)(i).

The standard prices in this notice were calculated using applicable guidance for protecting confidentiality of data submitted to or collected by NMFS. NMFS does not publish any price information that would permit the identification of an individual or business. At least four different vessels must make landings of a species with a particular gear type at a particular port in order for NMFS to publish that price data for that species-gear-port combination. Similarly, at least three different processors in a particular port must purchase a species harvested with a particular gear type in order for NMFS to publish a price for that species-gear-port combination. Price data that is confidential because fewer than four vessels or three processors contributed data to a particular species-gear-port combination has been aggregated to protect confidential data.

Groundfish Standard Ex-Vessel Prices

Table 1 shows the groundfish species standard ex-vessel prices for 2016. These prices are based on the CFEC gross revenue data, which are based on landings data from ADF&G fish tickets and information from the COAR. The COAR contains statewide buying and production information, and is considered the most complete routinely collected information to determine the ex-vessel value of groundfish harvested from waters off Alaska.

The standard ex-vessel prices for groundfish were calculated by adding ex-vessel value from the CFEC gross revenue files for 2012, 2013, and 2014 by species, port, and gear category, and adding the volume (weight) the CFEC gross revenue files for 2012, 2013, and 2014 by species, port, and gear category, and then dividing total ex-vessel value over the 3-year period in each category by total volume over the 3-year period in each category. This calculation results in an average ex-vessel price per pound by species, port, and gear category for the 3-year period. Three gear categories were used for the standard ex-vessel prices: (1) Non-trawl gear, including hook-and-line, pot, jig, troll, and others (Non-Trawl); (2) non-pelagic trawl gear (NPT); and (3) pelagic trawl gear (PTR).

CFEC ex-vessel value data are available in the fall of the year following

the year the fishing occurred. Thus, it is not possible to base ex-vessel fee liabilities on standard prices that are less than 2 years old.

If a particular groundfish species is not listed in Table 1, the standard ex-vessel price for a species group, if it exists in the management area, will be used. If price data for a particular species remained confidential once aggregated to the ALL level, data is aggregated by species group (BSAI Skate; Flathead Sole; GOA Deep-water Flatfish; GOA Shallow-water Flatfish; GOA Skate, Other; and Other Rockfish). Standard prices for the groundfish species groups are shown in Table 2.

If a port-level price does not meet the confidentiality requirements, the data are aggregated by port group. Port-group data for Southeast Alaska (SEAK) and the Eastern GOA excluding Southeast Alaska (EGOAxSE) also are presented separately when price data are available. Port-group data is then aggregated by regulatory area in the GOA (Eastern GOA, Central GOA, and Western GOA) and by subarea in the BSAI (BS subarea and AI subarea). If confidentiality requirements are still not met by aggregating prices across ports at these levels, the prices are aggregated at the level of BSAI or GOA, then statewide (AK) and ports outside of Alaska (OTAK), and finally all ports, including those outside of Alaska ("ALL").

Standard prices are presented separately for non-pelagic trawl and pelagic trawl when non-confidential data is available. NMFS also calculated prices for a "Pelagic Trawl/Non-pelagic Trawl Combined" category that can be used when combining trawl price data for landings of a species in a particular port or port group will not violate confidentiality requirements. Creating this standard price category allows NMFS to assess a fee on 2016 landings of some of the species with pelagic trawl gear based on a combined trawl gear price for the port or port group.

If no standard ex-vessel price is listed for a species or species group and gear category combination in Table 1, Table 2, or Table 3, no fee will be assessed on that landing. Volume and value data for that species will be added to the standard ex-vessel prices in future years, if that data becomes available and display of a standard ex-vessel price meets confidentiality requirements.

TABLE 1—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR GROUND FISH SPECIES FOR 2016 OBSERVER COVERAGE FEE LIABILITY
[Based on volume and value from 2012, 2013, and 2014]

Species ^{1 2}	Port/area ^{3 4}	Non-trawl (\$)	NPT (\$)	PTR (\$)	PTR/NPT (\$)
Alaska Plaice Flounder (133)	Kodiak	—	0.09	—	0.09
	CGOA	—	0.09	—	0.09
	GOA	—	0.09	—	0.09
	AK	—	0.09	—	0.09
	ALL	—	0.09	—	0.09
Arrowtooth Flounder (121)	Kodiak	—	0.06	0.06	—
	CGOA	—	0.06	0.06	—
	GOA	—	0.06	0.06	—
	AK	0.45	0.06	0.06	—
	ALL	0.45	0.06	0.06	—
Black Rockfish (142)	AK	0.48	0.19	—	0.18
Bocaccio Rockfish (137)	SEAK	0.43	—	—	—
	EGOA	0.43	—	—	—
	GOA	0.43	—	—	—
	AK	0.43	—	—	—
	ALL	0.43	—	—	—
Butter Sole (126)	Kodiak	—	0.16	0.16	—
	CGOA	—	0.16	0.16	—
	GOA	—	0.16	0.16	—
	AK	—	0.16	0.16	—
	ALL	—	0.16	0.16	—
Canary Rockfish (146)	Sitka	0.56	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.51	—	—	—
	EGOA	0.51	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.42	—	—	—
	GOA	0.50	—	—	—
	AK	0.50	—	—	—
	ALL	0.50	—	—	—
China Rockfish (149)	SEAK	0.55	—	—	—
	Cordova	0.37	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.37	—	—	—
	Homer	0.53	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.67	—	—	—
	GOA	0.45	—	—	—
	AK	0.45	—	—	—
	ALL	0.45	—	—	—
	Sitka	0.58	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.56	—	—	—
Copper Rockfish (138)	Cordova	0.29	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.29	—	—	—
	Homer	0.38	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.40	—	—	—
	GOA	0.41	—	—	—
	AK	0.41	—	—	—
	ALL	0.41	—	—	—
	Kodiak	—	0.10	0.10	—
	CGOA	—	0.10	0.10	—
	GOA	—	0.10	0.10	—
Dover Sole (124)	AK	—	0.10	0.10	—
	ALL	—	0.10	0.10	—
Dusky Rockfish (172)	Sitka	0.50	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.49	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.29	—	—	—
	Homer	0.39	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.30	0.20	0.20	—
	Seward	0.46	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.31	0.20	0.20	—
	GOA	0.35	0.20	0.22	—
	AK	0.35	0.20	0.22	—
	ALL	0.35	0.20	0.22	—
English Sole (128)	Kodiak	—	0.16	—	0.16
	CGOA	—	0.16	—	0.16
	GOA	—	0.16	—	0.16
	AK	—	0.16	—	0.16
	ALL	—	0.16	—	0.16
Flathead Sole (122)	Kodiak	—	0.16	0.16	—
	CGOA	—	0.16	0.16	—
	GOA	—	0.16	0.10	—
	AK	—	0.16	0.09	—
	ALL	—	0.16	0.09	—

TABLE 1—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR GROUNDFISH SPECIES FOR 2016 OBSERVER COVERAGE FEE LIABILITY—
Continued

[Based on volume and value from 2012, 2013, and 2014]

Species ^{1 2}	Port/area ^{3 4}	Non-trawl (\$)	NPT (\$)	PTR (\$)	PTR/NPT (\$)
Northern Rockfish (136)	Kodiak	0.14	0.20	0.19	—
	CGOA	0.17	0.20	0.19	—
	GOA	0.17	0.20	0.19	—
	AK	0.24	0.20	0.19	—
	ALL	0.24	0.20	0.19	—
Octopus (870)	Homer	0.77	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.56	0.58	0.52	—
	CGOA	0.57	0.58	0.52	—
	WGOA	0.41	—	—	—
	GOA	0.52	0.58	0.52	—
	DH/Unalaska	0.31	—	—	—
	BS	0.30	—	—	—
	BSAI	0.30	—	—	—
	AK	0.51	0.58	0.52	—
	ALL	0.51	0.58	0.52	—
	Hoonah	0.55	—	—	—
	Juneau	0.60	—	—	—
	Ketchikan	0.31	—	—	—
Pacific Cod (110)	Petersburg	0.14	—	—	—
	Sitka	0.43	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.57	—	—	—
	Cordova	0.36	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.35	—	—	—
	Homer	0.35	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.33	0.29	0.27	—
	Seward	0.34	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.34	0.29	0.27	—
	WGOA	0.28	—	—	—
	GOA	—	0.28	0.19	—
	Adak	0.30	—	—	—
	AI	0.30	—	—	—
	DH/Unalaska	0.31	0.29	—	0.29
	BS	0.31	0.28	—	0.28
	BSAI	—	0.28	—	0.28
	Stationary Floating Processor	0.30	—	—	0.27
	AK	0.31	0.28	0.18	—
	ALL	0.31	0.28	0.18	—
	Kodiak	—	0.21	0.23	—
	CGOA	—	0.21	0.23	—
	GOA	—	0.21	0.25	—
	AK	0.33	0.21	0.25	—
	ALL	0.33	0.21	0.25	—
Pollock (270)	Homer	0.34	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.13	0.16	0.16	—
	Seward	0.09	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.14	0.16	0.16	—
	GOA	0.14	0.16	0.16	—
	DH/Unalaska	0.11	0.16	—	0.16
	BS	0.10	0.15	—	0.15
	BSAI	0.10	0.15	—	0.15
	Stationary Floating Processor	—	—	—	0.16
	AK	0.14	0.16	0.16	—
	ALL	0.14	0.16	0.16	—
	Ketchikan	0.46	—	—	—
	Sitka	0.82	—	—	—
Quillback Rockfish (147)	SEAK	0.83	—	—	—
	Cordova	0.27	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.28	—	—	—
	Homer	0.39	—	—	—
	Seward	0.39	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.39	—	—	—
	GOA	0.59	—	—	—
	AK	0.59	—	—	—
	ALL	0.59	—	—	—
	Ketchikan	0.32	—	—	—
	Sitka	0.52	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.37	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.31	—	—	—
Redbanded Rockfish (153)	Homer	0.34	—	—	—

TABLE 1—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR GROUND FISH SPECIES FOR 2016 OBSERVER COVERAGE FEE LIABILITY—
Continued

[Based on volume and value from 2012, 2013, and 2014]

Species ^{1 2}	Port/area ^{3 4}	Non-trawl (\$)	NPT (\$)	PTR (\$)	PTR/NPT (\$)
Redstripe Rockfish (158)	Kodiak	0.23	0.18	—	0.18
	Seward	0.40	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.33	0.18	—	0.18
	GOA	0.36	0.18	—	0.18
	AK	0.36	0.18	—	0.18
	ALL	0.36	0.18	—	0.18
	EGOA	0.46	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.31	—	—	—
	GOA	0.35	—	—	—
	AK	0.35	—	—	—
Rex Sole (125)	ALL	0.35	—	—	—
	Kodiak	—	0.31	0.31	—
	CGOA	—	0.31	0.31	—
	GOA	—	0.31	0.31	—
	AK	—	0.31	0.31	—
Rock Sole (123)	ALL	—	0.31	0.31	—
	Kodiak	—	0.25	0.25	—
	CGOA	—	0.25	0.25	—
	GOA	—	0.25	0.25	—
	AK	—	0.25	0.25	—
Rosethorn Rockfish (150)	ALL	—	0.25	0.25	—
	SEAK	0.45	—	—	—
	EGOA	0.45	—	—	—
	GOA	0.44	—	—	—
	AK	0.44	—	—	—
Rougheye Rockfish (151)	ALL	0.44	—	—	—
	Ketchikan	0.32	—	—	—
	Petersburg	0.27	—	—	—
	Sitka	0.52	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.41	—	—	—
	Cordova	0.25	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.28	—	—	—
	Homer	0.34	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.31	0.23	0.23	—
	Seward	0.40	—	—	—
Sablefish (blackcod) (710)	CGOA	0.35	0.23	0.22	—
	GOA	0.36	0.25	0.22	—
	DH/Unalaska	0.14	—	—	—
	BS	0.14	—	—	—
	BSAI	0.16	—	—	—
	AK	0.36	0.25	0.22	—
	ALL	0.36	0.25	0.22	—
	Kodiak	⁵ n/a	2.74	2.73	—
	CGOA	⁵ n/a	2.74	2.71	—
	GOA	⁵ n/a	2.75	2.71	—
Shortraker Rockfish (152)	AK	⁵ n/a	2.75	2.71	—
	ALL	⁵ n/a	2.75	2.71	—
	Ketchikan	0.31	—	—	—
	Sitka	0.54	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.39	—	—	—
	Cordova	0.37	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.50	—	—	—
	Homer	0.35	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.30	0.23	0.24	—
	Seward	0.40	—	—	—
Silvergray Rockfish (157)	CGOA	0.39	0.23	0.22	—
	GOA	0.40	0.29	0.22	—
	DH/Unalaska	0.38	—	—	—
	BS	0.34	—	—	—
	BSAI	0.34	—	—	—
	AK	0.40	0.29	0.22	—
	ALL	0.40	0.29	0.22	—
	Ketchikan	0.36	—	—	—
	Sitka	0.55	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.44	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.28	—	—	—
	Homer	0.44	—	—	—
	Seward	0.42	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.41	—	—	—

TABLE 1—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR GROUNDFISH SPECIES FOR 2016 OBSERVER COVERAGE FEE LIABILITY—
Continued

[Based on volume and value from 2012, 2013, and 2014]

Species ^{1 2}	Port/area ^{3 4}	Non-trawl (\$)	NPT (\$)	PTR (\$)	PTR/NPT (\$)
Skate, Alaska (703)	GOA	0.43	—	—	0.29
	AK	0.43	—	—	0.29
	ALL	0.43	—	—	0.29
	EGOA	0.40	—	—	—
	GOA	0.41	—	—	—
Skate, Aleutian (704)	AK	0.41	—	—	—
	ALL	0.41	—	—	—
	AK	0.43	—	—	—
Skate, Big (702)	ALL	0.43	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.43	—	—	—
	EGOA	0.42	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.45	0.45	0.45	—
	Seward	0.40	—	—	—
Skate, Longnose (701)	CGOA	0.44	0.45	0.45	—
	GOA	0.44	0.45	0.45	—
	AK	0.44	0.45	0.45	—
	ALL	0.44	0.45	0.45	—
	Petersburg	0.40	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.40	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.41	—	—	—
	Homer	0.36	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.45	0.44	0.44	—
	Seward	0.41	—	—	—
Skate, Other (700)	CGOA	0.44	0.44	0.44	—
	GOA	0.43	0.44	0.44	—
	AK	0.43	0.44	0.44	—
	ALL	0.43	0.44	0.44	—
	Kodiak	0.44	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.47	—	—	—
	GOA	0.44	—	—	—
	Stationary Floating Processor	0.35	—	—	—
	AK	0.37	—	—	—
	ALL	0.37	—	—	—
Squid (875)	Kodiak	—	—	0.06	0.06
	CGOA	—	—	0.08	0.08
	GOA	—	—	0.08	0.08
	AK	—	0.03	0.07	—
	ALL	—	0.03	0.07	—
Starry Flounder (129)	Kodiak	—	0.08	0.08	—
	CGOA	—	0.08	0.08	—
	GOA	—	0.08	0.08	—
	AK	—	0.08	0.08	—
	ALL	—	0.08	0.08	—
Thornyhead Rockfish (Idiots) (143)	Ketchikan	1.18	—	—	—
	Petersburg	1.00	—	—	—
	SEAK	1.09	—	—	—
	Cordova	0.53	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.82	—	—	—
	Homer	0.79	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.64	0.67	—	0.70
	Seward	0.84	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.77	0.67	—	0.70
	WGOA	0.72	—	—	—
	GOA	—	0.67	—	0.70
	AI	0.44	—	—	—
	DH/Unalaska	0.75	—	—	—
	BS	0.73	—	—	—
	AK	0.85	0.67	—	0.70
Tiger Rockfish (148)	ALL	0.85	0.67	—	0.70
	SEAK	0.45	—	—	—
	Cordova	0.25	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.28	—	—	—
	Homer	0.35	—	—	—
	Seward	0.39	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.38	—	—	—
	GOA	0.40	—	—	—
	AK	0.40	—	—	—
	ALL	0.40	—	—	—
Widow Rockfish (156)	Sitka	0.46	—	—	—

TABLE 1—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR GROUNDFISH SPECIES FOR 2016 OBSERVER COVERAGE FEE LIABILITY—
Continued

[Based on volume and value from 2012, 2013, and 2014]

Species ^{1 2}	Port/area ^{3 4}	Non-trawl (\$)	NPT (\$)	PTR (\$)	PTR/NPT (\$)
Yelloweye Rockfish (145)	SEAK	0.46	—	—	—
	EGOA	0.46	—	—	—
	GOA	0.47	—	—	—
	AK	0.47	—	—	—
	ALL	0.47	—	—	—
	Craig	1.44	—	—	—
	Hoonah	0.54	—	—	—
	Ketchikan	1.48	—	—	—
	Petersburg	1.15	—	—	—
	Sitka	1.78	—	—	—
	SEAK	1.61	—	—	—
	Cordova	0.98	—	—	—
	Whittier	0.86	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.95	—	—	—
	Homer	0.79	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.42	0.25	—	0.25
	Seward	0.67	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.65	0.25	—	0.25
	GOA	1.40	0.25	—	0.25
	DH/Unalaska	0.35	—	—	—
Yellowtail Rockfish (155)	BS	0.23	—	—	—
	BSAI	0.23	—	—	—
	AK	1.40	0.25	—	0.25
	ALL	1.40	0.25	—	0.25
	Sitka	0.55	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.55	—	—	—
	EGOA	0.54	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.24	—	—	—
	GOA	0.32	—	—	—
	AK	0.32	—	—	—
	ALL	0.32	—	—	—

— = no landings in last 3 years or the data is confidential

¹ If species is not listed, use price for the species group in Table 2 if it exists in the management area. If no price is available for the species or species group in Table 1, Table 2, or Table 3, no fee will be assessed on that landing. That species will come into standard ex-vessel prices in future years.² For species codes, see Table 2a to 50 CFR part 679.³ Regulatory areas are defined at § 679.2. (AI = Aleutian Islands subarea; AK = Alaska; ALL = all ports including those outside Alaska; BS = Bering Sea subarea; BSAI = Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands; CGOA = Central Gulf of Alaska; EGOA = Eastern Gulf of Alaska; EGOAxSE = Eastern Gulf of Alaska except Southeast Alaska; GOA = Gulf of Alaska; SEAK = Southeast Alaska; WGOA = Western Gulf of Alaska)⁴ If a price is listed for the species, port, and gear type combination, that price will be applied to the round weight equivalent for groundfish landings. If no price is listed for the port and gear type combination, use port group and gear type, or see Table 2 or Table 3.⁵ n/a = ex-vessel prices for sablefish landed with hook-and-line, pot, or jig gear are listed in Table 3 with the prices for IFQ and CDQ landings.TABLE 2—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR GROUNDFISH SPECIES GROUPS FOR 2016 OBSERVER COVERAGE FEE
LIABILITY

[Based on volume and value from 2012, 2013, and 2014]

Species group ¹	Port/area ^{2 3}	Non-trawl (\$)	NPT (\$)	PTR (\$)	PTR/NPT (\$)
BSAI Skate (USKT)	AK	0.43	—	—	—
Flathead Sole (FSOL)	Kodiak	—	0.16	0.16	—
	CGOA	—	0.16	0.16	—
	GOA	—	0.16	0.10	—
	AK	—	0.16	0.09	—
GOA Deep-water Flatfish ⁴ (DFL4)	Kodiak	—	0.10	0.10	—
	CGOA	—	0.10	0.10	—
	GOA	—	0.10	0.10	—
GOA Shallow-water Flatfish ⁵ (SFL1)	Kodiak	—	0.23	0.23	—
	CGOA	—	0.23	0.23	—
	GOA	—	0.23	0.23	—
GOA Skate, Other (USKT)	EGOA	0.40	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.45	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.47	—	—	—
	GOA	0.42	—	—	—
Other Rockfish ^{6 7} (ROCK)	Ketchikan	0.32	—	—	—
	Sitka	0.59	—	—	—
	SEAK	0.48	—	—	—

TABLE 2—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR GROUND FISH SPECIES GROUPS FOR 2016 OBSERVER COVERAGE FEE LIABILITY—Continued

[Based on volume and value from 2012, 2013, and 2014]

Species group ¹	Port/area ^{2 3}	Non-trawl (\$)	NPT (\$)	PTR (\$)	PTR/NPT (\$)
	Cordova	0.79	—	—	—
	Whittier	0.79	—	—	—
	EGOAxSE	0.80	—	—	—
	Homer	0.76	—	—	—
	Kodiak	0.39	0.21	—	0.21
	Seward	0.57	—	—	—
	CGOA	0.58	0.21	0.28	—
	GOA	0.60	0.21	0.29	—
	AI	0.44	—	—	—
	DH/Unalaska	0.75	—	—	—
	BS	0.72	—	—	—
	AK	—	0.21	0.29	—

— = no landings in last 3 years or the data is confidential

¹ If groundfish species is not listed in Table 1, use price for the species group if it exists in the management area. If no price is available for the species or species group in Table 1, Table 2, or Table 3, no fee will be assessed on that landing. That species will come into standard ex-vessel prices in future years.

² Regulatory areas are defined at § 679.2. (AI = Aleutian Islands subarea; AK = Alaska; BS = Bering Sea subarea; CGOA = Central Gulf of Alaska; EGOA = Eastern Gulf of Alaska; EGOAxSE = Eastern Gulf of Alaska except Southeast Alaska; GOA = Gulf of Alaska; SEAK = Southeast Alaska)

³ If a price is listed for the species, port, and gear type combination, that price will be applied to the round weight equivalent for groundfish landings. If no price is listed for the port and gear type combination, use port group and gear type combination.

⁴ “Deep-water flatfish” in the GOA means Dover sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, and deepsea sole.

⁵ “Shallow-water flatfish” in the GOA means flatfish not including “deep-water flatfish,” flathead sole, rex sole, or arrowtooth flounder.

⁶ In the GOA:

“Other rockfish (slope rockfish)” means *Sebastes aurora* (aurora), *S. melanostomus* (blackgill), *S. paucispinis* (bocaccio), *S. goodei* (chillipepper), *S. crameri* (darkblotch), *S. elongatus* (greenstriped), *S. variegatus* (harlequin), *S. wilsoni* (pygmy), *S. babcocki* (redbanded), *S. proriger* (redstripe), *S. zacentrus* (sharpchin), *S. jordani* (shortbelly), *S. brevispinis* (silvergray), *S. diploproa* (splitnose), *S. saxicola* (stripetail), *S. miniatus* (vermillion), *S. reedi* (yellowmouth), *S. entomelas* (widow), and *S. flavidus* (yellowtail).

“Demersal shelf rockfish” means *Sebastes pinniger* (canary), *S. nebulosus* (china), *S. caurinus* (copper), *S. maliger* (quillback), *S. helvomaculatus* (rosethorn), *S. nigrocinctus* (tiger), and *S. ruberrimus* (yelloweye).

“Other rockfish” in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas means “other rockfish (slope rockfish)” and demersal shelf rockfish.

“Other rockfish” in the West Yakutat District of the EGOA means “other rockfish (slope rockfish),” northern rockfish (*S. polypsinis*), and demersal shelf rockfish.

“Other rockfish” in the SEO District of the GOA (and SEAK for Table 2) means “other rockfish (slope rockfish) and northern rockfish (*S. polypsinis*).

⁷ “Other rockfish” in the BSAI includes all *Sebastes* and *Sebastolobus* species except for Pacific ocean perch, northern, shortraker, and rougheye rockfish.

TABLE 3—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR HALIBUT IFQ, HALIBUT CDQ, SABLEFISH IFQ, AND SABLEFISH ACCRUING AGAINST THE FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH CDQ RESERVE FOR THE 2016 OBSERVER FEE LIABILITY

[Based on 2015 IFQ Buyer Report]

Species	Port/Area ¹	Price ² (\$)
Halibut (200) ..	Ketchikan	\$6.59
	Petersburg	6.60
	SEAK	6.61
	Cordova	6.65
	Yakutat	6.47
	EGOAxSE	6.53
	Homer	6.74
	Kenai	7.09
	Kodiak	6.45
	CGOA	6.58
	WGOA	5.44
	BS	5.87
	BSAI	5.81
	AK	6.42
	ALL	6.42
	Ketchikan	3.95
	SEAK	4.06
Sablefish (710).		

TABLE 3—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES FOR HALIBUT IFQ, HALIBUT CDQ, SABLEFISH IFQ, AND SABLEFISH ACCRUING AGAINST THE FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH CDQ RESERVE FOR THE 2016 OBSERVER FEE LIABILITY—Continued

[Based on 2015 IFQ Buyer Report]

Species	Port/Area ¹	Price ² (\$)
	EGOAxSE	3.63
	Homer	3.54
	Kodiak	3.76
	CGOA	3.74
	WGOA	3.28
	BS	4.68
	BSAI	4.52
	AK	3.85
	ALL	3.85

¹ Regulatory areas are defined at § 679.2. (AK = Alaska; ALL = all ports including those outside Alaska; BS = Bering Sea subarea; CGOA = Central Gulf of Alaska; EGOAxSE = Eastern Gulf of Alaska except Southeast Alaska; SEAK = Southeast Alaska; WGOA = Western Gulf of Alaska)

² If a price is listed for the species and port combination, that price will be applied to the round weight equivalent for sablefish landings and the headed and gutted weight equivalent for halibut landings. If no price is listed for the port, use port group.

Halibut and Sablefish IFQ and CDQ Standard Ex-Vessel Prices

Table 3 shows the observer fee standard ex-vessel prices for halibut and sablefish. These standard prices are calculated as a single annual average price, by port or port group. Volume and ex-vessel value data collected on the 2015 IFQ Buyer Report for landings made from October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015, were used to calculate the standard ex-vessel prices for the 2016 observer fee liability for halibut IFQ, halibut CDQ, sablefish IFQ, and sablefish landings that accrue against the fixed gear sablefish CDQ reserve.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: December 10, 2015.

Emily H. Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2015-31520 Filed 12-14-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE353

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS (Assistant Regional Administrator), has made a preliminary determination that the Exempted Fishing Permit that would facilitate the harvest of Atlantic herring research set-aside quota warrants further consideration. The Exempted Fishing Permit would authorize federally permitted Atlantic herring vessels to harvest Atlantic Herring research set-aside quota without possession limit after the possession limit in herring management areas has been reduced to 2,000 lb (907.2 kg) for commercial herring vessels. It would also allow vessels to harvest Atlantic herring research set-aside quota during Area 1A and 1B seasonal closures. Vessels working with researchers for approved projects will need the Exempted Fishing Permits to harvest herring that will generate funds to pay for the research.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed EFPs.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before December 30, 2015.

ADDRESSES: You may submit written comments by any of the following methods:

- *Email:* NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on 2016/2018 Atlantic Herring RSA EFP."

- *Mail:* John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, NE Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside

of the envelope "Comments on 2016/2018 Atlantic Herring RSA EFP."

- *Fax:* (978) 281-9135.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Daniel Luers, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 282-8457, *Daniel.Luers@noaa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) would facilitate herring research set-aside (RSA) compensation fishing in support of project(s) funded under the 2016-2018 herring RSA competition. Proposals are currently under review. One project would examine river herring portside sampling and an avoidance program while the other would investigate mixing of the Gulf of Maine-Georges Bank Atlantic herring resource with the Scotian shelf Atlantic herring resource using genetic analysis techniques. Consistent with previous herring RSA compensation fishing EFPs, vessels would be authorized to harvest herring RSA quota after a herring management area quota has been caught and the fishery is limited to a 2,000 lb (907.2 kg) herring possession limit per trip, as well as allow vessels to harvest RSA quota during the seasonal closures in Management Areas 1A and 1B from January through May and January through April, respectively. Grant recipients will be required to meet all EFP application requirements prior to the issuance of the subject EFPs.

If approved, the applicants may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq*.

Dated: December 10, 2015.

Emily H. Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2015-31519 Filed 12-14-15; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Alaska Region Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Crab Economic Data Reports (EDR)

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

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before February 16, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at *Jjessup@doc.gov*).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to NMFS Alaska Region, Patsy A. Bearden, (907) 586-7008 or *patsy.bearden@noaa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The Crab Rationalization (CR) Program is a limited-access system that allocates crab managed under the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) among harvesters, processors, and coastal communities. The CR Program currently includes a comprehensive economic data collection program requiring participants to complete annual Economic Data Reports (EDRs). These EDRs are intended to aid the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and NMFS in assessing the success of the CR Program and developing amendments to the FMP to mitigate any unintended consequences of the CR Program.

Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) is the Data Collection Agent for the CR Program. The CR Crab EDR program collects annually reported cost, revenue, ownership, and employment data from harvest and processing sector participants in the CR fisheries. This