

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration****49 CFR Part 541**

[Docket No. NHTSA-03-14452; Notice 01]

RIN 2127-AJ00

Preliminary Theft Data; Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Publication of preliminary theft data; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This document requests comments on data about passenger motor vehicle thefts that occurred in calendar year (CY) 2001 including theft rates for existing passenger motor vehicle lines manufactured in model year (MY) 2001. The theft data preliminarily indicate that the vehicle theft rate for CY/MY 2001 vehicles (3.26 thefts per thousand vehicles) increased by 12.8 percent from the theft rate for CY/MY 2000 vehicles (2.89 thefts per thousand vehicles).

Publication of these data fulfills NHTSA's statutory obligation to periodically obtain accurate and timely theft data, and publish the information for review and comment.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before June 16, 2003.

ADDRESSES: All comments should refer to the docket number and notice number cited in the heading of this document and be submitted, preferably with two copies to: U.S. Department of Transportation, Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Docket hours are from 10 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Deborah Mazyck, Office of Planning and Consumer Standards, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Ms. Mazyck's telephone number is (202) 366-0846. Her fax number is (202) 493-2290.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NHTSA administers a program for reducing motor vehicle theft. The central feature of this program is the Federal Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard, 49 CFR part 541. The standard specifies

performance requirements for inscribing or affixing vehicle identification numbers (VINs) onto certain major original equipment and replacement parts of high-theft lines of passenger motor vehicles.

The agency is required by 49 U.S.C. 33104(b)(4) to periodically obtain, from the most reliable source, accurate and timely theft data, and publish the data for review and comment. To fulfill the § 33104(b)(4) mandate, this document reports the preliminary theft data for CY 2001, the most recent calendar year for which data are available.

In calculating the 2001 theft rates, NHTSA followed the same procedures it used in calculating the MY 2000 theft rates. (For 2000 theft data calculations, see 67 FR 53756, August 19, 2002). As in all previous reports, NHTSA's data were based on information provided to the agency by the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The NCIC is a governmental system that receives vehicle theft information from nearly 23,000 criminal justice agencies and other law enforcement authorities throughout the United States. The NCIC data also include reported thefts of self-insured and uninsured vehicles, not all of which are reported to other data sources.

The 2001 theft rate for each vehicle line was calculated by dividing the number of reported thefts of MY 2001 vehicles of that line stolen during calendar year 2001, by the total number of vehicles in that line manufactured for MY 2001, as reported by manufacturers to the Environmental Protection Agency.

The preliminary 2001 theft data show an increase in the vehicle theft rate when compared to the theft rate experienced in CY/MY 2000. The preliminary theft rate for MY 2001 passenger vehicles stolen in calendar year 2001 increased to 3.26 thefts per thousand vehicles produced, an increase of 12.8 percent from the rate of 2.89 thefts per thousand vehicles experienced by MY 2000 vehicles in CY 2000. For MY 2001 vehicles, out of a total of 217 vehicle lines, 68 lines had a theft rate higher than 3.5826 per thousand vehicles, the established median theft rate for MYs 1990/1991. (See 59 FR 12400, March 16, 1994). Of the 68 vehicle lines with a theft rate higher than 3.5826, 56 are passenger car

lines, 12 are multipurpose passenger vehicle lines, and none are light-duty truck lines.

In Table I, NHTSA has tentatively ranked each of the MY 2001 vehicle lines in descending order of theft rate. Public comment is sought on the accuracy of the data, including the data for the production volumes of individual vehicle lines.

Comments must not exceed 15 pages in length (49 CFR part 553.21). Attachments may be appended to these submissions without regard to the 15 page limit. This limitation is intended to encourage commenters to detail their primary arguments in a concise fashion.

If a commenter wishes to submit certain information under a claim of confidentiality, three copies of the complete submission, including purportedly confidential business information, should be submitted to the Chief Counsel, NHTSA, at the street address given above, and two copies from which the purportedly confidential information has been deleted should be submitted to Dockets. A request for confidentiality should be accompanied by a cover letter setting forth the information specified in the agency's confidential business information regulation. 49 CFR part 512.

All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above for this document will be considered, and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address both before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Comments on this document will be available for inspection in the docket. NHTSA will continue to file relevant information as it becomes available for inspection in the docket after the closing date, and it is recommended that interested persons continue to examine the docket for new material.

Those persons desiring to be notified upon receipt of their comments in the rules docket should enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard in the envelope with their comments. Upon receiving the comments, the docket supervisor will return the postcard by mail.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 33101, 33102 and 33104; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THEFT RATES FOR 2001 MODEL YEAR PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLES STOLEN IN CALENDAR YEAR 2001

	Manufacturer	Make/model (line)	Thefts 2001	Production (Mfr's) 2001	2001 Theft rate (per 1000 vehicles produced)
1	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY MPV	248	10,792	22.9800
2	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	DODGE INTREPID	1,442	113,333	12.7236
3	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET METRO	199	15,999	12.4383
4	HONDA	ACURA INTEGRA	148	14,092	10.5024
5	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	PLYMOUTH NEON	400	38,651	10.3490
6	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	DODGE NEON	1,047	101,410	10.3244
7	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	DODGE STRATUS	1,115	109,015	10.2280
8	MAZDA	MIRAGE	447	48,393	9.2369
9	SUZUKI	ESTEEM	152	18,713	8.1227
10	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER LHS	86	11,413	7.5353
11	GENERAL MOTORS	PONTIAC FIREBIRD/TRANS AM/FOR- MULA	149	20,084	7.4188
12	MAZDA	GALANT	729	102,990	7.0784
13	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET CAMARO	193	28,278	6.8251
14	MAZDA	MONTERO	258	38,599	6.6841
15	GENERAL MOTORS	PONTIAC GRAND AM	1,192	182,220	6.5415
16	GENERAL MOTORS	BUICK REGAL	340	52,492	6.4772
17	MAZDA	MONTERO SPORT	402	64,115	6.2700
18	JAGUAR	S-TYPE	126	20,102	6.2680
19	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD ESCORT	536	87,019	6.1596
20	FORD MOTOR CO	LINCOLN LS	256	41,817	6.1219
21	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER 300M	228	37,284	6.1152
22	GENERAL MOTORS	PONTIAC SUNFIRE	445	73,808	6.0292
23	HONDA	ACURA NSX	1	167	5.9880
24	MAZDA	DIAMANTE	77	13,667	5.6340
25	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD MUSTANG	869	155,039	5.6050
26	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER SEBRING	407	73,543	5.5342
27	KIA MOTORS	OPTIMA	134	24,754	5.4133
28	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER CONCORDE	147	28,030	5.2444
29	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET CAVALIER	1,136	217,438	5.2245
30	SUZUKI	VITARA/GRAND	281	53,810	5.2221
31	TOYOTA	COROLLA	1,201	230,246	5.2162
32	NISSAN	ALTIMA	706	137,253	5.1438
33	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET MALIBU	956	186,788	5.1181
34	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER SEBRING CONVERTIBLE ...	200	39,668	5.0418
35	TOYOTA	LEXUS IS	155	30,959	5.0066
36	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET LUMINA	213	42,803	4.9763
37	GENERAL MOTORS	OLDSMOBILE ALERO	548	112,455	4.8731
38	GENERAL MOTORS	CADILLAC DEVILLE	428	87,909	4.8687
39	ISUZU	TROOPER	91	18,818	4.8358
40	KIA MOTORS	RIO	276	57,340	4.8134
41	MAZDA	ECLIPSE	380	79,034	4.8081
42	MAZDA	MILLENNIA	85	17,969	4.7304
43	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET MONTE CARLO	324	68,518	4.7287
44	AUDI	S4/QUATTRO	72	15,301	4.7056
45	TOYOTA	4RUNNER	373	83,052	4.4912
46	GENERAL MOTORS	GMC JIMMY S15/T15	209	46,905	4.4558
47	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER NEON ¹	3	682	4.3988
48	NISSAN	MAXIMA	447	102,260	4.3712
49	HYUNDAI	SONATA	204	46,989	4.3414
50	ROLLS-ROYCE	BENTLEY ARNAGE	2	466	4.2918
51	GENERAL MOTORS	OLDSMOBILE INTRIGUE	168	39,491	4.2541
52	JAGUAR	XK8	19	4,501	4.2213
53	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET PRIZM	209	50,141	4.1682
54	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	JEEP CHEROKEE/GRAND	1,376	338,673	4.0629
55	HONDA	PRELUDE	46	11,329	4.0604
56	GENERAL MOTORS	OLDSMOBILE BRAVADA	44	10,935	4.0238
57	GENERAL MOTORS	PONTIAC BONNEVILLE	175	43,842	3.9916
58	KIA MOTORS	SEPHIA/SPECTRA	296	74,516	3.9723
59	GENERAL MOTORS	PONTIAC GRAND PRIX	466	117,647	3.9610
60	MERCEDES-BENZ	129 (SL-CLASS)	16	4,080	3.9216
61	ISUZU	RODEO	242	62,963	3.8435
62	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET BLAZER S10/T10	629	163,771	3.8407
63	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET CORVETTE	124	33,204	3.7345
64	KIA MOTORS	SPORTAGE	215	57,927	3.7116
65	FORD MOTOR CO	LINCOLN TOWN CAR	255	68,832	3.7047
66	FORD MOTOR CO	MERCURY SABLE	364	98,867	3.6817
67	DAEWOO	LEGANZA	73	20,112	3.6297

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THEFT RATES FOR 2001 MODEL YEAR PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLES STOLEN IN CALENDAR YEAR 2001—Continued

	Manufacturer	Make/model (line)	Thefts 2001	Production (Mfr's) 2001	2001 Theft rate (per 1000 vehicles produced)
68	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD FOCUS	964	267,470	3.6041
69	TOYOTA	CELICA	126	35,540	3.5453
70	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD TAURUS	1,238	351,813	3.5189
71	TOYOTA	LEXUS GS	105	29,858	3.5166
72	GENERAL MOTORS	CADILLAC SEVILLE	88	25,157	3.4980
73	MERCEDES-BENZ	215 (CL-CLASS)	11	3,162	3.4788
74	SUZUKI	SWIFT	15	4,375	3.4286
75	MAZDA	626	173	51,355	3.3687
76	BMW	Z8	3	895	3.3520
77	HYUNDAI	ACCENT	256	77,491	3.3036
78	NISSAN	INFINITI Q45	6	1,846	3.2503
79	DAEWOO	LANOS	69	21,626	3.1906
80	TOYOTA	CAMRY	1,123	353,219	3.1793
81	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET IMPALA	597	188,248	3.1713
82	NISSAN	SENTRA	335	106,549	3.1441
83	FORD MOTOR CO	MERCURY MOUNTAINEER	45	14,439	3.1166
84	TOYOTA	LEXUS LX	31	9,967	3.1103
85	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER PROWLER	5	1,632	3.0637
86	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD EXPLORER	1,050	344,002	3.0523
87	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	DODGE CARAVAN/GRAND	649	218,302	2.9729
88	JAGUAR	XJ8	17	5,960	2.8523
89	HYUNDAI	TIBURON	64	22,713	2.8178
90	GENERAL MOTORS	OLDSMOBILE AURORA	140	50,034	2.7981
91	GENERAL MOTORS	SATURN LS	222	79,562	2.7903
92	NISSAN	FRONTIER PICKUP	286	102,545	2.7890
93	MERCEDES-BENZ	220 (S-CLASS)	85	31,977	2.6582
94	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD RANGER PICKUP	708	266,960	2.6521
95	BMW	3	307	117,873	2.6045
96	DAEWOO	NUBIRA	35	13,450	2.6022
97	VOLVO	C70	14	5,462	2.5632
98	NISSAN	INFINITI G20	18	7,087	2.5399
99	JAGUAR	XKR	4	1,588	2.5189
100	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	JEEP WRANGLER	163	66,366	2.4561
101	HONDA	ACURA 3.2 CL	94	38,679	2.4303
102	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET ASTRO VAN	104	42,909	2.4237
103	GENERAL MOTORS	BUICK PARK AVENUE	88	36,407	2.4171
104	JAGUAR	XJR	3	1,256	2.3885
105	HYUNDAI	SANTA FE	121	51,088	2.3685
106	TOYOTA	LEXUS LS	75	31,738	2.3631
107	HYUNDAI	XG	47	19,894	2.3625
108	GENERAL MOTORS	BUICK LESABRE	327	140,202	2.3323
109	HONDA	S2000	23	9,945	2.3127
110	MAZDA	PROTEGE	110	47,754	2.3035
111	HONDA	PASSPORT	39	16,999	2.2943
112	MERCEDES-BENZ	208 (CLK-CLASS)	34	14,940	2.2758
113	GENERAL MOTORS	GMC SAFARI VAN	33	14,549	2.2682
114	GENERAL MOTORS	BUICK CENTURY	285	126,295	2.2566
115	FORD MOTOR CO	MERCURY COUGAR	58	25,810	2.2472
116	AUDI	TT/QUATTRO	47	21,022	2.2358
117	BMW	7	57	25,548	2.2311
118	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	PLYMOUTH PROWLER	3	1,353	2.2173
119	VOLVO	S40	69	31,145	2.2154
120	JAGUAR	VANDEN PLAS	8	3,617	2.2118
121	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET S10/T10 PICKUP	354	166,708	2.1235
122	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD F150 PICKUP	293	138,481	2.1158
123	HONDA	ACURA 3.5 RL	7	3,312	2.1135
124	VOLVO	S80	53	25,203	2.1029
125	SUBARU	IMPREZA	19	9,205	2.0641
126	TOYOTA	TACOMA PICKUP	330	160,222	2.0596
127	FORD MOTOR CO	MERCURY GRAND MARQUIS	215	104,890	2.0498
128	HYUNDAI	ELANTRA	217	106,418	2.0391
129	GENERAL MOTORS	GMC SONOMA PICKUP	86	42,536	2.0218
130	GENERAL MOTORS	SATURN SC	94	46,557	2.0190
131	TOYOTA	TUNDRA PICKUP	38	19,191	1.9801
132	TOYOTA	RAV4	172	87,108	1.9746
133	GENERAL MOTORS	SATURN SL	214	108,946	1.9643
134	TOYOTA	ECHO	103	52,694	1.9547
135	NISSAN	PATHFINDER	172	89,836	1.9146

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THEFT RATES FOR 2001 MODEL YEAR PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLES STOLEN IN CALENDAR
YEAR 2001—Continued

	Manufacturer	Make/model (line)	Thefts 2001	Production (Mfr's) 2001	2001 Theft rate (per 1000 vehicles produced)
136	BMW	5	76	40,591	1.8723
137	PORSCHE	911	20	10,931	1.8297
138	VOLKSWAGEN	JETTA	281	153,706	1.8282
139	NISSAN	INFINITI I30	70	39,505	1.7719
140	HONDA	CIVIC	603	341,401	1.7663
141	NISSAN	XTERRA	170	96,255	1.7661
142	HONDA	ACCORD	665	379,508	1.7523
143	VOLKSWAGEN	GOLF/GTI	56	32,736	1.7107
144	VOLVO	V40	7	4,109	1.7036
145	SAAB	9-5	39	23,016	1.6945
146	MERCEDES-BENZ	ML	68	40,257	1.6891
147	MAZDA	B-SERIES PICKUP	46	27,490	1.6733
148	AUDI	A4/QUATTRO	58	35,023	1.6561
149	NISSAN	INFINITI QX4	59	36,778	1.6042
150	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER PT CRUISER	279	176,326	1.5823
151	GENERAL MOTORS	CADILLAC CATERA	18	11,568	1.5560
152	GENERAL MOTORS	PONTIAC AZTEK	63	41,111	1.5324
153	TOYOTA	LEXUS ES	54	35,282	1.5305
154	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD WINDSTAR VAN	275	179,687	1.5304
155	VOLVO	V70	25	16,408	1.5236
156	GENERAL MOTORS	SATURN SW	6	3,973	1.5102
157	FORD MOTOR CO	LINCOLN CONTINENTAL	32	21,341	1.4995
158	ISUZU	VEHICROSS	2	1,347	1.4848
159	AUDI	A6/QUATTRO	39	26,592	1.4666
160	PORSCHE	BOXSTER	19	12,979	1.4639
161	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	DODGE DAKOTA PICKUP	230	158,303	1.4529
162	TOYOTA	MR2 SPYDER	10	6,950	1.4388
163	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD ESCAPE	214	151,295	1.4145
164	GENERAL MOTORS	PONTIAC MONTANA VAN	71	50,437	1.4077
165	TOYOTA	LEXUS RX	121	86,206	1.4036
166	MERCEDES-BENZ	170 (SLK-CLASS)	22	16,294	1.3502
167	MERCEDES-BENZ	210 (E-CLASS)	67	49,628	1.3500
168	HONDA	ACURA 3.2 TL	46	34,860	1.3196
169	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET VENTURE VAN	110	85,346	1.2889
170	AUDI	S8/QUATTRO	1	814	1.2285
171	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	DODGE VIPER	2	1,643	1.2173
172	NISSAN	QUEST VAN	37	31,402	1.1783
173	TOYOTA	SIENNA VAN	99	85,794	1.1539
174	VOLKSWAGEN	NEW BEETLE	83	72,350	1.1472
175	MERCEDES-BENZ	203 (C-CLASS)	36	32,931	1.0932
176	VOLKSWAGEN	PASSAT	90	82,870	1.0860
177	VOLKSWAGEN	CABRIO	16	15,479	1.0337
178	TOYOTA	AVALON	79	77,925	1.0138
179	GENERAL MOTORS	CHEVROLET TRACKER	108	108,204	0.9981
180	GENERAL MOTORS	OLDSMOBILE SILHOUETTE VAN	36	36,278	0.9923
181	FORD MOTOR CO	MERCURY VILLAGER VAN	18	18,169	0.9907
182	VOLVO	S60	32	33,335	0.9600
183	SAAB	9-3	20	20,920	0.9560
184	VOLVO	XC	25	27,082	0.9231
185	AUDI	A8/QUATTRO/L	2	2,177	0.9187
186	HONDA	CR-V	99	117,003	0.8461
187	VOLKSWAGEN	EUROVAN/CAMPER	3	3,652	0.8215
188	BMW	M/Z3	15	18,627	0.8053
189	GENERAL MOTORS	CADILLAC ELDORADO	8	10,289	0.7775
190	MAZDA	TRIBUTE	42	55,827	0.7523
191	TOYOTA	HIGHLANDER	52	69,706	0.7460
192	SUBARU	LEGACY/OUTBACK	73	98,623	0.7402
193	HONDA	ACURA MDX	30	41,081	0.7303
194	MAZDA	MX-5 MIATA	12	18,040	0.6652
195	MAZDA	MPV	23	36,356	0.6326
196	SUBARU	FORESTER	37	63,015	0.5872
197	FORD MOTOR CO	FORD LTD/CROWN VICTORIA	50	89,572	0.5582
198	GENERAL MOTORS	SATURN LW	5	9,223	0.5421
199	DAIMLERCHRYSLER	CHRYSLER VOYAGER	78	169,370	0.4605
200	TOYOTA	PRIUS	7	15,773	0.4438
201	AUDI	ALLROAD/QUATTRO	3	6,840	0.4386
202	HONDA	ODYSSEY MINIVAN	54	123,522	0.4372
203	QUANTUM TECH.	CAVALIER	1	2,417	0.4137

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THEFT RATES FOR 2001 MODEL YEAR PASSENGER MOTOR VEHICLES STOLEN IN CALENDAR YEAR 2001—Continued

	Manufacturer	Make/model (line)	Thefts 2001	Production (Mfr's) 2001	2001 Theft rate (per 1000 vehicles produced)
204	HONDA	INSIGHT	1	3,426	0.2919
205	ASTON-MARTIN	DB-7/VANTAGE/COUPE/VOLANTE	0	348	0.0000
206	ROLLS-ROYCE	BENTLEY AZURE	0	100	0.0000
207	ROLLS-ROYCE	BENTLEY CONTINENTAL R	0	22	0.0000
208	ROLLS-ROYCE	BENTLEY CONTINENTAL T	0	8	0.0000
209	GENERAL MOTORS	CADILLAC FUNERAL COACH/HEARSE	0	2,203	0.0000
210	FERRARI	360	0	723	0.0000
211	FERRARI	456	0	64	0.0000
212	FERRARI	550	0	290	0.0000
213	LAMBORGHINI	DB132/144 DIABLO	0	150	0.0000
214	ROLLS-ROYCE	CORNICHE	0	45	0.0000
215	ROLLS-ROYCE	PARK WARD	0	28	0.0000
216	ROLLS-ROYCE	SILVER SERAPH	0	51	0.0000
217	MITSUBISHI	NATIVA ²	0	1,653	0.0000

¹ This vehicle was manufactured under the Chrysler nameplate for sale in a U.S. Territory only (Guam, American Samoa, Puerto Rico) and the Virgin Islands (St. Thomas and St. Croix).

² This vehicle was manufactured for sale only in Puerto Rico and represents the U.S. version of the Montero Sport line.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Associate Administrator for Rulemaking.

[FR Doc. 03-9186 Filed 4-14-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 600

[Docket No. 020424095-2095-01; I.D. 032801B]

RIN 0648-AP25

Fishing Capacity Reduction Program for the Crab Species Covered by the Fishery Management Plan for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Commerce.

ACTION: Reopening proposed rule public comment period.

SUMMARY: This document reopens for 15 days the public comment period for a proposed rule establishing a fishing capacity reduction program for the crab species managed under the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crab Fishery Management Plan. The reopening's intent is to seek additional public comment about, and clarification of, issues in previous public comments about the proposed rule.

DATES: Comments will be accepted until April 30, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Mail or fax written comments to Michael L. Grable. The mailing address is: Michael L. Grable, Chief, Financial Services Division, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282. The fax number is (301) 713-1306. NMFS will not accept e-mail or internet comments.

If a comment involves any aspect of the collection of information requirements, send the comment both to Michael L. Grable and to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Desk Officer, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C. 20503. Anyone who wants the Environmental Assessment, Regulatory Impact Review, and Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis for this proposed rule may obtain it from Michael L. Grable.

Anyone who wants to contact the Restricted Access Management Program (which issues crab species fishing licenses) may do so at this address: Restricted Access Management Program, National Marine Fisheries Service, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau AK 99802-1668. The fax number is (907) 586-7354.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael L. Grable, (301) 713-2390.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Proposed Rule Background

General

NMFS published the proposed rule in the **Federal Register** (67 FR 76329) on December 12, 2002. The rule proposed a fishing capacity reduction program (program) for the crab species (crab) managed under the Bering Sea/Aleutian

Islands King and Tanner Crab Fishery Management Plan.

The rule proposed to reduce crab fishing capacity by paying bidders whose bids the program accepts to surrender their crab fishing interests for revocation or restriction. A loan, repaid by post-reduction crab landing fees, would finance 100% of program cost.

On December 30, 2002, NMFS corrected (67 FR 79550) the proposed rule and, on January 28, 2003, responded to public comment by extending (68 FR 4161) the proposed rule's comment period until February 27, 2003.

NMFS is reopening the comment period for 15 days to seek additional public comment about, and clarification of, issues in previous public comments about the proposed rule.

Reduction Vessel and Reduction Vessel Fishing History

The rule proposed to require each program bidder's reduction fishing interest to include the bidder's:

- (1) Crab reduction permit,
- (2) Reduction vessel fishing history,
- (3) Non-crab reduction permit, and
- (4) Reduction vessel fishing privilege.

Proposed rule § 600.1018(a) defines the first two of these bid elements as follows:

(1) "Crab reduction permit" means a non-interim crab license [under the license limitation program] endorsed for one or more reduction endorsement fisheries, regardless of whether it is also endorsed for the Norton Sound fishery, and

(2) "Reduction vessel fishing history" means, for each bid, the reduction vessel's complete history of documented