

included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: April 13, 1998.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.

[FR Doc. 98-10170 Filed 4-16-98; 8:45 a.m.]

BILLING CODE 3510-12-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Licensing of Private Remote-Sensing Space Systems

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

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, Pub. L. 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before June 16, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Richard Roberts, NOAA/OFA1x1, Station 8118, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301-713-3525, ext. 115).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Pub. L. 102-555 requires that any person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States who operates a private remote-sensing space system must obtain a license. Before issuing such a license NOAA must obtain certain information (see 15 CFR 960) in order for it to determine whether U.S. interests will be protected. NOAA is currently working on a revision of the applicable regulations, but some issues concerning those revisions may not be resolved prior to the expiration of the Office of Management and Budget's Paperwork Reduction Act approval of the existing regulations. This notice announces NOAA's intent to request extension of that approval for the

existing requirements so that they can remain in force until the revised requirements take effect.

II. Method of Collection

No forms are used. Respondents must address the requirements as set forth in the regulation.

III. Data

OMB Number: 0648-0174.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular Submission.

Affected Public: Businesses and other for-profit.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 6.

Estimated Time Per Response: 16 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden

Hours: 96 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost: \$0 (no capital expenditures).

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: April 14, 1998.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.

[FR Doc. 98-10204 Filed 4-16-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 033198B]

RIN 0648-AH77

Atlantic Shark Fisheries; Notice of Availability

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

ACTION: Notice of availability; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the Highly Migratory Species Management Division has prepared a draft consideration of the economic effects and potential alternatives to the 1997 quotas on the Atlantic large coastal shark fishery as ordered by the Middle District Court of Florida, Tampa Division, on February 26, 1998. Written comments are requested from the public.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before April 24, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Rebecca Lent, Chief, Highly Migratory Species Management Division (F/SF1), National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Requests for copies of the draft should be sent to Margo Schulze at the same address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Margo Schulze or Karyl Brewster-Geisz, 301-713-2347; fax: 301-713-1917.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The fishery for Atlantic sharks is managed under the Fishery Management Plan for Sharks of the Atlantic Ocean prepared by NMFS under authority of section 304(g) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), as amended, and was implemented on April 26, 1993, through regulations found at 50 CFR part 678.

On April 2, 1997 (62 FR 16648), NMFS reduced the large coastal shark commercial quota and recreational bag limit by 50 percent as proposed, with an exception for an additional recreational allowance of two Atlantic sharpnose sharks per person per trip. The prohibition on possession of white sharks was modified to allow for a catch-and-release-only recreational fishery. Otherwise, all measures were implemented as proposed. Partly because NMFS received comments that indicated the proposed measures may have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities and because it wanted to ensure that the impacts were thoroughly analyzed, NMFS prepared a Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (FRFA) that assessed the economic impacts of the regulation on small entities engaged in the Atlantic shark fishery in the final rule. In that FRFA, NMFS reaffirmed its conclusion from the proposed rule stage that the 1997 quotas would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities engaged in the large coastal shark fishery.

On May 2, 1997, a coalition of commercial shark fishermen, dealers, and organizations sued the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) to set aside the 1997 commercial shark quotas based on allegations of uncertainty in the data used in stock assessments, on lack of international management, and on NMFS' determination that there would be no significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities engaged in the Atlantic shark fishery. On February 27, 1998, Judge Steven D. Merryday, U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division, issued an amended order that found "that the Secretary acted within his regulatory discretion in setting the quotas but failed to conduct a proper analysis to determine the quota's economic effect on small businesses" (p. 1). Judge Merryday ordered that the agency submit further analyses on or before May 15, 1998, and retained jurisdiction over the case pending review of the analyses. The quotas are maintained until further order of the Court.

The draft consideration of the economic effects and potential alternatives to the 1997 quotas on the Atlantic large coastal shark fishery responds to the judicial order. Public comment is requested on the assumptions, analysis, and conclusions in the draft document. NMFS must submit the final document to the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division, on or before May 15, 1998.

NMFS is soliciting comments on what factors (e.g., percentage reduction in gross revenues, one-time total reduction in gross revenues), singly or in aggregate, would force a participant to cease operations in one fishery or in all fisheries, and where displaced fishing effort might be directed as a result of regulations in the Atlantic shark fishery. NMFS is also soliciting comments and data on the costs of re-rigging from gears used in the Atlantic shark fishery to participate in other fisheries.

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

Dated: April 13, 1998.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

[FR Doc. 98-10242 Filed 4-14-98; 2:44 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 980401083-8083-01 ; I.D. 021398C]

RIN 0648-ZA36

Financial Assistance for Research and Development Projects in the Northeastern Coastal States; Marine Fisheries Initiative (MARFIN)

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

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that funding will be available to assist persons in carrying out research and development projects that optimize the use of fisheries in the Northeastern Coastal States, focusing on the New England region. Priority funding consideration in 1998 is given to projects involving the assimilation and analysis of economic, social, and cultural information to assist in the formulation of marine fishery management decisions. NMFS issues this notice describing the conditions under which applications will be accepted and selected for funding.

DATES: Applications for funding under this program will be accepted between April 17, 1998 and 5 p.m. eastern daylight time on May 18, 1998. Applications received after that time will not be considered for funding.

ADDRESSES: Send applications to: Harold C. Mears, Director, State, Federal & Constituent Programs Office, Northeast Regional Office, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Copies of Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW) Reports are available from: Helen Mustafa, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, NMFS, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026. No facsimile application will be accepted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Harold C. Mears, 978-281-9243.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Authority

The Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) is authorized under 15 U.S.C. 713c-3 to conduct any biological, technological, or other research pertaining to American fisheries and, under 16 U.S.C. 742f, to take such steps as may be required for the development, advancement, management, conservation, and protection of the fisheries resources.

II. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

This program is described in the "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance" (CFDA), under program number 11.433, Marine Fisheries Initiative.

III. Program Description

MARFIN financial assistance began in FY 1986 in the NMFS Southeast Region and is being expanded to New England for the first time in FY 1998. MARFIN is a competitive Federal assistance program that promotes and endorses programs which seek to optimize benefits from U.S. marine fishery resources through cooperative research and development efforts. Projects to be funded under the Northeastern MARFIN Program are envisioned as multi-sector partnerships to complement the goals and objectives of the NOAA Fisheries Strategic Plan, a copy of which is available from the Northeast Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**). The Plan's elements include shared stewardship responsibilities relating to sustainable fisheries, recovered protected species, and healthy living marine resource habitat. Applications from multiple cooperating applicants that address conservation and management needs over the broad scope of a fishery or fisheries are encouraged.

Overall MARFIN emphasis will be placed upon funding projects that have the greatest probability of recovering, maintaining, improving, or developing fisheries; improving the understanding of factors affecting recruitment success; and/or generating increased values and opportunities for commercial and recreational marine fishery industries. During this first year of the Northeastern MARFIN Program, priority funding consideration will be given to projects involving the assimilation and analysis of social and cultural information to assist in the formulation of marine fishery management decisions. Projects will be evaluated as to the likelihood of achieving these benefits through both short-term and long-term research efforts, with consideration of the magnitude of the eventual economic or social benefits that may be realized. However, short-term projects which emphasize immediate benefits will receive priority consideration.

IV. Funding Availability

This solicitation announces that funding of approximately \$500,000 will be available in FY 1998. There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all approved projects. Publication of this