

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Crab Rationalization (CR) Program: Annual Report**

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 June 11, 2013.

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 Patsy A. Bearden, (907) 586-7008 or Patsy.Bearden@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**I. Abstract**

This request is for a new information collection.

Since implementation of the Crab Rationalization (CR) Program (prior to the 2005–2006 season), critics of the program have pointed to high lease rates, fleet consolidation, absentee quota share (QS) ownership, and changes in crew compensation as some of the program's greatest shortcomings.

At its December 2011 meeting, the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (Council) requested and received a report from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reviewing the performance of the CR Program during its first 5 years. Based on the report and public testimony, the Council identified certain aspects of the program that need additional attention. The Council requested a discussion paper concerning certain measures from CR cooperatives that might promote acquisition of QS by crew and other active participants and promote equitable crew compensation. The Council specifically requested that the

paper examine the “best practice” requirements for cooperative agreements. The paper was presented to the Council at the February 2013 meeting.

After receiving the presentation of the paper, the Council passed a motion in February 2013 requesting that each cooperative in the CR Program voluntarily provide an annual report to the Council to describe the measures the cooperative is taking to increase the transfer of quota share to active participants and crew members. While the high flexibility allowed cooperatives in use of their IFQ has permitted QS holders to achieve operational efficiencies, it has also allowed for inactive QS holders and inequitable crew compensation. Holdings of inactive QS holders may limit the amount of QS on the market. One solution may be to require that any cooperative member must meet an active participation requirement.

The annual report would also describe measures the cooperative is taking to lower currently high lease rates and to increase currently low crew compensation. The high lease rates in the fisheries may contribute to the decline in revenues to persons who actively participate in the fisheries as vessel owners and crew. Lower lease rates may allow for more of the fisheries' revenues to be realized by vessel owners and crews. Crews in the crab fisheries are typically paid a share (or percentage) of adjusted vessel revenues, with adjustments made for normal vessel expenses, such as bait and fuel. Since implementation of the CR Program, many vessel operators have also made adjustments for QS lease payments. To limit the effects of the leasing market and to protect crews from the financial impacts of high lease rates, the amount of any lease payments charged to crews could be limited or capped.

The annual report should describe the effectiveness of the measures implemented through the cooperatives and the estimated level of member participation in any voluntary measures, and should include supporting information and data. These reports are to be provided to the Council at its October meeting.

II. Method of Collection

Respondents have a choice of either electronic or paper forms. Methods of submittal include email, mail, and facsimile transmission of paper forms.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: None.
Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (request for a new collection).

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 10.

Estimated Time per Response: CR Cooperative Annual Report, 10 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 100.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$50 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

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 8, 2013.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2013–08568 Filed 4–11–13; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Processed Products Family of Forms**

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 June 11, 2013.

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 Melissa Yench, (301) 427-8193 or melissa.yench@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for extension of a current information collection.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) annually collects information from seafood and industrial fishing processing plants on the volume and value of their processed fishery products and their monthly employment figures. NOAA also collects monthly information on the production of fish meal and oil. The information gathered is used by NOAA in the economic and social analyses developed when proposing and evaluating fishery management actions.

II. Method of Collection

In the current survey, NOAA Fisheries provides each processor with a pre-printed survey form that includes the products produced by that processor in the previous year. The processor only needs to fill in the quantity of product, value of product, monthly employment, and add any new products. New firms to the survey are provided blank forms. Responses are submitted by mail, via postage-paid envelopes provided by NOAA Fisheries.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0018.

Form Number: NOAA Forms 88-13, 88-13C.

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

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 855.

Estimated Time per Response: 30 minutes for an Annual Processed Products Report and 15 minutes for a Fishery Products Report Fish Meal and Oil, Monthly.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 440.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

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 8, 2013.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2013-08569 Filed 4-11-13; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC597

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, Northeast Region, NMFS (Assistant Regional Administrator), has made a preliminary determination that an exempted fishing permit application contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This exempted fishing permit would facilitate compensation fishing under the monkfish Research Set-Aside Program by exempting vessels from monkfish days-at-sea possession limits. The compensation fishing is in support of a 2012 Monkfish Research Set-Aside project that is attempting to validate monkfish aging methods. The project is being conducted by the University of

Massachusetts, Dartmouth, School for Marine Science and Technology.

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

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 29, 2013.

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

- *Email:* nero.efp@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line "Comments on SMAST Monkfish RSA EFP."

- *Mail:* John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on SMAST monkfish RSA EFP."

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jason Berthiaume, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9177.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: To conduct compensation fishing in support of the project, SMAST initially submitted an application for an EFP on April 20, 2012, requesting exemptions from the monkfish DAS possession limits. However, due to complications resulting from the listing of Atlantic sturgeon under the Endangered Species Act, an EFP was not issued. The applicant has since modified their EFP application by stating that vessels would only fish under the EFP in depths greater than 50 fathoms (91 m), where Atlantic sturgeon interactions are extremely rare. The revised application was submitted on March 18, 2013. Twenty-five vessels have been identified by the applicant to conduct monkfish compensation fishing under the requested EFP. The vessels conducting the compensation fishing would use standard commercial gillnet gear.

Monkfish EFPs that waive possession limits were first issued in 2007, and each year thereafter through 2011. The EFPs were approved to increase operational efficiency and to optimize research funds generated from research set-aside (RSA) DAS. To ensure that the amount of monkfish harvested by vessels operating under the EFPs was similar to the amount of monkfish that was anticipated to be harvested under the 500 RSA DAS set-aside by the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, NMFS associated 3,600 lb (1,633 kg) of whole monkfish per RSA DAS. This amount of monkfish was the equivalent of a double