

0648-0743 (Alaska Notification of Intent to Process Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod) will be merged into this collection. Under that collection, the City Manager of Adak and the City Administrator of Atka notify NMFS of their city's intent to process Pacific cod in the upcoming year.

II. Method of Collection

Paper logbooks and paper and electronic reports are required from participants. Methods of submittal include mail, Internet, and facsimile transmission of paper forms.

The notification from the City Manager of Adak and the City Administrator of Atka of their city's intent to process Pacific cod must be submitted by certified mail through the United States Postal Service.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0213.

Form Number(s): None.

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

Affected Public: Individuals or households; business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 606.

Estimated Time per Response: 35 minutes per active response and 5 minutes per inactive response for Catcher Vessel Longline and Pot Gear DFL; 18 minutes for active response and 5 minutes for inactive response for Catcher Vessel Trawl Gear DFL; 7 minutes for Mothership Check-in/Check-out Report; 50 minutes per active response and 5 minutes per inactive response for Catcher/processor Longline and Pot Gear DCPL; 5 minutes for Shoreside Processor Check-in/Check-out Report; 20 minutes for Product Transfer Report; 14 minutes for Vessel Activity Report; and 30 minutes for Notification of Intent to Process Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod (currently approved under 0648-0743).

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 15,692 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$9,536 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: September 14, 2017.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017-19887 Filed 9-18-17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XF657

Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management 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, has made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) renewal application from the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation (CFRF) contains all of the required information and warrants further consideration. This permit would exempt participating commercial fishing vessels from Federal lobster escape vent, trap limit, and trap tag regulations, as well as restrictions on temporary possession of egg-bearing and v-notched female and sublegal-sized juvenile lobsters, to facilitate research on the abundance and distribution of juvenile American lobster and Jonah crab along the northwest Atlantic coast. Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative 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 October 4, 2017.

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 CFRF Lobster Study Fleet EFP."

- *Mail:* John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on CFRF Lobster Study Fleet EFP."

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cynthia Hanson, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9180, Cynthia.Hanson@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation submitted a complete application to renew an existing Exempted Fishing Permit on August 10, 2017, to conduct fishing activities that the regulations would otherwise restrict. The EFP would authorize 18 vessels to conduct a study using ventless traps to survey the abundance and distribution of juvenile American lobster and Jonah crab in regions and times of year not covered by traditional surveys. Overall, this EFP proposes to use a total of 54 ventless lobster traps throughout lobster management areas 2, 3, 4, and 5; covering statistical areas 514, 515, 521, 522, 525, 526, 533, 534, 537, 538, 539, 541, 542, 543, 561, 562, 613, 615, 616, 622, 623, 624, 626, 627, 628, 629, 632, 633, 634, 636, 637, 638, and 640. Maps depicting these areas are available on request. The study is designed to aid and inform management by addressing the questions of changing reproduction and recruitment dynamics of lobster, and developing a foundation of knowledge for the emergent Jonah crab fishery.

Funding for this study has been awarded through the Campbell Foundation and the Saltonstall-Kennedy Grants Program (Grant #NA17NMF4270208). For this research, CFRF is requesting exemptions from the following Federal lobster regulations:

1. Gear specification requirements in 50 CFR 697.21(c) to allow for closed escape vents and smaller trap mesh and entrance heads;

2. Trap limit requirements, as listed in § 697.19, for areas 2, 3, 4 and 5, to be exceeded by 3 additional traps per fishing vessel for a total of 54 additional traps;

3. Trap tag requirements, as specified in § 697.19(j), to allow for the use of untagged traps (though each

experimental trap will have the participating fisherman's identification attached); and

4. Possession restrictions in §§ 697.20(a), 697.20(d), and 697.20(g) to allow for temporary possession of juvenile, v-notched, and egg-bearing lobsters for onboard biological sampling.

If the EFP is approved, this research would take place during the regular fishing activity of the participating 18 federally permitted commercial fishing vessels: 6 "inshore" vessels in lobster management area 2 and 12 "offshore" vessels in lobster management areas 3, 4, and 5. Each participating vessel would have up to three modified traps attached to a standard, Atlantic Large Whale-compliant trap trawl. No more than 54 total modified traps would be in the water at any time. Modifications to conventional lobster traps used in this study include a closed escape vents, single parlors, and smaller mesh sizes and entrance heads, all to allow for the capture of juvenile lobsters and Jonah crabs. Sampling would occur during regular fishing activity on each vessel weekly in area 2, and every 10 days in the other areas.

During sampling, all lobsters and Jonah crabs will be counted, sexed, and measured. Other biological information will be recorded on both lobster and Jonah crab catch, including shell hardness and presence of eggs. The possession exemptions are required to temporarily hold catch onboard for biological sampling before animals are promptly returned to the sea. No catch of any species from experimental traps will be landed for sale. All data collected will be made available to state and Federal management agencies to improve and enhance the available data for these two crustacean species.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the study period. 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: September 14, 2017.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

[FR Doc. 2017-19925 Filed 9-18-17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Individual Fishing Quotas for Pacific Halibut and Sablefish in the Alaska Fisheries

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 November 20, 2017.

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 pracomments@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Stephanie Warpinski, (907) 586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for revision and extension of a currently approved information collection.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) established the Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program to improve the long-term productivity of the sablefish and Pacific halibut fisheries by further promoting the conservation and management objectives of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.* (with respect to sablefish) and the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982 (with respect to Pacific halibut) while retaining the character and distribution of the fishing fleets as much as possible. The IFQ Program includes several provisions, such as ownership caps and vessel use caps that protect small harvesters and processors, part-time participants, and entry-level participants that otherwise could be adversely affected by excessive consolidation.

The IFQ Program also includes other restrictions to prevent the halibut and sablefish fisheries from domination by large boats or by any particular vessel class. NMFS designed the requirements to maintain a predominantly owner-operated fishery, which was a key characteristic of the halibut and sablefish fisheries prior to the implementation of the IFQ Program. The IFQ Program provides each fisherman an IFQ that can be used any time during the open season to allow each fisherman to set his/her own pace and fishing effort.

Under the IFQ Program, quota share (QS) represents a harvesting privilege for a person. Annually, NMFS issues IFQ to QS holders to harvest specified poundage. The specific amount of IFQ held by a person is determined by the number of QS units held, the total number of QS units issued in a specific regulatory area, and the total pounds of sablefish or halibut allocated for the IFQ fisheries in a particular year. Fishermen may harvest the IFQ over the entire fishing season, which extends approximately from March through November 15.

The IFQ Manual Landing Report form will be removed from this information collection. This form is approved under OMB Control Number 0648-0515 (Alaska Interagency Electronic Reporting System (IERS)) and will remain in that collection.

II. Method of Collection

"Fillable" forms and applications are available from the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries-applications>, except for those forms completed by NOAA Office of Law Enforcement officers via the telephone. These forms and applications may be completed on the computer by the participant, downloaded, printed, and faxed to NMFS.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0272.

Form Number(s): None.

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

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations; Individuals or households; Not-for-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,639.

Estimated Time per Response:

Application for Eligibility to receive QS/IFQ (TEC), QS holder form (Identification of Ownership Interest), Application for Transfer of QS/IFQ (includes sweep-up); Application for Military Transfer, and Application for