

departure time, and transit through a protected species zone per 50 CFR 665.803. Other fisheries are required to submit notifications of trip return, unloading, or sales reports per regulations in multiple Subparts of 50 CFR 665.

II. Method of Collection

Respondents will report their catch using paper logbooks or electronic logbooks. Methods of submittal include submission by mail or facsimile for paper logbooks, and via the vessel monitoring system or online for electronic logbook data. Notifications may be made by phone or email.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0214.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular (Revision of a currently approved collection of information).

Affected Public: Individuals or households, and small businesses.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 667.

Estimated Time per Response: From 5 to 35 minutes per report or notification, depending on type; average 16 minutes per response.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 6,926.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$663.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

Legal Authority: 50 CFR 665.

IV. Request for Comments

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Evaluate ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this information collection request. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal

identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Sheleen Dumas,

Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Commerce Department.

[FR Doc. 2021–26950 Filed 12–13–21; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XB577]

Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Exempted Fishing Permit Applications

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Regional Administrator, West Coast Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that applications received from Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) sponsors to renew the Electronic Monitoring EFP program warrant further consideration. NMFS requests public comment on the applications.

DATES: Comments must be received by December 29, 2021.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA–NMFS–2021–0115, by the following method:

- **Electronic Submissions:** Submit all public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov and enter NOAA–NMFS–2021–0115 in the Search box. Click on the “Comment” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. The EFP applications will be available under Supporting and Related Materials through the same link.

- **Instructions:** Comments must be submitted by the above method to ensure that the comments are received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information

(e.g., name, address, etc.) submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Justin Kavanaugh, West Coast Region, NMFS, (206) 526–4140, justin.kavanaugh@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action is consistent with Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan and the regulations implementing the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act at 50 CFR 600.745, which state that EFPs may be used to authorize fishing activities that would otherwise be prohibited.

On January 2, 2015 (80 FR 30), NMFS announced notice of receipt of four EFP applications to test electronic monitoring (EM) in lieu of human observers. NMFS approved the EFPs in 2015 and renewed them annually in subsequent years through 2021, in order to further test the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of the EM EFP program.

On June 28, 2019 (84 FR 31146), at the recommendation of the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), NMFS published a final rule that authorized the use of EM in place of human observers to meet requirements for 100-percent at-sea monitoring for catcher vessels in the groundfish trawl catch share fishery (Trawl Rationalization Program). EM video systems are used to record catch and discards by the vessel crew while at sea. Vessel operators are responsible for recording catch and discards in a logbook, which is then used to debit individual fishing quota (IFQ) accounts and cooperative allocations. Recently, the Council recommended, and NMFS implemented, a delay to the start of the regulatory program (86 FR 55525; October 6, 2021). The Council recommended the renewal of the EM EFPs during this delay to provide more time for industry and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) to test a model for industry to fund PSMFC for review of video from their fishing trips and to further evaluate the costs of the regulatory program. PSMFC has been reviewing video data from the experimental EM EFP program, funded by NMFS, since 2015.

NMFS received applications to renew the EM EFPs for 2022 and 2023. A summary of each EFP application is provided below.

- *California Groundfish Collective EM EFP*: In partnership with the Nature Conservancy, eligible vessels participating in the Collective would further test the feasibility of using at-sea EM for vessels using fixed gear or bottom trawl gear types. Fixed gear will operate under maximized retention and bottom trawl gear will operate under optimized retention. All fishing will be conducted south of Cape Mendocino, CA. Fishing may target all species authorized by the Trawl Rationalization Program. The applicants have not requested any exemptions from quota limits, or gear or area restrictions, and all catch will be covered by the vessels' IFQ, Individual Bycatch Quota (IBQ), or cooperative allocation. According to the applicants, the EFP renewal aims to achieve five goals:

1. Identify individual and overall cost components of implementing EM on fixed gear and bottom trawl vessels.
2. Establish best practices for discard control points on bottom trawl vessels using optimized retention.
3. Establish best practices for discard protocols, particularly for non-IFQ species and low-attainment IFQ species that are identifiable.
4. Identify improvements to EM systems and protocols to inform regulations that will allow for the use of EM.
5. Inform determination of final steps to implement EM for accountability in a way that will provide economic relief and operational flexibility to the groundfish IFQ program while maintaining individual accountability and the integrity of the IFQ program.

- *Fixed Gear EM EFP*: Under this EFP renewal, eligible fixed gear vessels with a trawl-endorsed groundfish limited entry permit assignment would continue to test the economic and operational feasibility of using EM in lieu of human observers for 100 percent at-sea monitoring of groundfish IFQ trips. The applicants seek to lower operating costs and identify more flexible catch handling methods under the renewed EFP. Applicants will target species authorized by the Trawl Rationalization Program, specifically sablefish (North and South of 36 degrees) off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. The applicants have not requested any exemptions from quota limits, or gear or area restrictions, and all catch will be covered by the vessels' IFQ, IBQ, or cooperative allocation.

- *Trawl Gear EM EFP*: The Midwater Trawlers Cooperative and United Catcher Boats seek to continue testing the cost-effectiveness and operational efficiency of using EM in lieu of human

observers while still providing the required 100 percent monitoring of catch and discards, for at-sea mothership catcher vessels and vessels delivering shoreside. Additionally, the application incorporates the midwater non-whiting and bottom trawl gears for EM EFP trips. The use of EM for bottom trawl gear was previously evaluated under the Leipzig EM EFP, which first began in 2015. Under the new sponsorship, bottom trawl EM trips would be tested under this overarching EFP. Fishing may occur in all times and locations, using all gear types, and targeting species authorized by the Trawl Rationalization Program. The applicants have not requested any exemptions from quota limits, or gear or area restrictions, and all catch will be covered by the vessels' IFQ, IBQ, or cooperative allocation.

The Regional Administrator has made a preliminary determination that the applications described above contain all of the required information and constitute an activity appropriate for further consideration. Following the conclusion of the public comment period and review of public comment, NMFS may approve and issue permits for the EFP projects. If approved, NMFS intends to issue the permits for two years, 2022 and 2023, without issuing another **Federal Register** notice. NMFS would issue the permits for the EFP project to the vessel owner or designated representative as the "EFP holder." NMFS intends to use an adaptive management approach in which NMFS may revise requirements and protocols to achieve the EM EFP goals and improve the program without issuing another **Federal Register** notice, provided that the modifications fall within the scope of the impacts of the original EFP.

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

Dated: December 8, 2021.

Ngagne Jafnar Gueye,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 2021-26959 Filed 12-13-21; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; International Work Sharing Program

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of information collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, invites comments on the extension and revision of an existing information collection: 0651-0079 (International Work Sharing Program). The purpose of this notice is to allow 60 days for public comment preceding submission of the information collection to OMB.

DATES: To ensure consideration, comments regarding this information collection must be received on or before February 14, 2022.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments by any of the following methods. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

- *Email*: InformationCollection@uspto.gov. Include "0651-0079 comment" in the subject line of the message.

- *Federal Rulemaking Portal*: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

- *Mail*: Kimberly Hardy, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Request for additional information should be directed to Michael Arguello, International Worksharing Planning and Implementation, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450; by telephone at 571-270-7876; or by email at Michael.Arguello@uspto.gov with "0651-0079 comment" in the subject line. Additional information about this information collection is also available at <http://www.reginfo.gov> under "Information Collection Review."

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) established a Work Sharing Pilot Program in