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[FR Doc. 2023–21170 Filed 9–27–23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DR–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XD406]

Marine Mammals; File No. 27424

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Point Blue Conservation Science, 3820 Cypress Drive No. 11, Petaluma, CA 94954, (Responsible Party: Grant Ballard, Ph.D.), has applied in due form for a permit to conduct research on five species of pinnipeds.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or email comments must be received on or before October 30, 2023.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by selecting “Records Open for Public Comment” from the “Features” box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 27424 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov.

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include File No. 27424 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Courtney Smith, Ph.D., or Shasta McClenahan, Ph.D., (301) 427–8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 *et seq.*).

The applicant requests a 5-year scientific research permit to study and monitor population trends, health, diet, ecology, and physiology of pinnipeds in the greater Gulf of the Farallones and San Francisco Bay region of California. Up to 210 northern elephant seals (*Mirounga angustirostris*) and 500 northern fur seals (*Callorhinus ursinus*) may be captured annually for marking, morphometrics, and biological sampling. An additional 1,355 elephant seals may be marked and swabbed without capture. Up to 1,500 harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*), 800 northern elephant seals, 5,320 California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), 155 Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*; Eastern distinct population segment), and 1,500 northern fur seals may be taken or unintentionally harassed annually during ground or unmanned aircraft system surveys, for counts, observation, and scat collection. The applicant also requests up to five unintentional mortalities of northern elephant seals over the duration of the permit, with no more than two annually.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), an initial determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, NMFS is forwarding copies of the application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: September 22, 2023.

Amy Sloan,

Acting Division Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2023–21225 Filed 9–27–23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Electronic Logbook for the Commercial Shrimp Fishery in the Gulf of Mexico

The Department of Commerce will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, on or after the date of publication of this notice. We invite the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public’s reporting burden. Public comments were previously requested via the **Federal Register** on June 9, 2023, during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

Agency: National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

Title: Electronic Logbook for the Commercial Shrimp Fishery in the Gulf of Mexico.

OMB Control Number: 0648–0543.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular submission—extension of a current information collection.

Number of Respondents: 610.

Average Hours per Response: 2 hours.

Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,220.

Needs and Uses: This request is for extension of a current information collection. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) authorizes the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) to prepare and amend fishery management plans for any fishery in waters under its jurisdiction. NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) manages the commercial shrimp fishery in Federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) under the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf. The electronic logbook (ELB) regulations for the Gulf shrimp fishery may be found at 50 CFR 622.51(a)(2). The ELB is a device that records the position of the vessel every ten minutes. The tracks of the vessels can be examined to determine when and where shrimp trawling is occurring.

As of May 1, 2023, there are approximately 1,319 valid or renewable Federal permits to commercially harvest shrimp from the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the Gulf. Monitoring shrimp vessels, operating together with many other fishing vessels of differing sizes, gears types used, and fishing capabilities, is made even more challenging by seasonal variability in shrimp abundance and price, and the broad geographic distribution of the fleet. ELBs provide a precise means of estimating the amount of shrimp fishing effort. Using ELBs to estimate fishing effort serves an important role to help estimate bycatch in the Gulf shrimp fleet.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: Twice Annually (every 6 months).

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain or Retain a Service or Benefit.

Legal Authority: Fishing Regulation 50 CFR 622.51(a)(2).

This information collection request may be viewed at www.reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function and entering either the title of the collection or the OMB Control Number 0648–0543.

Sheleen Dumas,

Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, Commerce Department.

[FR Doc. 2023–21176 Filed 9–27–23; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; NMFS Alaska Region Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Program

AGENCY: National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of information collection, request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

DATES: To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before November 27, 2023.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at NOAA.PRA@noaa.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 0648–0445 in the subject line of your comments. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Gabrielle Aberle, National Marine Fisheries Service, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau AK 99802–1668, or 907–586–7356.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS), Alaska Regional Office, is requesting extension of a currently approved information collection for the NMFS Alaska Region Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Program. There are no proposed changes to this information collection.

NMFS requires the owners and operators of selected vessels participating in federally managed groundfish and crab fisheries off Alaska to obtain, install, and maintain an operational, NMFS-approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). VMS units automatically transmit the location of a vessel several times per hour using a Global Positioning System satellite. The VMS unit is passive and automatic, requiring no reporting effort by the vessel operator. A communications service provider receives the transmission and relays it to NMFS Office for Law Enforcement (OLE).

Tracking vessel location using VMS is required to monitor compliance with area-specific catch allocations, to monitor compliance with requirements to redeploy or remove fishing gear from commercial fishing grounds, and to monitor compliance with complicated time and area closures in the Gulf of

Alaska (GOA) and Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) designed to protect Steller sea lion or essential fish habitat. The VMS requirements are found at 50 CFR parts 679 and 680.

VMS is an essential component of monitoring and management for complicated, geographically widespread fishing closures. Given the large size and remoteness of the area in which Alaska fisheries occur, and the limited enforcement infrastructure available, determining a vessel's location depends crucially on VMS reports. When a VMS track is examined, information can be inferred about whether a vessel is actively fishing, the type of gear being used, and the fisheries that are open. NMFS uses information from VMS to identify where vessels are operating, to organize patrols so as to increase the number of fishing vessels visually examined, or to focus examination of vessels of greatest concern, and as evidence in prosecutions.

II. Method of Collection

Automatic GPS position reporting starts after VMS transceiver installation and power activation on board the vessel. The unit is pre-configured and tested for NMFS VMS operations. The VMS unit is passive and automatic, requiring no reporting effort by the vessel operator.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0445.

Form Number(s): None.

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

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

Estimated Number of Respondents: 550.

Estimated Time per Response: VMS installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting, 12 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 2,476 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$812,668.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain or Retain Benefits.

Legal Authority: 16 U.S.C.1801 *et seq.*; 16 U.S.C. 773–773k.

IV. Request for Comments

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department/Bureau 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,