

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before April 4, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5027, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW, Washington DC 20230 (or via Internet at LEngelme@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Richard A. Pearson, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930, 978-281-9279.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) is currently considering management alternatives for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) multispecies fishery for inclusion in Framework Adjustment 33 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Two of the potential management measures have collection-of-information requirements associated with them.

These are the Western Gulf of Maine (WGOM) Restricted Fishery Program and the Multispecies Party/Charter Closed Area Exemption Certificate. These are described here.

Western GOM Restricted Fishery Program.

One of the management measures proposes to establish a new declaration that would allow vessel owners to annually enroll into a program entitled the Western Gulf of Maine (WGOM) Restricted Fishery Program. Vessels enrolled in this program would be allowed access to the area referred to as the WGOM Restricted Fishery Area, but would be limited to 25 Days-At-Sea or 25 trips, whichever is less, during the months of February, March, April and May in any fishing year. Vessels not enrolled in the WGOM Restricted Fishery Program category would be prohibited from fishing in the WGOM restricted fishery area during these months.

The WGOM restricted fishery area has preliminarily been described as an area extending from 43°50' N. Lat. and the Maine coast to 43°50' N. Lat., 70°00' W. Long. to 43°00' N. Lat., 70°15' W. Long. to 42°00' N. Lat., 70°15' W. Long. to 42°00' and the Massachusetts coast.

Multispecies Party/Charter GOM Closed Area Exemption Certificate

This proposed management measure would require vessel owners possessing

a multispecies party/charter Federal permit, or operating a vessel as a party/charter vessel and fishing for multispecies, to obtain an exemption certificate to be allowed access to fish in GOM closed areas. This exemption certificate would allow access to GOM closed areas but would prohibit the vessel owner from utilizing multispecies days-at-sea while carrying passengers for hire on-board the vessel for the duration of the exemption certificate. Three potential duration periods have been proposed for the certificate, three months, six months and 12 months.

II. Method of Collection

Vessel owners electing to enroll into the WGOM Restricted Fishery Program would be required to complete an application form. Vessel owners would apply for the Multispecies Party/Charter GOM Closed Area Exemption Certificate by making a phone call.

III. Data

OMB Number: None.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,003.

Estimated Time Per Response: 5 minutes for the Western GOM Restricted Fishery Program and 2 minutes for the Multispecies Party/Charter GOM Closed Area Exemption Certificate.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 57.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$438.

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: January 28, 2000.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 00-2575 Filed 2-3-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 020100A]

Marine Mammal Stranding Report; Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request

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

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, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Nicole R. Le Boeuf, Office of Protected Resources, F/PR2, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Section 402(b) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) requires that information on marine mammal strandings be collected. The Marine Mammal Stranding Reports provide baseline information on marine mammal mortalities, human interactions with marine mammals, and marine mammal population dynamics. NMFS uses the information to fulfill management responsibilities under the

MMPA. The Marine Mammal Stranding Reports are submitted by members of the marine mammal stranding network—the vast majority of whom are volunteers who have been authorized by NMFS to respond to strandings.

There are three marine mammal stranding data forms proposed for use. All the forms are intended to accurately characterize marine mammal strandings data. The new Marine Mammal Human Interaction and Marine Mammal Disposition Reports are designed to supplement the existing main form, the Marine Mammal Stranding Report.

The Marine Mammal Stranding Report was designed to provide a basic record of a marine mammal stranding event. The proposed Marine Mammal Stranding Report contains minor modifications of the form currently in use by the stranding networks. The modifications were made to increase consistency with data collected and currently used databases, to clarify meanings of data fields, and to improve the overall readability and appearance of the form.

The Marine Mammal Human Interaction Report is designed to provide stranding responders with a tool to objectively examine and collect data on marine mammal strandings specific to signs of human interaction. The Report is intended to prompt the examiner to collect data that will lead to a human interaction determination of “yes”, “no”, or “could not be determined”. The determination is recorded on the Marine Mammal Stranding Report, but the detailed information supporting this determination is provided on the Marine Mammal Human Interaction Report. The data collected on this form will help managers determine the frequency and type of human interactions that occur with marine mammals.

The Marine Mammal Disposition Report is designed to provide information regarding the treatment and disposition of a live marine mammal after initial examination and/or rehabilitation. Stranding network participants submit the Marine Mammal Stranding Report on a timely basis, but a live stranded animal may require longer care and/or may be deemed non-releasable and may be permanently retained in a captive display facility. The Marine Mammal Disposition Report allows the stranding network to provide follow-up information on the care, release, tagging, and specimen collection of live stranded marine mammals. This information will help managers track the final disposition of marine mammals that strand alive.

II. Method of Collection

Stranding Network members submit basic biological data contained on the reporting forms to NMFS Regional Offices for compilation and analysis.

III. Data

OMB Number: 0648–0178.

Form Number: NOAA Forms 89–864, 89–870, and 89–869.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Individuals, not-for-profit institutions, business or other for-profit, Federal government, and state and local government

Estimated Number of Respondents: 400

Estimated Time Per Response: 20 minutes

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 2,240

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$2,200

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.

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Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Chief Information Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 012800]

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a meeting to discuss stock assessment plans for 2000. The meeting will be open to the public.

DATES: The meeting will be held February 28–February 29, 2000. The meeting will begin on Monday, February 28, 2000 at 10:00 a.m., and reconvene February 29, 2000 at 8:00 a.m.; the meeting will run as late as necessary each day to complete scheduled business.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, 45 SE 82nd Drive, Suite 100, Gladstone, OR 97027–2522.

Council address: Pacific Fishery Management Council, 2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224, Portland, OR 97201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dan Waldeck, Fishery Management Analyst; telephone: (503) 326–6352.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the meeting is to plan the stock assessment process for groundfish species in 2000. The meeting will consider revisions to the terms of reference used for 1999 stock assessments, revise the goals and objectives for the annual stock assessment cycle, develop a calendar for 2000 stock assessment activities, confirm the list of species to be assessed in 2000, designate the resources and personnel for the assessments and the reviews, and discuss ways of improving coordination of the process. The meeting will also consider developing draft terms of reference for the process to rebuild overfished stocks.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this notice may be discussed at the meeting, those issues will not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Actions will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Mr. John Rhoton at (503) 326–6352 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.