PRA Change Request for OMB Control No.: 0402 "Application and Reports for Scientific Research and Enhancement Permits Under the Endangered Species Act"

Background: This information collection, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control No.: 0402, includes application instructions for research and enhancement permits. This information collection applies to protected species for which the National Marine Fisheries Service (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries) is responsible, including the Pacific salmon and steelhead protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*; ESA).

All permit applications are available on the internet as Portable Document Format (PDF) or Word documents (at <u>http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/permits/esa_permits.htm#scientific</u>), and applications can be mailed, faxed, or emailed to applicants if requested. Applicants in turn submit both paper and electronic permit and authorization application materials. A Pre-Application Guide (PAG) is currently available to the public at <u>http://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov/</u>. The purpose of the PAG is to help prospective applicants determine what type of permit or authorization, if any, they may need. After answering several questions about the proposed work, the system will provide the user with a description of what the required permits or authorizations are and where to go for more information, including contact information and the appropriate application or forms currently available on the internet.

Proposed Change: The NOAA Fisheries, Office of Protected Resources Permits, Conservation and Education Division (Permits Division) is the lead office adding an on-line application system known as APPS (Authorizations and Permits for Protected Species) for application instructions for research and enhancement permits for marine mammals, Pacific salmon, and other threatened and endangered species under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and ESA. This system incorporates these OMB-approved (OMB Control No.: 0402) salmon permit applications processed in the NOAA Fisheries Northwest and Southwest Regions.

Purpose: The intent of the APPS on-line system is to provide a user-friendly and efficient electronic format for the public to apply for ESA scientific research and enhancement permits for protected species, in addition to the currently OMB-approved paper applications. Applicants will be able to submit applications and reports electronically, thus substantially reducing the need to submit paper applications and hopefully reducing the time spent filling out the paper applications. The public will also be able to search the APPS database and obtain information available to the public more efficiently and in an electronic format. It is anticipated that the APPS system will be available to the public for applying for ESA salmon scientific research and enhancement permits in February 2008.

Appearance: The appearance of the on-line application will include web pages with fillable fields (see example screen shots below). The instructions for filling out the fields on each web page will be provided in a "Help Document" that will include the same questions that are in the current OMB Control No.: 0402 approved application instructions for salmon ESA scientific research and enhancement permits.



