



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Services

Washington, DC
20250

Subject: Request for Expedited Processing of
OMB Paperwork Reduction Act Clearance

To: Margaret A. Malanoski
Desk Officer

Through: Ruth Brown
Department Clearance Officer

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is requesting emergency review, processing, and approval of an informational collection activity that is needed in connection with the efforts of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to prevent further introductions into, and dissemination within, the United States of viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS), a highly contagious disease of certain fresh and saltwater fish. An interim rule is necessary on an emergency basis to prevent the introduction of VHS into U.S. aquaculture facilities by controlling the movement of certain live fish species at risk of harboring VHS virus. The interim rule will replace an existing Federal Order issued by USDA APHIS that currently limits fish movements into and within the United States.

VHS is listed as a notifiable disease by the World Organization for Animal Health. The development of the disease in infected fish can result in substantial mortality; potentially crippling the U.S. aquacultured fish industry. Despite its current VHS-free status for

farmed fish, the United States remains unprotected from continuing introductions of VHS-infected non-salmonid fish imported from Canada, since there are a number of exporters of fish species that APHIS will regulate through the interim rule who are located in two provinces in Canada that have been affected by VHS; pretesting of these fish is not currently required. Live salmonid fish species are currently required to be tested for VHS by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, under title 50 (CFR) regulations, before importation to the United States. Although VHS outbreaks have so far been limited to States within the Great Lakes watershed, there are no standardized restrictions in place other than those specified in title 50 and the existing APHIS Federal Order to prevent the further spread of VHS into new watersheds or areas by the transfer of live salmonid or non-salmonid VHS-regulated species. Therefore, it is necessary to implement regulations that will restrict such imports and interstate movements of regulated species in as timely a manner as possible.

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This interim rule will amend title 9, *Code of the Federal Regulations*, part 93 and create part 83 by preventing the introduction of VHS into U.S. aquaculture facilities by controlling the movement of certain live fish species at risk of harboring VHS virus. Accordingly, APHIS is requiring the use of the following information collection activities: Completion of an Interstate Certificate of Inspection, VS form 1-27, Cleaning and Disinfection Certificate, Import Permit Application, and Health Certificate; a 72-hour Notification; and Recordkeeping for Testing Requirements.

APHIS requests approval of the paperwork clearance package by July 25, 2008.

John R. Clifford
Associate Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services