

**CHANGE REQUEST
ALASKA ROCKFISH PILOT PROGRAM
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0545**

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) manages the U.S. groundfish fisheries of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) under the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI FMP), the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA FMP), the Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs (CRAB FMP), and the [Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982](#) (Halibut Act). The FMPs were prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) as amended by [Public Law 108-199](#), section 801. Regulations implementing these procedures are located at [50 CFR part 679](#).

In response to Industry requests for new data collection methods that would allow them to react quickly to changing conditions and to realize harvesting efficiencies, NMFS would change certain transfer procedures and regulations to provide an option for transfer requests to be submitted through automated, online submittals.

A rockfish cooperative may transfer all or part of its cooperative quota (CQ) to another rockfish cooperative. In order for an inter-cooperative transfer to be approved, both parties must be already established and recognized by NMFS as a cooperative prior to the transfer. The transfer request currently may be submitted by mail, fax, or courier. *This action adds an option for online submission for inter-cooperative transfer.* When using the online submittal method, the respondent must provide a NMFS Person ID and transfer key. These two pieces of information are provided by NMFS after an applicant is approved for participation in the Rockfish Program. Application forms are available through the Internet on the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov>, or by contacting NMFS at 800-304-4846, Option 2.

Providing the Rockfish Program cooperatives with an online opportunity for transfers reduces the burden and cost for participants and increases accuracy of the data and efficiency of the process. In addition, the form is changed to include identification and certification information for the transferor's processor and the transferee's processor, as required by regulations: Blocks B and D, and Blocks F² and G², in the revised form (*NOTE: certifications are not needed if submitting online; the NMFS Person ID and transfer key take their place*). These changes result in a \$45 decrease in total respondent miscellaneous cost: \$5,909 from \$5,954. They also result in a 15 hr decrease in total respondent burden: 3,270 from 3,285 hr; and a \$375 decrease in total personnel costs: \$81,688 from \$82,063.

The NMFS Alaska Region will submit a proposed rule, RIN 0648-AW56, Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Western Alaska Community Development Quota Program, Rockfish Program, the Amendment 80 Program, and the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program, coincident with this submission, requesting comments from the public.