

**JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
ALASKA REGION SCALE AND CATCH WEIGHING
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0610**

Minor adjustments to remove certain unnecessary information requested on the Inspection Request for an Electronic Monitoring System.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) manages the groundfish fisheries in the exclusive economic zone off Alaska. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) prepared the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (FMP) under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation & Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*). Regulations implementing the FMP appears at 50 CFR part 679.

The final rule for Amendment 91 to the FMP (RIN 0648-AX89) revises requirements for the American Fisheries Act (AFA) and Western Alaska Community Development Quota (CDQ) Program trawl catcher/processors. Video technology is proposed as a potential way to supplement existing observer coverage; enhance the value of the data NMFS receives; and/or fill data gaps that have proven difficult to fill with human observers. Video monitoring of bins is currently offered as an option for the AFA pollock fishery.

The owner or operator of a catcher/processor or a mothership must provide and maintain an electronic monitoring system that includes cameras, a monitor, and a digital video recording system for all areas where sorting of salmon of any species takes place and the location of the salmon storage container. These electronic monitoring system requirements must be met when the catcher/processor is directed fishing for pollock in the Bering Sea, including pollock CDQ, and when the mothership is taking deliveries from catcher vessels directed fishing for pollock in the Bering Sea, including pollock CDQ.

The owner of a catcher/processor or a mothership may arrange the time and place for an inspection of the electronic monitoring system by submitting to NMFS by fax (206) 526-4066 or e-mail station.inspections@noaa.gov an Inspection Request. This request form is available on the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov>.

Inspections are scheduled no later than ten (10) working days after NMFS receives a complete application for an inspection. Inspections will be conducted on vessels tied to docks in Alaska at Dutch Harbor and Kodiak and in the Puget Sound area of Washington State.

An Electronic Monitoring System (EMS) Inspection Report, valid for twelve (12) months from the date it is signed by NMFS, will be issued to the vessel owner, if the electronic monitoring system meets the requirements. The EMS Inspection Report must be available upon request by the observer, NMFS personnel, or any authorized officer. The vessel owner must maintain a current EMS Inspection Report onboard the vessel at all times the vessel is required to provide an approved electronic monitoring system.

The purpose of this change request is to remove the following questions from the Inspection Request for an Electronic Monitoring System: whether a catcher/processor or mothership; whether vessel previously received an electronic monitoring system inspection; and if YES, the date of the most recent inspection. This information is already in NOAA's records. These revisions are not expected to significantly change the cost and amount of time required to complete and submit the inspection request.