

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
ATLANTIC HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES
VOLUNTARY RELEASE REPORTS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

This request is for approval of a new information collection.

Under the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) (MSFCMA, 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) promotes conservation and management measures that implement scientific research programs including the tagging and releasing of Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS; Atlantic tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks). As a part of this effort and to achieve other requirements of the MSFCMA, the final rule for Amendment 3 to the Consolidated HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) ([75 FR 30484](#)) included measures to promote the live release of shortfin mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) in domestic recreational and commercial fisheries.

In order to address these requirements, NMFS is creating a web page that would contain an interactive mapping tool, which would be populated with volunteered information from the public regarding the release of HMS. Information would be used to raise awareness regarding releasing HMS and HMS tagging programs by driving internet traffic to this web page, and there would be no claim that information received is representative of the universe of such information. Data collected would be displayed by NMFS on an interactive web map on the NMFS web page. This web map could provide an incentive for fishermen to release HMS (e.g., personal recognition), and the web page could contain information or links to information promoting NMFS scientific research, tagging programs, and conservation measures, as described in MSFCMA and Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

Information would be used by NMFS to populate an interactive web map that would contain data regarding locations of HMS releases, information about the individual animals released (e.g., size, gender), and the name of the individual who submitted the data. The form could contain some or all of the following information:

Species name
Data caught and released
Location (latitude and longitude)
Appropriate length measurement, e.g., total length, curved fork length (estimated or measured)
Gender (male, female, or unknown)
Fisherman's name

Fisherman's email address (will not be posted to web page)
Image of HMS released
Was the fish tagged (yes or no)
Tag Number (if yes for tagged).

This information would be publically accessible 24 hours a day, as long as the NMFS website is available and the public would be able to download the data used to create the data points on the map. The web map would be used for informational purposes only, as the data represented in the map has been voluntarily submitted and are not representative of all of HMS releases. The goal of creating a web map based on volunteered geographic information and public participation is to drive internet traffic to a website that contains information regarding NMFS scientific research, tagging programs, and conservation measures, as described in MSFCMA and Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (i.e. the web map page will have links to research and conservation measures, etc)..

The data collected, while not representative of all possible results, would be considered original data and the collection would comply with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines for original data.

As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. NOAA will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to [Section 515 of Public Law 106-554](#).

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

Collection of information would primarily be internet-based, and the majority of submissions are anticipated to come through a website submission form at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms_shortfinmako.htm.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

All data submissions received would be processed by a NMFS staff member for quality control/quality assessment purposes before being posted to the web map. Duplicate submissions would not be added to the interactive Web map.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.

The collection is voluntary; therefore, small businesses or small entities can minimize this burden by choosing not to submit information regarding HMS releases.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

Management measures included in the MSFMCA to promote, to the extent practicable, implementation of scientific research programs that include the tagging and releasing HMS, and in Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP to promote the live release of shortfin mako sharks to address overfishing on the North Atlantic shortfin mako shark stock, would be hindered if this collection was not conducted or conducted less frequently. The interactive HMS release web map, which would be initially populated with voluntarily submitted shortfin mako shark release information, is designed as the focal point driving internet traffic to information promoting releasing HMS and HMS tagging programs on the NMFS website, and is dependent on this collection. Limiting the collection would reduce the number of individuals exposed to this information, and could hinder efforts to stop overfishing of shortfin mako sharks and promote conservation and management of all HMS.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

There are no expected special circumstances where this collection would take place in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

A Federal Register Notice published on August 18, 2010 (75 FR 50990) solicited public comments. No comments were received.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments or gifts are to be offered as part of this information collection.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

There is no assurance of confidentiality.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

No information of a sensitive nature is requested in this collection of information.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

The estimated hours of burden for this collection are based on the average number of annual HMS releases from 2007 through 2009 multiplied by the estimated time it would take to fill out the electronic submission form, multiplied by 20%. The estimated average number of recreational releases of HMS was calculated using data from the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS), and the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP).

The LPS data cover trips taken from Maine to Virginia, and reflect both private and for-hire recreational vessels. The weighted HMS release proportion of total LPS trips for 2007-2009 was 0.316, or roughly 32% of all LPS trips. Data from two MRIP pilot programs that took place from North Carolina to Texas were compared to the LPS trips to estimate the number of for-hire HMS trips taken from 2007-2009 in that area. All HMS trip estimates for 2007-2009 were summed and averaged to arrive at an estimate of 146,294 HMS trips per year. The estimated number of trips was then multiplied by the HMS release proportion, which resulted in an annual estimate of 46,229 trips with at least one HMS released alive from 2007-2009 ($146,294 * 0.316 = 46,229$).

Assuming a 20 percent response rate, the estimated annual number of responses would be 9,246. The estimated burden time for this submission is five minutes, therefore, the annual burden hour estimate of 771 hours ($(9,246 \text{ responses} * 5 \text{ minutes}) / 60 \text{ minutes} = 771 \text{ response hours}$).

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).

There is no cost burden to the respondents.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

The HMS internet mapping website will be created and maintained by NMFS staff, therefore, there would be no annualized cost to the Federal government other than regular staff time.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

This is a new program.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

Results from this collection will be displayed on an interactive Web map.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

Not Applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not Applicable.