

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
MARINE RECREATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAM
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0052**

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

There are approximately 400,000 registered saltwater anglers in the state of Massachusetts. We will select a random sample of 1,900 anglers from the registry, and randomly assign those to the three “treatments”: 500, 700 and 700 anglers, respectively. We expect approximately a 75% response rate from the first group of respondents, who will receive a check, and be given the choice of returning the check or sending their license to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). For the other two groups, as we expect a somewhat lower response rate of 63%, due to no such specific action being required.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

Three separate treatment groups will be surveyed. The first sample shall consist of 500 randomly selected anglers that purchased a license during the first 4 months of 2012. According to Dillman (2009) a sample size of 384 is needed to expand up to a population of about 1 million people with 95% confidence level. Assuming the response rate will be approximately 75% translates into a sample of about 500 anglers. Each of the 500 anglers will be mailed a short questionnaire that collects avidity and demographic information along with a check, the amount of which varies from angler to angler, as a cash offering for the angler’s 2012 Massachusetts fishing license. Instruction will be provided that each angler should return either the check or his or her fishing license and that the offer will expire on a certain date in the future (approximately 6 weeks later).

The offers will start at \$15 (\$5 more than the cost of a MA license in 2012) and increase to \$500 in log-linear amounts. The cover letter will explain that if an angler returns his/her license they will essentially be giving up their right to fish in Massachusetts waters for the remainder of 2012.

Two additional samples of randomly selected anglers from the Massachusetts license frame shall be drawn during the first 4 months of 2012. One sample of 700 anglers will be sent a short questionnaire (1-2 pages) that collects the same avidity and demographic data as the simulated market samples along with a hypothetical question about the angler’s willingness to sell his/her

license for a specified price. The hypothetical prices will vary from angler to angler and will match the amount of the cash offerings indicated above for the simulated market. Another sample of 700 anglers will be sent the same short questionnaire except the hypothetical question will inquire about the angler's willingness to pay for his/her license. The estimated values from this hypothetical willingness to sell/accept approach will be directly comparable to the simulated market values. Lower response rates are anticipated for the hypothetical surveys so a sample size of 700 should provide the required data necessary for expansion to a population of about 1 million anglers (440 for an estimated 63% response rate).

The evaluation surveys will be mailed to approximately 1,900 anglers that purchase a Massachusetts saltwater recreational fishing license during the first 4 months of 2012. The surveys shall be mailed in four separate monthly waves beginning in February to anglers that purchase a license during January and ending four months later in May when surveys are sent to anglers that purchase a license during April. The surveys will contain the following features:

- A one-page cover letter that explains the purpose of the survey and provides the contractors contact information to address any questions or concerns that the respondents may have regarding the survey.
- A pre-paid return envelope.
- A 1-800 phone line shall be set up by the contractor to address questions or concerns.
- Respondents will receive the survey packet via mail and non-respondents will be followed up by a reminder post-card and finally by a telephone call.
- Personalized checks, drawn by the contractor, in varying amounts, will be included in the survey packet for 500 anglers. The cash offers will total approximately \$73,690.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

There will be initial outreach in the form of newspaper articles and a FAQ on the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries Web site to alert anglers to the pending survey. The valuation of the respondents' angler license – not at all an abstract valuation but for something that the respondent has purchased and intends to use – should engage this particular group. The steps described in Question 2, to explain, be available for questions, and both written and telephone follow-up, are all designed to maximize response rates.

Although the response rates are estimated to be somewhat below 80%, the sample sizes were designed to expand up to a population of about 1 million people with 95% confidence level. However, nonresponse bias can be addressed at least in terms of demographic information from the registry.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

No additional testing is planned beyond a small focus group testing which was conducted to determine the average response rate.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the statistical aspects of the design, and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

Statistical support was provided by the following:

QuanTech, Inc. 2020 North 14th Street, Suite 560, Arlington, VA 22201 was consulted on the simple random sample design, administered the mail surveys and entered the raw survey data.

Scott Steinback is the point-of-contact for the Agency, 508-495-2371.