SUPPORTING STATEMENT
ECONOMIC EXPENDITURE SURVEY OF WRECKFISH FISHERMEN IN THE U.S. SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX

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 only ten wreckfish permits in existence, and they are currently owned by nine individuals in conjunction with their corporations. Because of this small population, all nine license owners will be contacted. We expect all of the owners to respond.

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.

The survey is of the entire population of active fishermen. Because of the small size of this population, all respondents must be contacted or the resulting information will be biased. To make the survey the least burdensome possible, only expenditure data and cost estimates will be collected and the survey is very short.

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.

Following Dillman (2007)[1] we adopt the following plan to achieve high response rates.

First, we drafted a respondent-friendly questionnaire. The expenditure forms can easily be filled in by the fishermen by looking at the annual tax records for their businesses.

Second, we plan to make multiple contacts (if necessary). If the completed survey instrument is not received within a few weeks of the mailing, then a letter and replacement questionnaire will be mailed to the respondents urging them to collaborate with the data collection. If that is unsuccessful, SEFSC staff will telephone or visit the fishermen.

1 Dillman, D. A., 2007. Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method 2007 Update with New Internet, Visual, and Mixed-Mode Guide. 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Hoboken, NJ.

Third, respondents will be provided first class pre-paid envelopes so that they easily return their completed questionnaires. Dillman (2007) notes that personalized mailings increase responses rates by 5-11% in multiple-contact general public surveys.

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.

The fishermen were contacted beforehand and had a chance to examine the forms to be used. Feedback was incorporated into the form design. Additionally, we modeled the expenditure questions on those used in 1994 to ensure continuity.

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.

Dr. Scott Crosson, an economist employed by NMFS, can be reached at (305) 361-4468. He designed the study and will collect and analyze the information.