

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
ALASKA PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES: INDIVIDUAL FISHING QUOTA (IFQ)
COST RECOVERY
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0398

Under the new Catch Sharing Plan for Halibut Fisheries in Alaska, the commercial IFQ holder would submit all cost recovery fees on IFQ pounds harvested for his/her IFQ permit(s) and also harvested as Guided Angler Fish (GAF) which originated from his/her IFQ account(s). This change is due to associated final rule, RIN 0648-BA37.

Other information collection requirements associated with this rule were approved by OMB in January 2012 (revision to OMB Control No. 0648-0592 and March 2012 (temporary collection OMB Control No. 0648-0632). There were several actions in process for OMB Control No. 0648-0398, and thus this change request was temporarily overlooked. The rule has been re-issued, but there are no changes to previously approved information collection requirements for the two other referenced collection.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposed regulations that would implement a catch sharing plan for the guided sport and commercial fisheries for Pacific halibut in waters of International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Regulatory Areas 2C (Southeast Alaska) and 3A (Central Gulf of Alaska).

To provide flexibility for individual commercial and guided sport fishery participants, the proposed catch sharing plan would authorize annual transfers of commercial individual fishing quota (IFQ) halibut to qualified guided charter halibut business owners as Guided Angler Fish (GAF). The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires that cost recovery fees be collected for the costs of managing and enforcing limited access privilege programs, including the Alaska commercial halibut IFQ program. Under this action, the IFQ permit holder would pay an IFQ cost recovery fee on all pounds of halibut harvested as IFQ in the commercial fishery and as GAF in the charter fishery.

Changes caused by this action:

The existing IFQ Permit Holder Fee Submission Form would be revised to add a column for GAF pounds in the Fee Calculation block and include instructions incorporating GAF in the calculation of an IFQ permit holder's cost recovery fee. No increase to burden or cost is expected from this change.

An increase in fees for the IFQ Permit holder would only result if there is an increase in costs associated with the implementation of GAF. It is possible that fees will increase due to agency costs associated with processing additional transfers resulting from the ability of IFQ permitholders to transfer to the charter sector.

No comments were received on this change.