

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
LARGE PELAGICS FISHING SURVEY
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0380**

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

This action seeks to revise the Large Pelagic Fishing Survey, OMB Control No. 0648-0380, in the following ways:

- Discontinue the Large Pelagics Headboat Survey (LPHS) component.
- Increase the annual Large Pelagics Telephone Survey (LPTS) target sample size from 10,780 to 15,900 interviews for Northeast and Southeast combined.
- Add questions to the LPTS questionnaire to allow for comparisons between fishing trips returning to private access sites that are not covered by the dockside large pelagics survey and trips returning to sites on the dockside sampling frame.
- Add a non-response follow-up survey to the LPTS in the Southeast region (previously only the Northeast was covered).
- Reduce the Large Pelagics Biological Survey annual sample size from 1,500 to 1,000 interviews.

Since OMB Control No. 0648-0380 expires November 30, 2014, this action also seeks to extend approval for three more years.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is responsible for monitoring and managing United States (U.S.) marine fisheries resources. Collection of information regarding fishing for large pelagic species (tunas, billfishes, swordfish, and sharks) is necessary to fulfill the following statutory requirements: [Atlantic Tunas Convention Act](#) (16 U.S.C. 971 et seq.), the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), and to meet administrative requirements of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Marine Recreational Fishery Policy implemented to comply with [Executive Order 12962](#) on Recreational Fisheries.

The Atlantic Tunas Convention Act at 16 U.S.C. 971d(c)(3)(I) provides the Secretary of Commerce the authority to “require any commercial or recreational fisherman to obtain a permit from the Secretary and report the quantity of catch of a regulated species”. Section 303(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act specifies data and analyses to be included in Fishery Management Plans (FMPs), as well as pertinent data, which shall be submitted to the Secretary of Commerce under the plan. Recommendation One of the NMFS Marine Recreational Fishery (MRF) Policy focuses on developing “a comprehensive data acquisition and analysis system (participation, catch, effort and socio-economic data) on a regular, continuing basis” in support of the Executive Order 12962 requirement to assess the implementation and evaluate achievements of the “Recreational Fishery Resources Conservation Plan.”

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act, signed into law in January 2007, requires that the Secretary of Commerce, “establish a program to improve the quality and accuracy of information generated by the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey (MRFSS).” NMFS has organized a joint federal-state-community initiative to accommodate the requirements and timelines specified by MSA and to address recommendations by the National Research Council in their 2006 report titled “Review of Recreational Fisheries Survey Methods.” This new initiative is called the Marine Recreational Information Program or MRIP (based on the original MRFSS). One of the stated objectives of MRIP is to improve and expand existing recreational data collection programs for large pelagic (i.e., highly migratory) species to meet management needs. Because highly migratory species are only sought on a relatively small proportion of the total marine recreational angler fishing trips made, the fishing effort directed at such species, and the resulting angler catches are generally not estimated very precisely or accurately by general (all species) recreational surveys. Therefore, the Large Pelagics Survey (LPS) was designed as a specialized survey that would focus specifically on the recreational fishery directed at large pelagic, also called highly migratory, species. This specialization has allowed higher levels of sampling needed to provide more precise and accurate estimates of pelagic fishing effort and catches of large pelagic species.

The LPS was designed to estimate the elements of the generalized catch equation. That is, the estimated total trips are multiplied by the estimated average catch per trip to determine total catch. Due to the migratory nature of large pelagic fishes, the LPS design considers geographic and seasonal variation in fish distribution and the differences in effort and catch characteristics of the fishing fleet. Given this variation and the data requirements for estimating the components of the generalized catch equation, the survey incorporates a multi-frame, stratified random sampling design. Specifically, the LPS consists of two complementary surveys: a directory frame telephone survey of tuna and/or HMS permit holders to obtain fishing effort information, and a dockside survey which collects catch information and also estimates the proportion of vessels fishing for large pelagics that are not on the telephone frame (non-permitted vessels and vessels fishing out of state). While catch information could be (and has been) taken over the phone, it is necessary to have the dockside survey to assess effort by non-permitted vessels, gather detailed information on catch (accurate species identification and length-weight measurements), and collect biological data. In addition to the telephone and dockside surveys, collection of additional biological data and body parts has been added as a contract option in recent years. This request includes all of the data collection components for the LPS. Implementation of certain components will depend on fiscal year funding and NMFS priorities. The proposed annual reporting burden anticipates full funding for all components listed below.

Response to these survey components is mandatory under the authority of the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act. Implementing regulations at [50 CFR Part 635](#) require that operators of vessels issued permits for Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS), or who retain HMS, respond to surveys on fishing effort and catch.

Current Survey under this information collection that will be removed from OMB Control No. 0648-0380:

Large Pelagics Headboat Survey

Headboats (also known as party boats) are vessels that take anglers fishing for a relatively modest fee paid on an individual basis and tend to be licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) to carry more than six passengers. This differs from the pre-arranged groups of six or fewer anglers that tend to make up charter boat clientele and who typically pay as a group for a full or half-day charter. Headboats normally take trips targeted at certain species (i.e., flounder, bluefish, and striped bass) during the appropriate fishing season and generally take short (6-10 hrs.) trips. There is a small component of the Atlantic headboat fleet that, among other more usual trips, seasonally schedules trips targeted at large pelagics (i.e., bluefin, yellowfin, and bigeye tunas). Some of these trips last overnight due to the distances to the offshore canyon fishing areas. These large pelagics trips are normally scheduled well in advance of sailing dates to allow time for marketing the trip and registering enough anglers to make the trip profitable. Due to funding limitations, a specialized headboat survey for large pelagics has not been conducted since 2002 and the LPHS is not included as an option in the current LPS multi-year contract. Although implementation of the LPHS could still provide valuable information for fishery management and assessment, at present other data needs take priority for funding consideration. In addition, MRIP is currently testing and implementing data collection design improvements for headboats in general which would include the subset of vessels targeting large pelagics.

Current Surveys under this information collection that will be revised under OMB Control No. 0648-0380:

Large Pelagics Telephone Survey

The telephone survey collects data to determine the average number of large pelagic fishing trips per active boat in the recreational large pelagics fishing fleet. The survey is conducted biweekly by interviewing a random sample of private boat owners who have obtained permits that allow them to fish for certain large pelagic fishes. Therefore, this survey is restricted to individuals who have professed to be likely participants in the fishery. Since an independent sample is drawn for every two-week period, it is possible for a particular vessel to be selected more than once per year. At current sampling rates it is very rare for a vessel to be selected more than two or three times in the same year.

The Large Pelagics Telephone Survey is typically conducted only from Maine through Virginia and from May through November. However, if funds become available, NMFS may opt to conduct these surveys in the Southeast Region from North Carolina through Texas, including Puerto Rico. Expansion to the Southeast Region may also necessitate temporal expansion to account for large pelagics fishing activity outside the May through November time frame. Justification for expanding the LPTS to the Southeast Region is included as part of this request even though this option may not be exercised in any given year.

Representatives of vessels selected for the telephone survey are mailed pre-notification letters informing them that they have been selected and indicating the dates for which they will be expected to report about when called.

Response to the telephone survey is mandatory and is a condition of permit issuance. Certain identifying data elements are obtained from a fishing permit database and can be pre-coded by the telephone interviewer for each potential respondent prior to dialing. The screening introduction questions are asked in order to establish contact with the primary respondent and confirm that he/she is a captain or owner of a vessel that fishes for large pelagic fishes. If the primary respondent no longer owns or operates the permitted vessel, then questions are asked to determine the new owner/operator of the vessel. If the primary respondent is not likely to be available for an interview, then either an appropriate proxy (or secondary respondent) is identified for an immediate interview or the call is terminated. Once contact with the primary or secondary respondent is established, questions are asked to confirm respondent and permitted vessel identification, to ask for a preferred interview time, to identify and obtain telephone numbers of other operators of the vessel, and to determine whether the respondent can accurately respond to questions about all of the vessel's large pelagics fishery activity during the prior week.

Each qualified operator of a permitted vessel is required to provide information on the fishing trips directed at large pelagic species during the prior two weeks including trips outside of the state where the vessel is normally docked or within the home port state. Respondents must provide the total number of fishing trips, as well as the date, time of day and species target of each trip. In addition, for each in-state trip the respondent must provide the type of access site used, the name of the site, whether the trip was associated with a tournament, and the fishing gears used. This information is needed to help describe the type of fishing activity which occurred. For each trip using rod and reel or handline, the respondent must provide the number of fishing lines used and the time spent with lines in the water. Data are collected to accurately describe the amount of fishing effort by gear type in hours. For each use of a particular gear type, the respondent must identify the types of bait and fishing methods used. Finally, for each trip the respondent must provide the number of people who actually fished for large pelagics, as well as the identity and location of the fishing grounds where they fished. The prior information is needed to allow estimation of effort in terms of individual angler trips, and the latter is needed to allow post-stratification of effort by fishing area.

To improve response rates, an electronic Internet reporting option was added to the Large Pelagics Telephone Survey (LPTS) in the 2010 PRA revision. The Internet option was pilot tested in Puerto Rico but may be expanded to other areas in future survey years. As explained in the 2010 revision supporting statement, adding the Internet reporting option is not expected to have a noticeable impact on average response time.

Also, in 2012 a non-response follow-up pilot survey was implemented to assess the impact of non-response bias on catch and effort estimates. Recent response rates for the LPTS have been around 70-75%. The non-response follow-up study was conducted in the Northeast states from Maine through Virginia. The results of this pilot will be used to determine how to address non-

response bias in future survey years. If approved, this revision will expand the option to conduct an LPTS non-response follow-up study to cover the Southeast region.

An MRIP project aimed at improving the Large Pelagics Survey design and estimation methods is currently underway. The project team has submitted a proposal for MRIP funding to increase the LPTS sample size (private boat mode only) and to add questions to the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) questionnaire in order to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve our estimate of undercoverage due to trips returning to sites not on the dockside (LPIS) sampling frame (e.g. private or restricted access sites).
- Allow for more meaningful comparisons of LPS trip attributes, including catch rates, between on-frame and off-frame trips.
- Collect more information about vessel trips ending at “off-frame” sites.
- Provide sufficient sample sizes for developing models aimed at improving the statistical validity of the estimation methods being applied to the LPIS

While many telephone calls do not result in complete interviews (i.e., vessel owner not home) and many calls are of short duration (vessel not used for large pelagics trips in prior week), some lengthy calls (15-20 minutes) are required when collecting information from captains who took several trips in the preceding week. Given this mix of potential responses, the response burden for the average telephone interview is currently estimated at 10 minutes. This average assumes an LPTS non-response follow-up will be conducted in both the Northeast and Southeast regions and that virtually all non-respondents can be contacted. If an Internet option is available, the response burden for vessel representatives who chose to provide their information via the Web is also currently estimated to be 10 minutes on average. The proposal to add up to five questions to the LPTS questionnaire will result in an estimated increase of one minute per interview (from 10 to 11 minutes on average). While these questions may take more than one minute to complete, they will only be asked on a relatively small proportion of interviews with LPS trips reported.

Large Pelagics Biological Survey (LPBS)

During the period covered by this submission, NMFS anticipates the need for biological data for large pelagic species. These efforts may not be implemented in any given year due to funding restrictions. Supplemental sampling may be conducted for the purpose of collecting supplemental length and weight information on certain key management species (i.e., bluefin tuna). In some years samplers also collect fish body parts including otoliths (inner ear organs), vertebrae, spines, and gonad samples that are used for age and growth, fecundity, and natal origin studies. Data collection for this survey will be unique not only in the amount of data obtained but also in the number of species encountered on an assignment.

Biosampling consists of intercepting captains/mates/owners at weighing or cleaning stations that have just finished fishing trips for large pelagic fishes and recording various lengths and weights by species. Additional information such as date, site and vessel name, vessel type, and if possible, gender of each fish will also be recorded during biological assignments. Most of the information collected during a biological sampling assignment is obtained directly from the fish rather than the angler/captain, thus the reporting burden for the respondents is extremely small.

Other than requesting permission to sample the fish, the only questions asked of respondents are relative to fishing location, fishing gear, tournament participation and condition of the fish at time of capture. It is estimated that total response time (respondent burden) for a biological intercept is 1 minute. The LPBS annual sample size will be reduced from 1,500 to 1,000 interviews with this submission to more accurately reflect sampling levels obtained in recent years and available funds for this component.

Current Surveys under this information collection with no requested changes to questions or burden OMB Control No 0648-0380:

Large Pelagics Dockside Intercept Survey

The dockside intercept survey collects data needed to determine the average weekly catches per charter and private boat trips of bluefin tuna (BFT) by market category and of other large pelagic fishes by species or species group. The survey is conducted continuously over the course of the fishing season by intercepting and interviewing charter boat captains and private boat owners who have just finished a fishing trip for large pelagic fishes. Individuals interviewed would be selected at random during 2 to 8 hour field assignments distributed randomly across fishing access sites and days, where fishing sites would be weighted by expected numbers of active fishing vessels. Response is mandatory for persons holding fishing permits and for persons landing regulated species. The questionnaire is designed to obtain information on the fishing methods, locations and catches of all large pelagic species. The Large Pelagics Intercept Survey (LPIS) is typically conducted only from Maine through Virginia. However, if funds become available NMFS may opt to conduct these surveys in the Southeast Region from North Carolina through Texas, including Puerto Rico. LPIS sample size includes interviewing in the Southeast Region even though this option may not be exercised in any given year due to funding limitations.

The intercept survey interview begins by ascertaining whether a potential respondent is indeed the owner or operator of a vessel that has just finished fishing for large pelagic species. Data elements are determined by the date and site assigned to an interviewer prior to interviewing. The status of an attempted interview (refusal vs. cooperation) is recorded as a data element and information about refusals is made available to enforcement. Once an eligible owner or operator has been identified, he/she is required to provide the name, HMS permit number, (or either Coast Guard number or State registration number), of the vessel used on the fishing trip. The respondent must then identify the boat's classification for LPS sampling and the time of its return to port. In addition, the respondent is asked questions to determine the target species for the trip, whether the vessel participated in a fishing tournament, the gear types used, the effort associated with each gear type, and the baits and methods associated with each gear type. The respondent must also indicate the number of people who fished for large pelagic species during the trip and must identify the name and location of the fishing grounds, the distance from shore, the depth and the surface water temperature where fishing occurred.

The interview concludes with questions pertaining to identification, enumeration and measurement of the fishes caught. The respondent must indicate the numbers of each species caught that were kept, released alive, and released dead. The interviewer requests permission

to measure available fish and proceeds to obtain length measurements on individual fish of each available species in the catch. The catch information is critical to determination of the average catches by species per boat trip from the intercept survey sample. Collection of the catch information by gear type allows for possible post-stratification of the catches by gear category.

While many dockside intercepts are of short duration (no catch of large pelagics during trip), some longer interviews are required when collecting information from captains who caught and/or released many large pelagic fish during a successful trip. Given this mix of potential responses (2 minutes for no catch to 15 minutes for trips with catch available to measure), the response burden for the average dockside intercept is estimated at 5 minutes.

Evaluation of field interviewer performance will be accomplished by a telephone follow-up to validate 10 percent of intercepts. Validation calls only require the respondent to verify that the intercept took place at the time and site recorded by the field interviewer and that the interviewer was courteous, professional and followed certain procedures. Telephone validation follow-ups are estimated to take 1.5 minutes on average.

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 applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

NMFS, regional fishery management councils, interstate marine fisheries commissions, and state fishery agencies use the data in developing, implementing and monitoring fishery management programs. Failure to conduct these data collections would prevent the Secretary from meeting statutory requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. In addition, NMFS would be unable to implement Recommendation One of its Marine Recreational Fisheries (MRF) Policy with a resulting loss in service and credibility to the MRF constituency. Catch and effort statistics are fundamental for assessing the influence of fishing on any stock of fish. The quantities taken, the fishing effort, and both the seasonal and geographic distributions of the catch and effort are required for the development of regional management policies and plans. Accurate and timely catch statistics collected over the range of a species must be used in association with biological studies to perform the stock assessments necessary for monitoring the effectiveness of fishery management planning for optimum yield. Several large pelagic species are now being managed under FMP quota or landings limit systems, which include recreational fishery components. For example, this collection has been the key source of data used to monitor recreational quotas for the harvest of bluefin tuna in the Mid-Atlantic and southern New England regions. Catch distributions, harvested size distributions, and other indices obtained in this data collection have formed the basis of fishery management plans and used in stock assessments for Atlantic highly migratory species such as tunas, billfish, swordfish and sharks.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. NMFS 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 of other forms of information technology.

LPS Dockside interview forms (both intercept and biological sampling) are scanned using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology for maximum efficiency and data accuracy. The Large Pelagic Telephone Survey utilizes Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) technology with built-in error and logic checks and skips patterns that both reduce the response burden and improve on data quality. In addition, a Web tool Internet reporting option was added for the Large Pelagic Telephone Survey in an effort to increase response rates.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

NMFS has the lead Federal responsibility for collection of data from marine recreational fishermen and coordinates informational needs with other agencies. NMFS has also worked with State fishery agencies each year to coordinate data collection efforts and avoid duplication. In some cases, NMFS employs State personnel under contract to conduct field interviewing. A specialized data collection such as the LPS overlaps to a minor extent with NMFS' more comprehensive Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) surveys. Such overlap is minimal because the MRIP is designed to cover marine recreational fishing for all finfish species, including many sites on inland bays and estuaries. Because large pelagic species typically occur further offshore, requiring larger vessels and specialized gear, the participants tend to use specific ports located at points of ocean access. Contacts with anglers who fished for large pelagic species are relatively rare in the MRIP samples and relatively few respondents are surveyed by both the LPS and the MRIP in a given year. However, anglers who fish for large pelagic species, but also fish for other species, are not excluded from MRIP sampling because representative sampling of their fishing trips in relation to other marine recreational angler fishing trips is necessary to avoid biasing catch estimates for any given species.

NMFS also requires anglers to report their landings of Atlantic bluefin tuna and billfish directly via a toll-free number, via the internet, or via landings cards in the states of North Carolina and Maryland for real-time quota monitoring. This requirement is covered under OMB No. 0648-0328. Although these other data collections overlap to a minor extent with the LPS (i.e., only trips landing bluefin tuna are affected), none of them collects information on all the other finfish species caught on large pelagic fishing trips. The LPS is the only survey designed to obtain accurate and precise marine recreational fishery catch information for all large pelagic species. In addition, to the extent overlap occurs (i.e., a person directly reporting bluefin tuna is also selected for a dockside or telephone interview), the information is useful to assess compliance with the direct reporting requirement. Therefore, data from these other programs have been used in a complementary manner along with LPS data.

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

All charter boat respondents to the LPS are considered to be small businesses. Charter boat businesses are frequent respondents due to the high level of fishing effort relative to private recreational vessels. The survey instruments have been restricted in length to minimize response time per interview, and randomized sampling will distribute dockside reporting burdens among individual charter boat operators.

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

An annual survey of recreational anglers is required to monitor changing conditions in the fishery and support modifications in fishery regulations for each fishing year. A continuous time series of data is scientifically essential. Without continued data collections the U.S. would not be able to meet essential monitoring and reporting requirements to international treaties that we are party to and domestic management of highly migratory species would be compromised significantly. Due to shifting migratory patterns, spatial availability to recreational anglers, pulse-like nature of these fisheries, and other factors, landings and size distribution of many large pelagics fluctuate significantly from year to year. Important changes taking place in the fishery and the stock status may be undetected if the LPS were not conducted every year.

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

Not Applicable.

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 (78 FR) published on November 22, 2013 solicited public comment on this collection. There were no comments.

NOAA Fisheries consulted with persons outside the agency who are very familiar with the Large Pelagics Survey to verify the accuracy of average reporting burden estimates. Large Pelagics Survey Field Supervisors working for the NOAA contractor QuanTech were asked the following questions:

1. NOAA Fisheries has estimated the average time per completed LPIS interview to be 5 minutes. Is this estimate (select one response): 1) very high, 2) slightly high, 3) about right, 4) slightly low, or 5) very low
2. NOAA Fisheries has estimated the average time per completed LPBS interview to be 1 minute. Is this estimate (select one response): 1) very high, 2) slightly high, 3) about right, 4) slightly low, or 5) very low

Two out of three supervisors said the LPIS estimate was “about right.” The third supervisor said the LPIS estimate was “slightly high” and commented that the interview was “... taking about 4 minutes or so” and that “during peak return periods is somewhat less and approaching 3 minutes.” All three supervisors said the LPBS average burden estimate was “about right.”

Large Pelagics Telephone Survey (LPTS) supervisors and experienced interviewers working for the NOAA contractor QuanTech were asked the following questions:

1. NOAA Fisheries has estimated the average time per completed LPTS interview to be 11 minutes. Is this estimate (select one response): 1) very high, 2) slightly high, 3) about right, 4) slightly low, or 5) very low

All three staff answered that the LPTS estimate of 11 minutes was “about right.”

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

Neither payments nor gifts will be provided to respondents.

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

Responses are kept confidential as required by section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens and [NOAA Administrative Order 216-100](#), Confidentiality of Fisheries Statistics, and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form without identification as to its source. Section 402(b) stipulates that data required to be submitted under an FMP shall be confidential and shall not be released except to Federal employees and Council staff responsible for FMP monitoring and development or when required under court order. Data such as personal addresses and phone numbers will remain confidential.

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 questions of a sensitive nature are requested in this collection of information.

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

The total annual burden for the LPS is estimated at 3,608 hours, for an estimated 25,557 responses by 15,024 unduplicated respondents. Calculations for specific components are as follows:

(a) Large Pelagics Telephone Survey

Based on the HMS permit list size (i.e., sample frame) and previous year's sampling effort, the estimated target interview sample size for future years is 15,900 for the Northeast and Southeast Regions combined. Due to the random selection process some will be contacted more than once and some not at all. Estimates of the number of respondents contacted given this sample size of interviews were determined from 2012 results. Because calls are made on a bi-weekly basis to collect information about a two-week period of fishing activity, it is important that a representative sample be obtained. This requires that prior respondents be eligible for resampling in future weeks. Sampling without replacement of prior contacts would likely result in a biased sample in later weeks.

The LPTS target sample size is 15,900 interviews. Since some respondents will be selected more than once per year, based on prior years' data this sample size will result in an estimated 12,020 unduplicated respondents to the LPTS. The average time per completed interview is estimated to be 11 minutes. **The estimated LPTS burden is 2,915 hours.**

(b) Large Pelagics Intercept Survey

At full funding, a total of 7,870 dockside interviews will be targeted annually at LPS sites. This includes interviewing in the Northeast and Southeast Regions. Since some respondents will be selected for LPIS more than once per year, this sample size will result in an estimated 3,803 unduplicated respondents to the LPIS. Based on prior years, it is estimated that 21% (799) of these respondents will also have been interviewed for the LPTS, reducing the 3,803 figure to 3,004). The average response burden is estimated at 5 minutes per intercept for a total of 656 total hours. In addition, field interviewer performance would be evaluated by validating 10 percent of dockside intercepts via a follow-up telephone call. The 787 calls (1.5 minutes each) would add 20 hours to the annual burden estimate. **Total burden for the dockside survey would be 676 hours annually.**

(c) Large Pelagics Biological Survey

Supplemental biological sampling interviews are estimated at 1 minute per intercept because few questions are asked of anglers and length/weight data and samples are obtained directly from the fish. At a sampling level of 1,000 interviews per year of intercept respondents in (b) (including biological sampling in the Northeast, Southeast and Gulf), **the total annual burden for the supplemental biological sampling is estimated at 17 hours.**

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

These data collections will incur no cost burden on respondents beyond the costs of response time.

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

At a fully funded level, the average annual cost to the Federal government is approximately \$2,402,754, divided as follows: \$1,792,754 in contract award money and \$250,000 in professional staff, overhead and computing costs.

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

Program Changes

- 1) Elimination of the Large Pelagics Headboat Survey (LPHS) component results in an annual reduction of 90 unduplicated respondents, 870 responses, and 82 burden hours.
- 2) Large Pelagics Telephone Survey changes
 - a. Addition of up to five questions to the Large Pelagics Telephone Survey.
 - b. Expansion of the LPTS non-response follow-up survey to cover all regions (previously only conducted in the Northeast from Maine through Virginia).
 - c. Increasing the Large Pelagics Telephone Survey target sample size from 10,780 to 15,900 for both the Northeast and Southeast combined.
 - d. LPTS changes combined (2a, 2b, 2c above) will result in an estimated annual increase of 3,871 unduplicated respondents, 5,120 responses, and 1,247 burden hours.
- 3) Reduction in the Large Pelagics Biological Survey annual sample size from 1,500 to 1,000 will result in an annual decrease of 500 responses and 8 burden hours.

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

LPS data and estimates will be included in annual catch reports to ICCAT and several documents frequently produced in support of NMFS rulemakings (i.e., Environmental Assessments, Regulatory Impact Reviews, Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Reports). LPS data can also be accessed online at: www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/recreational-fisheries/access-data/run-a-data-query/queries/index Additional summaries of data may be included in the annual NMFS publication "Fisheries of the United States".

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 seeking approval to not display expiration date.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not Applicable.