

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
ALASKA PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES: CHARTER RECORDKEEPING
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0575

JUSTIFICATION: Revision of an existing collection-of-information due to a Catch Sharing Plan for Halibut Fisheries in Alaska [associated rule, second proposed rule, RIN 0648-BA37]

Management of, and regulations for, Pacific halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*) in Alaska are developed on the international, Federal, and state levels by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Region (NMFS), and the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). The IPHC and NMFS manage fishing for Pacific halibut through regulations established under authority of the Convention between the United States Halibut Fishery of the Northern Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea (Convention), the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982, 16 U.S.C. 773c (Halibut Act), and Section 303(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).

NMFS proposed regulations to implement a Catch Sharing Plan (76 FR 44156, July 22, 2011) for the guided sport and commercial fisheries for Pacific halibut in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C (Southeast Alaska) and 3A (Central Gulf of Alaska). NMFS extended the public comment period to September 21, 2011. In October 2011, in part due to questions raised in the public comments on the proposed rule, NMFS and the Council started further analysis and clarification of provisions of the proposed Catch Sharing Plan. A second proposed rule was published on June 28, 2013 (78 FR 39122); comments to this second rule were extended to August 26, 2013. The final rule was published December 12, 2013 (78 FR 75844).

More than 4,000 public comments were received, although none of the comments were about recordkeeping and reporting. The majority of the comments were about the proposed allocation percentages and the fixed matrix of charter fishery harvest restrictions to be automatically triggered by changes in annual halibut catch limits.

a. ADF&G Saltwater Sport Fishing Charter Trip Logbook (Charter Logbook)
[REVISED burden and cost].

The charter logbook is the primary reporting requirement for charter fishery operators for all species harvested in saltwater in IPHC Reporting Areas 2C and 3A. ADF&G developed the charter logbook data to provide information on actual participation and harvest by individual anglers and businesses in charter fisheries for halibut as well as other state-managed species.

The charter vessel guide (guided angler fish (GAF) permit holder) is responsible for complying with the reporting requirements. For charter vessel fishing trips completed on a single day, charter vessel guides would be required to complete entries in the charter logbook before any halibut are offloaded or charter vessel anglers disembark from the vessel. For multi-day charter vessel fishing trips, charter vessel guides would be required to complete the GAF reporting requirements in a charter logbook by the end of each day of the trip. NMFS also would use the charter logbook to verify information reported in the GAF electronic reporting system.

Charter anglers in Area 2C are required to sign the charter logbook to verify the accuracy of the reported catch. NMFS would extend the signature requirement to include charter anglers in Area 3A as part of the Catch Sharing Plan. The charter vessel guide must acknowledge that the recorded information is correct and complete by signing the logbook data sheet.

Charter logbook

Charter vessel guide requirements

- ADF&G sport fishing guide license number held by the charter vessel guide
- Month and day of each charter vessel fishing trip
- GAF permit number under which the GAF were retained
- Angler sport fishing license number and printed name
- ADF&G statistical area
- CHP permit number
- Guide signature and ensure angler signature

Charter Logbook Vessel Guide Respondents	
Total number of guide respondents	696
Total annual responses (34 x 696) Frequency of response = 34 trips / vessel	23,664
Total annual time burden Estimated response time = 5 min	1,972 hr
Total personnel costs (\$25/hr)	\$49,300
Total miscellaneous costs	\$0

b. GAF electronic landing report [REVISED burden and cost]

In addition to the charter logbook, a GAF permit holder must use the GAF permit log and NMFS-approved electronic reporting system to submit a GAF landing report through an Internet website.

An Internet-based reporting system for GAF electronic reporting is used because it the most efficient and convenient method for charter operators to report GAF. A GAF permit holder must obtain at his or her own expense the technology (computer and Internet connection) to support the NMFS-approved electronic reporting system for GAF halibut landings. The GAF program is voluntary, and charter permit holders can weigh their own costs and benefits of participating in the program.

The GAF permit holder must enter information into the GAF electronic landing report for each GAF caught and retained by an angler on a charter vessel fishing trip. A GAF permit holder must submit a GAF electronic landing report by 2359 hours Alaska local time on the last day of a fishing trip for each day on which a charter vessel angler retained GAF authorized by the GAF permit held by that permit holder.

Upon receipt of a daily electronic GAF landing report, NMFS would respond with a confirmation number as evidence of receipt of the harvest report by NMFS and that the GAF account was properly debited. This confirmation number would allow cross reference of the charter logbook data and the electronic GAF report by management and NOAA Fisheries Office for Enforcement (OLE) staff.

NMFS would use the electronic GAF reporting system to manage GAF accounts and report GAF lengths. Near real-time reporting of GAF landings, and other GAF account and permit

information is essential to support participant access to current account balances for account management and regulatory compliance, and to monitor account transfers and GAF landings history. Management personnel need near real-time account information to manage permit accounts, conduct transfers, and assess fees. Enforcement personnel need real-time account information to monitor transfers between IFQ and GAF and monitor compliance with authorized GAF harvests and other program rules.

A manual GAF landing report is available in case the Internet or computer system is down or if the respondent needs to change a previously reported GAF landing. It is estimated within the burden and cost of the electronic GAF landing report.

GAF electronic landing report

ADF&G charter logbook number

Vessel identification number for vessel on which GAF were caught and retained

ADF&G vessel registration (AK number) or

U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) documentation number

GAF permit number

ADF&G sport fishing guide license number held by the charter vessel guide

Total number of GAF caught and retained

Total length (in inches) of each GAF retained.

Halibut lengths are measured in a straight line from the anterior-most tip of the lower jaw to the middle of the tail

Community charter halibut permit only

community or port where charter vessel fishing trip began and ended

Manual GAF report (optional)

Confirmation Number

Reason for Submitting Manual Reporting Form

Date and time reported

GAF Permit Number

GAF Permit Holder ID Number

GAF Permit Holder Name

Guide License Number

ADF&G Saltwater Logbook Number

USCG Vessel Documentation Number OR

State Vessel Registration Number

Trip Start Location (CQE only)

Trip End Location (CQE only)

Number of GAF Harvested

Multi-day Fishing Trip (circle YES or/ NO)

Harvest Date

Logbook Page Number

Halibut Length

Name of Person Submitting Report

Contact Number

Signature

Data Tech Signature and Date (NMFS only)

GAF Confirmation (issued by NMFS upon receipt of a GAF electronic report)

Confirmation Number

Date Reported

GAF Permit number

GAF Permit Holder

Permit Holder Name

Guide License Number

ADF&G Saltwater Logbook Number

USCG Number
 AK License Number
 Trip Start City
 Landing City
 Number of GAF Reported
 Multi-day Report (YES or NO)
 Harvest Date Log Page Number
 Fish Length

The estimated time to record information on the GAF electronic landing report is 5 minutes: 1 minute to measure GAF and 4 minutes to submit the report electronically.

GAF Electronic Landing Report, Respondents	
Total number of respondents	696
Total annual responses (34 x 696) Frequency of response = 34 trips / vessel	23,664
Total annual time burden Estimated response time = 5 min	1,972 hr
Total personnel costs (\$25/hr)	\$49,300
Total miscellaneous costs (1183.20) Online cost per response \$0.05 x 23664	\$1,183

c. GAF permit log (NEW)

As mentioned above, upon receipt of a GAF landing report from a GAF permit holder, NMFS would respond with a confirmation number as evidence that NMFS received the GAF harvest report and the GAF account was properly debited. The GAF permit holder would record this confirmation number on the GAF permit log, which is printed on the back of the corresponding GAF permit. This requirement would facilitate on-the-water enforcement and improve the accuracy of the GAF lengths reported electronically to NMFS.

The information recorded on the GAF permit log would be available for OLE officers to compare against records found upon boarding a vessel. This comparison would preserve the accuracy of the online reporting; otherwise the guides would need to remember the GAF lengths until the end of the trip.

A GAF permit holder may have several permits and logs by the end of the season. These documents must be retained for 2 years for inspection upon request of an OLE officer.

GAF Permit Log

Date halibut landed
 Total length in inches
 Electronic GAF landing report confirmation number

GAF Permit Log, Respondents	
Total number of respondents	696
Total annual responses (34 x 696) Frequency of response = 34 trips / vessel	23,664
Total annual time burden (788.80) Estimated response time = 2 min	789 hr \$19,725
Total personnel costs (\$25/hr)	\$1,183
Total miscellaneous costs (1183.20) Online cost per response \$0.05 x 23664	

SUMMARY

The **currently approved** numbers for the **GAF landing report** are: 37,060 responses, 3,088 hours, and \$1,853 miscellaneous costs. The **revised** numbers for the GAF landing report are: 23,664 responses, 1,972 hours, and \$1,183 miscellaneous costs. Difference: decrease of 13,396 responses and decrease of 1,116 hours.

The **currently approved** numbers for the **charter logbook vessel guide** are: 37,060 responses, 2,471 hours, and \$0 miscellaneous cost. The **revised** numbers for the **charter logbook vessel guide** are: 23,664 responses, 1,972 hours, and \$0 miscellaneous cost.

The added numbers for the **GAF permit log**: 23,664 responses, 789 hours, and \$1,183 miscellaneous costs.

Adjustments: A net decrease of 26,792 responses, 1,615 hours and \$670.

Charter halibut logbooks, vessel guide

a decrease of 13,396 responses, 23,664 instead of 37,060
a decrease of 499 hr burden, 1,972 hr instead of 2,471 hr
an increase of \$9,850 personnel costs, \$49,300 instead of \$39,450

GAF Electronic Landing Report

a decrease of 13,396 responses, 23,664 instead of 37,060
a decrease of 1,116 hr burden, 1,972 hr instead of 3,088 hr
a decrease of \$670 miscellaneous costs, \$1,183 instead of \$1,853

Program Change:

GAF Permit Log

an increase of 696 respondents, 696 instead of 0
an increase of 23,664 responses, 23,664 instead of 0
an increase of 789 hr burden, 789 hr instead of 0
an increase of \$19,725 personnel costs, \$19,725 instead of 0
an increase of \$1,183 miscellaneous costs, \$1,183 instead of 0

Overall changes: A net decrease of 3,128 responses and 826 hours and a net increase of \$513.