

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
ATLANTIC HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES VOLUNTARY RELEASE REPORTS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0628**

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

This request is for extension of an existing information collection.

Under the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) (MSFCMA, 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) promotes conservation and management measures that implement scientific research programs including the tagging and releasing of Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS; Atlantic tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks). As a part of this effort and to achieve other requirements of the MSFCMA, the final rule for Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP) (75 FR 30484; June 1, 2010) included measures to promote the live release of shortfin mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) in domestic recreational and commercial fisheries.

In order to address these requirements, NMFS created a Web page that contains an interactive mapping tool, which is populated with volunteered information from the public regarding the release of HMS. Information is used to raise awareness for releasing HMS and HMS tagging programs by driving internet traffic to a NMFS Website, and is not used as representative results. Data collected is displayed by NMFS on an interactive Web map on a NMFS Webpage. This Web map provides an incentive for fishermen to release HMS (e.g., personal recognition), and the Webpage contains information or links to information promoting NMFS scientific research, tagging programs, and conservation measures, as described in MSFCMA and Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP.

2. 1Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. 1If 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 all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

Information is used by NMFS to populate an interactive Web map that contains data regarding locations of HMS releases, information about the individual animals released (e.g., size, gender), and the name of the individual who submitted the data. The form contains the following information as applicable:

Species name
Date caught and released
Location (latitude and longitude)
Appropriate length measurement, e.g., total length, curved fork length (estimated or measured)
Gender (male, female, or unknown)
Fisherman's name
Fisherman's email address (will not be posted to Webpage)

Image of HMS released

Was the fish tagged (yes or no)

Tag Number (if yes for tagged)

The general public has access to view the Web map, and can view the data used to create the data points on the map. This information is available online: therefore, the data are publically accessible 24 hours a day, as long as the NMFS Web site is available. The Web map is used for informational purposes only, as the data represented in the map have been voluntarily submitted and are not representative of all of HMS releases. The goal of creating a Web map based on volunteered geographic information and public participation is to drive internet traffic to a Web site that contains information regarding NMFS scientific research, tagging programs, and conservation measures, as described in MSFCMA and Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP.

The data collected, while not representative results, are considered original data. NOAA 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 or other forms of information technology.

Collection of information would primarily be internet-based, and the majority of submissions are anticipated to come through a Web site submission form:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/shortfinmako/Map/index.htm>

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

All data submissions received are processed by a NMFS staff member for quality control/quality assessment purposes before being posted to the Web map. Duplicate submissions are not added to the interactive Web map.

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

The collection is voluntary; therefore, small businesses or small entities can minimize this burden by choosing not to submit information regarding HMS releases.

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

It is necessary to continue this collection because the MSFMCA promotes scientific research and tagging programs and management measures in Amendment 3 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP include a commitment to promote the live release of shortfin mako sharks. Therefore,

these policy activities would be hindered if this collection is not conducted or conducted less frequently. The interactive HMS release Web map, which has been initially populated with voluntarily submitted shortfin mako shark release information, is designed as the focal point driving internet traffic to information promoting releasing HMS and HMS tagging programs on the NMFS Website, and is dependent on this collection. Limiting the collection would reduce the number of individuals exposed to this information, and could hinder efforts to promote conservation and management of shortfin mako sharks and other HMS.

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 published on October 31, 2013 (78 FR 65291) solicited public comments. No comments were received on the notice.

NMFS consulted, in the form of a discussion with members of the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel and other members of the public at the public Panel meeting, on the burden estimate associated with this collection, and respondents concurred that estimates were an accurate representation of reporting burden.

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

No payments or gifts are to be offered as part of this information collection.

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

Information submissions are not considered to be confidential. On the Web site, it states “The information on this form, except for email address, will be publicly available on the NMFS website and Google Earth.

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 information of a sensitive nature is requested in this collection of information.

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

The estimated time of burden for this collection on an annual basis is 1 hour. This estimate comes from the average number of annual HMS release reports from 2011 through 2013 multiplied by the estimated time it would take to fill out the electronic submission form. From 2011-2013, 38 shortfin mako shark live release reports were submitted to NMFS using this reporting form, which is an average of 13 submissions annually. The estimated burden time for this submission is five minutes, therefore, the annual burden hour estimate is 1 hour ((13 responses * 5 minutes) / 60 minutes = 1 response hour).

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

There is no cost burden to the respondents, because there are a variety of zero cost means (i.e., Web submission form, smartphone applications) to submit the information.

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

The HMS internet mapping Web site is maintained by NMFS staff, with each submission taking approximately 30 minutes to process. At an hourly staff rate of approximately \$40 per hour, the annualized cost to the Federal government would be estimated at \$260.

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

Adjustments:

The burden hours associated with this submission form have been adjusted according to the average number of submissions that have been received by NMFS on an annual basis from 2011 – 2013. Previously, burden hours were estimated using recreational fishing survey data because this was a new collection: 9,246 responses and 771 hours. This new estimate should be a better representation of estimated burden hours to the general public based on results from 2011-2013.

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

All of the submissions received by NMFS have been submitted electronically through an online submission form. Once the information is received, NMFS staff reviews it for quality control purposes and then posts the information online via the interactive Web map.

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 Applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not Applicable.