

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
COOPERATIVE GAME FISH TAGGING REPORT
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0247**

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

The Cooperative Game Fish Tagging Program was initiated in 1971 as part of a comprehensive research program resulting from passage of P.L. 86-359, [Study of migratory game fish](#), and other legislative acts under which the National Marine Fisheries Service operates. The Cooperative Tagging Center (formerly the Cooperative Gamefish Tagging Program) attempts to determine the migratory patterns and other biological information of billfish, tunas, red drum, tarpon, amberjack, cobia, king mackerel, and swordfish by having anglers tag and release their catch.

The Fish Tag Issue Report card is a necessary part of the tagging program. Fishermen volunteer to tag and release their catch. When requested, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) provides the volunteers with fish tags for their use when they release their fish. Usually a group of five tags is sent at one time, each attached to a Report card, which is pre-printed with the first and last tag numbers received, and has spaces for the respondent's name, address, date, and club affiliation (if applicable).

When the angler releases a fish, he takes the Fish Tagging Report card with a tag attached, removes the numbered tag, applies the tag to the fish, and then mails the completed card (which has a number matching the tag number) to NMFS.

When a tagged fish is recaptured, the tag has the address of NMFS and a tag number. The person with the tagged fish can mail the tag to NMFS, where information on the fish is recorded and matched with the release data.

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 on each species is used by NMFS to determine migratory patterns, distance traveled, stock boundaries, age, and growth. These data are necessary input for developing management criteria by regional fishery management councils, states, and NMFS. The tag report cards are necessary to provide tags to the volunteer angler, record when and where the fish was tagged, the species, its estimated length and weight, tag number, and information on the tagger for follow-ups if the tagged fish is recovered. Failure to obtain these data would make management decisions very difficult and would be contrary to the NMFS Marine Recreational Fishing policy objectives.

Anglers are made aware of our tagging program through several forms of media: newspaper and magazine articles, through both [The Billfish Foundation](#) and the [Southeast Fisheries Science Center](#) websites, peer review papers, and by word of mouth. Anglers who wish to obtain tag kits or report recaptured tags can contact the cooperative tagging center via phone at 800-437-3936, via email addressed to tagging@noaa.gov, or via written request sent to:

Cooperative Tagging Center
75 Virginia Beach Dr.
Miami, Fl 33149.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Fisheries 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.

No other satisfactory method of obtaining movement information on oceanic pelagic fish has been identified. Although more sophisticated electronic tags exist, their expense prohibits their use in this program. Automated data entry by persons tagging fish isn't practical; the information is best entered at the time of tagging on fishing vessels.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

No duplication was evident during consultations with other conservation agencies. No similar information is available except what has been developed by this program.

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

Small entities are not involved.

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

The usefulness of this program would be compromised if the collection of data did not take place on a continual basis. It would be impossible to track trends in fish movement,

stock definitions, and growth rates. In addition, a less than annual frequency would have an adverse effect on the voluntary participation rate.

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

This collection is consistent with OMB guidelines, except that reports may be submitted more often than quarterly - whenever tagging takes place.

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 6, 2014 (79 FR 60139) solicited public comment on this renewal. No public comments were received.

The program consulted with Dr. David Kerstetter, a researcher and professor with Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center, and also currently a highly migratory species advisory panel member . Dr. Kerstetter has deployed our tags and has subsequently filled out the tagging card. His response was that the card looks good; the only questions he would consider adding would be regarding hook size and where on the animal the tag was attached. He found the directions on filling out the tag card quite clear, and said that it doesn't take long at all to write in those requested data fields. We will include his suggestions of hook size and tag location in the next tag order, FY16.

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

Tag release participants receive acknowledgment letters after submitting release data and a tag history letter upon the tag's recapture. Tag recapture participants receive a tag history letter and a Cooperative Tagging Center baseball cap or face buff as a reward.

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

Data on names and addresses are included in the [Commerce/NOAA-6, Fishermen's Statistical Data, Privacy Act system of records](#) and are protected as [Privacy Act](#) records. Handling procedures are described in various NOAA Directives.

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 sensitive questions are asked.

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

Estimated responses per year: 10,000

Mean time/response: 2 minutes

Total hours: 333 (10,000 x 2 minutes/60 minutes).

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

There is no cost to respondents; the postage is prepaid on the tag cards.

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

Annual cost of operation of the Cooperative Tagging Center:

Equipment: \$30,000

Labor: \$82,400

Total cost: \$112,400

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

No adjustments were made.

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

A summary of tagging effort is produced annually. Data is used in scientific studies and journal articles.

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.

There are no exceptions.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.

The following will be provided to the tagging volunteers when they are issued tags and Reports:

The Cooperative Game Fish Tagging Program is part of the fisheries research program operated by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The information supplied on the report will be used to determine migratory patterns, stock boundaries, and other aspects of the fish tagged. Your response is voluntary. The information submitted will be held as confidential under the Privacy Act. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 minutes per response, including the time necessary to review instructions, gather the data, and complete and review the report. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the address on the Fish Tagging Report form. Notwithstanding any other provision on the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

US Code: Title 16, Section 1881c

Sec. 1881c. Fisheries research

(a) In general

The Secretary shall initiate and maintain, in cooperation with the Councils, a comprehensive program of fishery research to carry out and further the purposes, policy, and provisions of this chapter. Such program shall be designed to acquire knowledge and information, including statistics, on fishery conservation and management and on the economics and social characteristics of the fisheries.

(b) Strategic plan

Within one year after October 11, 1996, and at least every 3 years thereafter, the Secretary shall develop and publish in the Federal Register a strategic plan for fisheries research for the 5 years immediately following such publication. The plan shall –

(1) identify and describe a comprehensive program with a limited number of priority objectives for research in each of the areas specified in subsection (c) of this section;

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(2) indicate goals and timetables for the program described in paragraph (1);

(3) provide a role for commercial fishermen in such research, including involvement in field testing;

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(4) provide for collection and dissemination, in a timely manner, of complete and accurate information concerning fishing activities, catch, effort, stock assessments, and other research conducted under this section; and

(5) be developed in cooperation with the Councils and affected States, and provide for coordination with the Councils, affected States, and other research entities.

(c) Areas of research

Areas of research are as follows:

(1) Research to support fishery conservation and management, including but not limited to, biological research concerning the abundance and life history parameters of stocks of fish, the interdependence of fisheries or stocks of fish, the identification of essential fish habitat, the impact of pollution on fish populations, the impact of wetland and estuarine degradation, and other factors affecting the abundance and availability of fish.

(2) Conservation engineering research, including the study of fish behavior and the development and testing of new gear technology and fishing techniques to minimize bycatch and any adverse effects on essential fish habitat and promote efficient harvest of target species.

(3) Research on the fisheries, including the social, cultural, and economic relationships among fishing vessel owners, crew, United States fish processors, associated shoreside labor, seafood markets and fishing communities.

(4) Information management research, including the development of a fishery information base and an information management system under section 1881 of this title that will permit the full use of information in the support of effective fishery conservation and management.

(d) Public notice

In developing the plan required under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall consult with relevant Federal, State, and international agencies, scientific and technical experts, and other interested persons, public and private, and shall publish a proposed plan in the Federal Register for the purpose of receiving public comment on the plan. The Secretary shall ensure that affected commercial fishermen are actively involved in the development of the portion of the plan pertaining to conservation engineering research. Upon final publication in the Federal Register, the plan shall be submitted by the Secretary to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives.

US Code : Title 16, Section 1881d

Sec. 1881d. Incidental harvest research

(a) Collection of information

Within nine months after October 11, 1996, the Secretary shall, after consultation with the Gulf Council and South Atlantic Council, conclude the collection of information in the program to assess the impact on fishery resources of incidental harvest by the shrimp trawl fishery within the authority of such Councils. Within the same time period, the Secretary shall make available to the public aggregated summaries of information collected prior to June 30, 1994 under such program.

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(b) Identification of stock

The program concluded pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall provide for the identification of stocks of fish which are subject to significant incidental harvest in the course of normal shrimp trawl fishing activity.

(c) Collection and assessment of specific stock information

For stocks of fish identified pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, with priority given to stocks which (based upon the best available scientific information) are considered to be overfished, the Secretary shall conduct

(1) a program to collect and evaluate information on the nature and extent (including the spatial and temporal distribution) of incidental mortality of such stocks as a direct result of shrimp trawl fishing activities;

(2) an assessment of the status and condition of such stocks, including collection of information which would allow the estimation of life history parameters with sufficient accuracy and precision to support sound scientific evaluation of the effects of various management alternatives on the status of such stocks; and

(3) a program of information collection and evaluation for such stocks on the magnitude and distribution of fishing mortality and fishing effort by sources of fishing mortality other than shrimp trawl fishing activity.

(d) Bycatch reduction program

Not later than 12 months after October 11, 1996, the Secretary shall, in cooperation with affected interests, and based upon the best scientific information available, complete a program to

(1) develop technological devices and other changes in fishing operations necessary and appropriate to minimize the incidental mortality of bycatch in the course of

shrimp trawl activity to the extent practicable, taking into account the level of bycatch mortality in the fishery on November 28, 1990;

(2) evaluate the ecological impacts and the benefits and costs of such devices and changes in fishing operations; and

(3) assess whether it is practicable to utilize bycatch which is not avoidable.

(e) Report to Congress

The Secretary shall, within one year of completing the programs required by this section, submit a detailed report on the results of such programs to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives.

(f) Implementation criteria

To the extent practicable, any conservation and management measure implemented under this chapter to reduce the incidental mortality of bycatch in the course of shrimp trawl fishing shall be consistent with

(1) measures applicable to fishing throughout the range in United States waters of the bycatch species concerned; and

(2) the need to avoid any serious adverse environmental impacts on such bycatch species or the ecology of the affected area.

US code: Title 16, Section 760e

Sec. 760e. Study of migratory game fish; waters; research; purpose

The Secretary of Commerce is directed to undertake a comprehensive continuing study of the migratory marine fish of interest to recreational fishermen of the United States, including species inhabiting the offshore waters of the United States and species which migrate through or spend a part of their lives in the inshore waters of the United States. The study shall include, but not be limited to, research on migrations, identity of stocks, growth rates, mortality rates, variations in survival, environmental influences, both natural and artificial, including pollution, and effects of fishing on the species, for the purpose of developing wise conservation policies and constructive management activities.

(including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for approval by the Office of Management and Budget for this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: September 30, 2014.

Gwellnar Banks,
Management Analyst, Office of the Chief
Information Officer.

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BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Cooperative Game Fish Tagging Report

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before December 5, 2014.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at Jjessup@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Eric Orbesen, (305) 361-4253 or Eric.Orbesen@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for extension of a current information collection.

The Cooperative Game Fish Tagging Program was initiated in 1971 as part of a comprehensive research program resulting from passage of Public Law 86-359, Study of Migratory Game Fish, and other legislative acts under which the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) operates. The Cooperative Tagging Center attempts to determine the migration patterns of, and other biological information for, billfish, tunas, and swordfish. The fish tagging report is provided to the angler with the tags, and he/she fills out the card with the information when a fish is tagged and mails it to NMFS. Information on each species is used by NMFS to determine migratory patterns, distance traveled, stock boundaries, age, and growth. These data are necessary input for developing management criteria by regional fishery management councils, states, and NMFS.

II. Method of Collection

Information is submitted by mail.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0247.

Form Number: NOAA form 88-162.

Type of Review: Regular submission (extension of a current information collection).

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 12,000.

Estimated Time per Response: 2 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 400 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: September 30, 2014

Gwellnar Banks,
Management Analyst, Office of the Chief
Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2014-23712 Filed 10-3-14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Pacific Albacore Logbook

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before December 5, 2014.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at Jjessup@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to John Childers, SWFSC, 8901 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037, 858-546-7192, john.childers@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for extension of a currently approved collection. U.S. fishermen, participating in the Pacific albacore tuna fishery, are required to obtain a Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan and/or a High-Seas Fishery Compliance Act permit. A requirement for the permits is to complete and submit logbooks documenting their daily fishing activities, including catch and effort for each fishing trip. Submissions must be made within 30 days of the completion of a trip. The information obtained is used by the agency to assess the status of Pacific albacore stocks and to monitor the fishery.