

**ALASKA REGION PERMIT FAMILY OF FORMS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0206**

This action requests an extension of an existing collection of information.

INTRODUCTION

Under the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.* (Magnuson-Stevens Act), the Secretary of Commerce is responsible for the conservation and management of marine fishery resources within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the United States (U.S.) through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA/NMFS). NMFS Alaska Region manages the groundfish fisheries in the EEZ of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) under the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area and the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska, respectively. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) developed the fishery management plans (FMPs). Regulations implementing the FMPs appear at [50 CFR part 679](#).

BACKGROUND

Section 303(b)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act specifically recognizes the need for permit issuance. The requirement of a permit for marine resource users is one of the regulatory steps taken to carry out conservation and management objectives. The issuance of a permit is an essential ingredient in the management of fishery resources needed for identification of the participants and expected activity levels and for regulatory compliance (e.g., withholding of permit issuance pending collection of unpaid penalties).

This collection includes the information requirements for the following permits:

Form Name	Located in Regulations at 50 CFR...
Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP)	679.4(b)
Federal Processor Permit (FPP)	679.4(f)
Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP)	600.745(b) and 679.6

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

Participation in the groundfish fisheries of the EEZ off Alaska requires a Federal Fisheries Permit or Federal Processor Permit, available upon request to any person who is a U.S. citizen. In addition, an Exempted Fishing Permit is available for limited experimental purposes.

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 all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

The information requested on the permit applications is used for fisheries management and regulatory compliance by NMFS Sustainable Fisheries Division, NMFS Restricted Access Management Program, NMFS Observer Program, NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and the Council.

a. Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP) application. [adjusted]

Federal Fisheries Permits (FFPs) are non-transferable, 3-year permits, issued on request and without charge to vessel owners. These permits are authorized at 50 CFR 679.4(b). An FFP is required for U.S. vessels used to fish for groundfish in the GOA and BSAI. The FFP is also required for vessels that must retain any bycatch of groundfish under 50 CFR part 679.

In addition, if the owner of a vessel plans to participate in the directed fisheries for Pacific cod, pollock, and/or Atka mackerel in the GOA or BSAI with any gear other than jig gear, the FFP must be endorsed for these species by gear type used. Vessels endorsed for these directed fisheries in the EEZ off Alaska are required to have on board an active Vessel Monitoring System (see OMB Control No. 0648-0445) while the directed fisheries for which the permit is endorsed are open, regardless of where the vessel is fishing at the time (including Alaska State waters) or what the vessel is targeting.

Only persons who are U.S. Citizens are authorized to receive or hold an FFP.

The FFP application is used to request a new or amended permit, to renew a permit, or to surrender a permit. The application is available on the NMFS Alaska Region website and may be submitted to NMFS by mail, courier, or fax.

If ownership in Block A of the application has changed or if this is an application for a vessel to which an FFP has never been issued, documentation of vessel ownership must be provided with this application. To demonstrate vessel ownership you must provide the following:

- ◆ For USCG documented vessels, a copy of the USCG Abstract of Title or Certificate of Documentation
- ◆ For undocumented vessels, a copy of the State of Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) vessel license or registration

An FFP application must include the following information:

Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP) application

Indicate the type of request:

New FFP, Renew FFP, Amend FFP, or Surrender FFP

If requesting to renew, amend, or surrender an existing FFP, provide current FFP number

Block A – Owner information

Owner name and NMFS Person ID

Business mailing address, including street or P.O. box, city, state, and zip code (indicate whether permanent or

temporary)
 Managing company name (if any)
 Business telephone number, business fax number, and business e-mail address

Block B. Vessel information

Vessel name
 Home port (city and state)
 ADF&G processor code (if applicable)
 Indicate whether this is a vessel of the United States
 USCG documentation number
 ADF&G vessel registration number
 Length overall (ft) and registered length (ft)
 Gross tonnage and net tonnage
 Shaft horsepower

Block C. Permit information

Area of operation
 Type of vessel operation
 Gear type (catcher vessel or catcher/processor only)
 GOA Inshore Processing Endorsement (vessels under 125 ft length overall)

Block D. Species Endorsements and Amendments

Indicate requested species endorsements with gear other than jig gear; or
 Remove species endorsement

Block E. Applicant Signature

Printed name and signature of applicant or authorized representative and date signed. If authorized representative, attach authorization.

The number of respondents was adjusted to reflect the most recent data. Adjustments were made to reflect the current postage cost (0.49 instead of 0.45) and current Federal government personnel cost (\$42/hr instead of \$37/hr).

Federal Fisheries Permit, respondents	
Total number of respondents (1,324/3)	441
Total number of responses	441
Response per participant = 1	
Total Time burden (154.35)	154 hr
Time per response (21 min x 441)	
Total personnel costs (\$37/hr x 154)	\$5,698
Total miscellaneous costs (304.25)	\$304
Submit by fax (\$6 x 16 = 96)	
Submit by mail (.49 x 425 = 208.25)	
Federal Fisheries Permit, Federal Government	
Total number of responses	441
Total time burden (183.75)	184 hr
Time requirement per response (25 min)	
Total personnel cost (\$42/hr x 184)	\$7,728
Total miscellaneous costs	\$0

b. Federal Processor Permit (FPP) application. [adjusted]

Federal Processor Permits (FPPs) are non-transferable, 1-year permits, issued to owners on request and without charge. These permits are authorized at 50 CFR 679.4(f). An FPP is required before the manager of a shoreside processor, stationary floating processor (SFP), or a community quota entity (CQE) floating processor may receive, process, purchase, or arrange to purchase unprocessed groundfish harvested in the GOA or BSAI (see 50 CFR 679.4(f)).

Only persons who are U.S. Citizens are authorized to receive or hold an FPP.

A shoreside processor, SFP, or CQE floating processor that is issued an FPP under 50 CFR 679.4(f) must use eLandings (see OMB Control No. 0648-0515) or other NMFS-approved software to daily record and report groundfish harvest. For more information on eLandings, see <https://elandings.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/doc/pages/79659055/eLandings+Reporting+System+FAQ+s>.

Persons holding an FPP may be required to pay an ex-vessel value-based observer fee to NMFS to support the funding and development of observers on vessels and in plants in the partial coverage category under the North Pacific Observer Program (see OMB Control No. 0648-0711; 50 CFR 679.55). This fee is intended to be split evenly between the vessel owner and the processor or registered buyer. However, the owner of a shoreside processor or SFP named on an FPP and the registered buyer are responsible for collecting the fee, including the vessel's portion, at the time of landing and remitting the full fee amount to NMFS. Additional information on the observer fee is available on the NMFS Alaska Region website at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/default.htm>.

An FPP permit holder who has incurred an observer fee must pay the fee to NMFS by February 15 of the year following the calendar year in which the landing was made. For an FPP application to be considered complete, all observer fees due to NMFS per § 679.55 must be paid.

The owner or authorized representative of the shoreside processor, SFP, or CQE floating processor must complete an FPP application to obtain, amend, renew, or surrender an FPP. The FPP application is available on the NMFS Alaska Region website and may be submitted to NMFS by mail, courier, or fax.

For an SFP, a GOA inshore processing endorsement is required to process GOA inshore pollock and Eastern GOA inshore Pacific cod. An SFP that wishes to receive GOA inshore processing endorsements must complete number 11 of Block B on the FPP application. An SFP that holds an inshore processing endorsement is prohibited from processing GOA pollock and GOA Pacific cod in more than one single geographic location during a fishing year and is also prohibited from operating as a catcher/processor in the BSAI. Vessels holding the GOA inshore processing endorsement face additional operating restrictions (see 50 CFR 679.7). Once issued, a GOA inshore processing endorsement cannot be rescinded for the duration of a fishing year. It may be changed for the next fishing year by submitting an FPP application to amend the permit prior to the beginning of that fishing year.

An FPP application must include the following information:

Federal Processor Permit (FPP) application

Indicate the category of processor: Shoreside; SFP; CQE floating processor

Indicate type of request: New; Renew; Amend; Surrender

If requesting to renew, amend, or surrender an existing FPP, enter FPP number

Block A. Shoreside processor information

Name of shoreside processor

Tax identification number

NMFS Person ID

ADF&G processor code

Permanent business mailing address, including P.O. box or street, city, state, and zip code
 Temporary business mailing address (if applicable)
 Physical location of plant at which this shoreside processor is operating (no post office boxes)
 Business telephone number, business fax number, and business e-mail address

Block B. SFP or CQE information.

Name of vessel
 Indicate whether this is a vessel of the United States
 USCG documentation number
 ADF&G vessel registration number
 ADF&G processor code
 Tax identification number
 Length overall (ft) and registered length (ft)
 Gross tonnage and net tonnage
 Shaft horsepower
 Home port (city and state)
 Indicate if requesting GOA Inshore Processing Endorsement
 Indicate if requesting GOA CQE Floating Processor Endorsement

Block C. Owner information

List all owners of the Shoreside Processor or Vessel Identified in Block A or Block B
 Name of primary owner
 NMFS Person ID
 Permanent business mailing address of contact owner, including street or P. O. box, city, state, and zip code
 Business telephone number, business fax number, and business e-mail address
 List name and NMFS Person ID of additional owners

Block D. Applicant signature

Printed name and signature of applicant and date signed
 If authorized representative, attach authorization

Attachments

Attach USCG Abstract of Title or Certificate of Documentation if requesting a new FPP or if change in ownership

The number of respondents was adjusted to reflect the most recent data. Adjustments were made to reflect the current postage cost (0.49 instead of 0.45) and current Federal government personnel cost (\$42/hr instead of \$37/hr).

Federal Processor Permit, respondents	
Total number of respondents	86
Total number of responses	86
Number annual responses = 1	
Total time burden (35.8)	36 hr
Time requirement per response = 25 min	
Total personnel cost (\$37/hr x 36)	\$1,332
Total miscellaneous cost (135.81)	\$136
Submit by fax (\$6 x 17 = 102)	
Submit by mail (.49 x 69 = 33.81)	

Federal Processor Permit, Federal Government	
Total number responses	86
Total time burden (35.8)	36 hr
Time requirement per response = 25 min	
Total personnel cost (\$42/hr x 36 hr)	\$1,512
Total miscellaneous cost	\$0

c. Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP). [name corrected from Exempted Fisheries Permit]

NMFS issues an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) to allow groundfish fishing activities that would otherwise be prohibited under regulations for groundfish fishing. EFPs are issued to support projects that could benefit the groundfish fisheries and the environment and result in gathering information not otherwise available through research or commercial fishing operations.

For limited experimental purposes, the Regional Administrator may authorize, after consulting with the Council, fishing for groundfish or fishing for Arctic fish in the Arctic Management Area in a manner that would otherwise be prohibited. No exempted fishing may be conducted unless authorized by an EFP issued by the Regional Administrator to the participating vessel owner in accordance with the criteria and procedures.

EFPs are issued without charge and expire at the end of a calendar year unless otherwise provided. This expiration requirement is necessary to avoid situations where information obtained from the fishing experiments might not be made available for several years, thereby denying the fishing industry information obtained from the experiment. The process to issue an EFP takes 6 to 12 months depending on the complexity of the project and the Council's meeting schedule.

No form exists for this application. Applicants may submit the required information to NMFS by mail, courier, email, or fax.

The EFP applicant need not be the owner or operator of the vessel(s). The EFP design must be—

- ◆ approved by the Alaska Fisheries Science Center;
- ◆ presented at a Council meeting; and
- ◆ must include observers, if required by the Regional Administrator, and a description of accommodations and work space for the observer(s).

For each EFP application, NMFS—

- ◆ may write an environmental analysis to determine the impacts of the EFP prior to awarding the permit. This analysis would support the decision-making and inform the public of the effects of the EFP project.
- ◆ must consult with the Council. This includes filing a *Federal Register* notice announcing receipt of the EFP application and notifying the public of which meeting NMFS will consult with the Council on the application.
- ◆ upon deciding to issue the EFP, develops the EFP. The EFP includes project-specific terms and conditions that must be met for the permit holder to be exempted from the stated regulations, and the timing, area, and vessel(s) to which the EFP applies.
- ◆ disseminates EFP project data and results when available. Through the release of information from NMFS and the EFP participants, other interested parties in the fishing industry could

make use of information obtained and not duplicate efforts already expended by those who initially received an EFP.

An EFP application must include the following information:

Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application

Date of the application.

Name of applicant

Permanent mailing address and telephone number of applicant

EFP Project Information

Purpose and goal of the EFP project

Describe arrangements for disposition of all species harvested under the EFP

Procedural information about the EFP project

(e.g., sampling procedures, the data and samples to be collected, and analysis of the data and samples)

Fishing mortality anticipated.

Mortality resulting from exempted fishing is outside of any total acceptable catch specification and is authorized only if overfishing as defined in the GOA and BSAI FMPs would not occur

Amounts of each species to be harvested that are necessary to conduct the experiment

Area and timing of the experiment

Vessel and gear to be used

Willingness to carry observers, if required by the Regional Administrator, and a description of accommodations and work space for the observer(s)

Details for all coordinating parties engaged in the experiment

Vessel Information

Vessel name

Name, address, and telephone number of owner and master

USCG documentation, ADF&G license, or vessel registration number

Home port

Length of vessel

Net tonnage

Gross tonnage

Provision for public release of all obtained information, and submission of interim and final reports

Signature of the applicant and signatures of all representatives of all principal parties

Several adjustments were made. Based on comments received on this renewal, the respondent's burden hours were increased from 20 hours to 100 hours, and personnel costs were increased from \$37 per hour to \$100 per hour (see A8 below). Miscellaneous costs for the respondents were changed from \$18 to \$0 because no one has submitted an application by mail or courier in the last three years; all were sent electronically and we expect this to continue.

Adjustments were also made to reflect the Federal Government's current burden hours (increased from 45 to 130 hours), personnel costs (increased from \$2,247 to \$5,383), and miscellaneous costs (decreased from \$300 to \$4).

Exempted fishing Permit, Respondent	
Estimated number of respondents	4
Total estimated responses (1 x 4)	4
Number of annual responses = 1	
Total time burden (4 x 100 hr)	400 hr
Time per response = 100 hr	
Total personnel cost (\$100/hr x 400 hr)	\$40,000
Total miscellaneous cost	\$0

Exempted fishing Permit, Federal Government	
Estimated total responses (1 x 4)	4
Number of annual responses = 1	
Total time burden	130 hr
Review application & resolve questions (20 hr) 16 hr at GS-12/13	
4 hr at GS-14/15	
Process application, create EA, issue EFP (106 hr)	
96 hr at GS-12/13	
10 hr at GS-14/15	
Complete report of EFP activity (4 hr)	
4 hr at GS-12/13	
Total personnel cost	\$5,838
(16 + 96 + 4 GS-12/13) x \$43 = 4,998	
(4 + 10 GS-14/15) x \$60 = 840	
Total miscellaneous costs	\$4

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 all applicable Information Quality Guidelines

Section 515 of Public Law 106-554 (the Information Quality Act) requires NMFS to ensure the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information it publicly disseminates. Public dissemination of data collected by this information collection is governed by NOAA's information quality guidelines, which were issued on October 30, 2014 (http://www.cio.noaa.gov/services_programs/IQ_Guidelines_103014.html).

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 or other forms of information technology.

The FFP and FPP applications are available on the NMFS Alaska Region website. The applications may be completed online using the fillable PDF forms and then printed and faxed to the NMFS Alaska Region permits office. Alternatively, the FPP application can be renewed online through the eFISH program. EFP applications may be submitted by fax or email.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

No duplication exists with other information collections.

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

The information collection affects some small entities. NMFS has attempted to minimize the burden on small entities.

The FFP and FPP applications are available online as fillable pdfs and may be submitted by fax. The FFP has a 3-year renewal cycle, so participants are not required to submit an application every year. The EFP does not have an application form. The required information may be submitted by fax or email. For help or more information on the FFP, FPP, or EFP, persons may contact NMFS staff through email and toll-free phone numbers.

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

The permit system is an integral part of the management of groundfish fisheries in the Alaska Region. It would not be possible to carry out the mandates of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other laws if approval to continue these previously approved collections were to be denied.

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

No special circumstances exist.

8. Provide a copy of 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.

Public comment was solicited in a Federal Register notice (82 FR 34928) published July 27, 2017. In addition, NMFS solicited input from permit holders. The comments received are summarized and responded to below.

Comment 1: The information required in the EFP application is useful and necessary to NMFS' review of proposed EFPs.

Response: NMFS acknowledges the comment.

Comment 2: The estimated costs for the EFP application are low. The hourly rate is too low given the skill level needed for preparing EFPs for the Alaska Region. Personnel costs are typically closer to \$100 per hour.

Response: In response to the comments received, NMFS has increased the hourly rate for the EFP application personnel cost from \$37 per hour to \$100 per hour.

Comment 3: The review standards for the EFP applied by the Alaska Region and those for the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee are relatively high; hence, the time needed to prepare an application typically exceeds 40 hours. The average number of hours per application is closer to 100 hours.

Response: In response to the comments received, NMFS has increased the estimate for the time to complete an EFP application from 20 hours to 100 hours.

Comment 4: The cost estimates are low. Personnel costs are typically closer to \$100 per hour for the formulation of the EFP. The other costs of the EFP are writing the report and making a presentation to the Council and in other venues. These activities take a minimum of 20 hours.

Response: See responses to Comments 2 and 3.

Comment 4: The instructions for the EFP application requirements are clear.

Response: NMFS acknowledges the comment.

Comment 5: The Alaska Region applies the standards for the EFPs in the North Pacific quite well and this leads to well thought out EFPs and relatively high quality projects done under EFPs. These projects have consistently been instrumental in improvements to fishery management in the Alaska Region.

Response: NMFS acknowledges the comment.

Comment 5: It would be nice to have some project flexibility with the EFP since sometimes unforeseen things happen, especially seasonal allocations of salmon or groundfish.

Response: NMFS acknowledges the comment. Expanding project flexibility is outside the scope of this PRA collection renewal.

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

No payment or gift is provided.

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

The information collected is confidential under section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*); and also under [NOAA Administrative Order \(AO\) 216-100](#), which sets forth procedures to protect confidentiality of fishery statistics.

The System of Records Notice that covers this information collection is [COMMERCE/NOAA-19, Permits and Registrations for United States Federally Regulated Fisheries](#). An amended notice was published in the *Federal Register* on August 7, 2015 (80 FR 47457), and became effective September 15, 2015 (80 FR 55327).

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.

This information collection does not involve information of a sensitive nature.

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

Estimated total respondents: 531, down from 662. Estimated total responses: 531, down from 662. Estimated total burden: 590, up from 319 hr. Estimated total personnel cost: \$47,030, up from \$11,803.

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).

Estimated total miscellaneous cost: \$440, down from \$864.

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

Estimated total responses: 531, down from 662. Estimated total burden: 350, up from 293 hr. Estimated total personnel cost: \$15,078, up from \$12,422. Total miscellaneous costs: \$4, down from \$300. Total costs: \$15,082.

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

Adjustments

Adjustments were made to reflect the most recently available data, changes in postage costs, and comments received from permit holders.

Federal fisheries permit application

- a decrease of 93 respondents, 441 instead of 534
- a decrease of 93 responses, 441 instead of 534
- a decrease of 33 hr burden, 154 instead of 187 hr
- a decrease of \$1,221 in personnel costs, \$5,698 instead of \$6,919
- a decrease of \$353 in miscellaneous costs, \$304 instead of \$657

Federal processor permit application

- a decrease of 38 respondents, 86 instead of 124
- a decrease of 38 responses, 86 instead of 124
- a decrease of 16 hr burden, 36 instead of 52 hr
- a decrease of \$592 in personnel costs, \$1,332 instead of \$1,924
- a decrease of \$53 in miscellaneous costs, \$136 instead of \$189.

Exempted fishing permit application

- an increase of 320 hr burden, 400 hr instead of 80 hr
- an increase of \$37,040 in personnel costs, \$40,000 instead of \$2,960
- a decrease of \$18 in miscellaneous costs, \$0 instead of \$18.

In addition to the decreases in the FFP and FPP responses, the net cost reduction is attributable to more responses being mailed than faxed.

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

The list of FFPs and FPPs and the information obtained from the permit applications are posted on the NMFS Alaska Region website at https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/permits-licenses?field_fishery_pm_value=Federal+Fisheries+Permits+%28FFP%29%2FFederal+Processor+Permits+%28FPP%29&=Apply. EFP applications, comments on the applications, and final reports resulting from issuance of EFPs are posted on the NMFS Alaska Region website at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/ram/efp.htm>.

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.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.