JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE

INTERNATIONAL DOLPHIN CONSERVATION PROGRAM ACT

OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0387

This request is to add an online payment option for the Eastern Tropical Pacific Vessel (ETP-V) permit onto the National Permits System (NPS) as an additional method of collection. NPS is a web based application used to facilitate the processing of NMFS permits. This website also offers a public application for permit applicants to apply and pay for permits, in addition to accessing permit related information. Currently, NPS offers applicants the option to apply for the Eastern Tropical Pacific Operator (ETP-O) permit (50 CFR Part 216) for the West Coast Region and Pacific Islands Regional Office. Activation of this option would be on an as-needed basis.

The International Dolphin Conservation Program Act (IDCPA) allows U.S. fishing vessels, including purse seine vessels, to participate in the yellowfin tuna fishery in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean (ETP). The ETP-V permit (50 CFR Part 216) is required for any purse seine vessel greater than 400 st (362.8 mt) carrying capacity that participates in commercial fishing operations in the ETP. Currently, application fees for ETP-V permits are collected as checks or money orders via mail. The addition of an online payment option will reduce the amount of time required for the applicant to receive their permit. The processing time by the permits office will decrease because all data entry is performed by the applicant.

The information collected from the applicant will remain the same. This includes (1) vessel information on which the applicants anticipated operating, (2, 3) vessel owner and permit holder information including owner's name, address, telephone, fax number, (4) operator name, (5) marine mammal safety information, (6) contact information, and (7) the permits completing the applications signature.

NMFS seeks approval to offer an optional online payment for ETP-V approved applications managed through the WCR Permits Office. No changes to the application procedure will occur.

A screen shot of the online payment form is attached.

