

comprehensive salmon and steelhead recovery strategy. As reported in the application, significant actions to address the decline of salmon and steelhead stocks in the Willamette River basin have been underway for several decades, and are progressing each year as a result of the implementation of ESA recovery plans throughout the Willamette River basin. These actions include harvest reductions, hydroelectric system mitigation, habitat restoration, predation management, and hatchery reforms.

In their application, the state asserts that taking no action or continued use of only non-lethal methods will likely result in an expansion of the problem interaction by allowing CSLs to become recruited into the pool of nuisance animals. The expected benefit of permanent removal of the animals in question will be to reduce a significant source of mortality that has jeopardized state, Federal, and non-governmental efforts to recover ESA-listed salmon and steelhead stocks in the Willamette River basin. The state's population viability analysis predicts that elimination of the problem interaction will reduce the probability of extinction of the three independent UWR steelhead populations from 20–64 percent to <5 percent.

In considering whether the application should be approved or denied, the MMPA requires that the Task Force and NMFS consider: (1) Population trends, feeding habits, the location of the pinniped interaction, how and when the interaction occurs, involved; (2) past efforts to deter such pinnipeds, and whether the applicant has demonstrated that no feasible and prudent alternatives exist and that the applicant has taken all reasonable nonlethal steps without success; (3) the extent to which such pinnipeds are causing undue injury impact to, or imbalance with, other species in the ecosystem, including fish populations; and (4) the extent to which such pinnipeds are exhibiting behavior that presents an ongoing threat to public safety. The NMFS West Coast Regional Administrator has considered the state's application and determined that it provides sufficient evidence to warrant establishing a Task Force. The application describes the means of identifying individual pinnipeds, includes a detailed description of the problem interaction between pinnipeds and listed salmonids in the vicinity of Willamette Falls, and describes the expected benefits of potential taking of pinnipeds. The application also documents the state's past non-lethal

efforts to deter pinnipeds in the vicinity of Willamette Falls.

Request for Comments and Other Information

NMFS solicits public comments on the state's application and any additional information that should be considered by the Task Force in making its recommendation, or by NMFS in making its determination whether to approve or deny the application. NMFS is interested in receiving additional information related to the factors that must be considered in determining whether to approve or deny the application (see Background), and on the impact of sea lion predation in the vicinity of Willamette Falls on the affected salmonid stocks.

NMFS requests that comments be specific. In particular, we request information regarding: (1) Observations of pinnipeds (number, species and predation on salmonids) in the Willamette River;

(2) Information on areas where numbers of pinnipeds are concentrated in the Willamette River, including resting/haul out sites and locations where pinnipeds have been repeatedly observed taking salmonids; and

(3) Dates when pinnipeds have been observed in the Willamette River.

NMFS also solicits the names and affiliations of experts from the academic and scientific community, tribes, Federal and state agencies, and the private sector for consideration as potential Task Force members. A Task Force, established under section 120(c) of the MMPA must, to the maximum extent practicable, consist of an equitable balance among representatives of resource users and non-users as outlined above. The state's application included a list of suggested agencies and organizations for inclusion in the Task Force (see Electronic Access). Nominations for Task Force membership must include sufficient background information (*e.g.*, 1–page resume) on the candidate to allow us to judge their expertise and should indicate the prospective candidate's willingness to serve without compensation.

Dated: November 3, 2017.

Donna S. Wieting,

*Director, Office of Protected Resources,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; West Coast Region Groundfish Trawl Fishery Monitoring and Catch Accounting Program

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 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 January 8, 2018.

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 pracomments@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to the West Coast Regional Office—7600 Sand Point Way NE., Seattle, WA 98115, Keeley Kent, telephone number ((206) 526–4655), or keeley.kent@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for extension of a currently approved information collection.

In January 2011, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) implemented a trawl rationalization program, a catch share program, for the Pacific coast groundfish fishery's trawl fleet. The program was developed through Amendment 20 to the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) and consists of an individual fishing quota (IFQ) program for the shorebased trawl fleet (including whiting and non-whiting fisheries); and cooperative (coop) programs for the at-sea mothership (MS) and catcher/processor (C/P) trawl fleets (whiting only). Fixed allocations to the limited entry trawl fleet were developed

through a parallel process with Amendment 21 to the FMP. The regulations implementing the program were effective January 1, 2011; all of the necessary tracking systems to make the program operational became active on January 11, 2011, the date fishing began under the new program. Since that time, the Council and NMFS have been addressing implementation issues as they arise. To achieve individual accountability for catch and bycatch and track total catch, the shorebased IFQ Program is subject to 100 percent monitoring both at-sea and dockside. In addition to 100 percent monitoring at-sea, motherships and catcher/processors are subject to flow scale requirements that include daily testing, reporting, and an annual inspection.

II. Method of Collection

This collection utilizes both electronic and paper forms, depending on the specific item. Methods of submittal include email of electronic forms, and mail and facsimile transmission of paper forms.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0619.
Form Number(s): None.

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

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 155.

Estimated Time per Response: 10 hours for a Provider permit, 2 hours for an annual renewal, 4 hours each for appeals and catch monitoring plans; 1 hour each for a catch monitor qualification inseason testing of shorebased scales; 2 hours for an inspection; 10 minutes each for first receiver reports and electronic fish tickets ; 1 minute for Pacific whiting disposition recordkeeping; 30 minutes for daily at-sea scale testing reports, 10 minutes for daily at-sea scale catch and cumulative weight reports, 1 minute each for at-sea scale audit trail, at-sea scale calibration log, and at-sea scale fault log, and 0 minutes for at-sea scale video monitoring.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,826.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$14,628 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

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: November 6, 2017.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017–24382 Filed 11–8–17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act.

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Title: West Coast Region Highly Migratory Species Vessel Identification Requirements.

OMB Control Number: 0648–0361.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular (extension of a currently approved information collection).

Number of Respondents: 1,700.

Average Hours per Response: All but purse seine vessels, 45 minutes; purse seine vessels, 1 hour, 15 minutes.

Burden Hours: 644.

Needs and Uses: This request is for extension of a current information collection. Regulations at 50 CFR 660.704 require that all commercial fishing vessels with permits issued under authority of the National Marine Fishery Service's (NMFS) Fishery Management Plan for United States (U.S.) West Coast Highly Migratory Species Fisheries display the vessel's official number (U.S. Coast Guard documentation number or state registration number). The numbers must be of a specific size and format and located at specified locations. The official number must be affixed to each

vessel subject to this section in block Arabic numerals at least 10 inches (25.40 centimeters) in height for vessels more than 25 feet (7.62 meters) but equal to or less than 65 feet (19.81 meters) in length; and 18 inches (45.72 centimeters) in height for vessels longer than 65 feet (19.81 meters) in length. Markings must be legible and of a color that contrasts with the background. The display of the identifying number aids in fishery law enforcement. This requirement does not apply to recreational charter vessels.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations; individuals or households.

Frequency: Biennially.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain benefits.

This information collection request may be viewed at reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to (202) 395–5806.

Dated: November 6, 2017.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017–24425 Filed 11–8–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Availability of Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Draft General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in association with the nonfederal sponsor, the Virginia Port Authority, an agent of the Commonwealth of Virginia, announces the availability of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Draft General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) for public review and comment. The purpose of this Draft GRR/EA is to identify whether the original authorized plan is still in the federal interest and to evaluate alternatives that have the potential to improve the current and future operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using the Norfolk