

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Alaska Pacific Halibut & Sablefish Fisheries:
Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ)
OMB Control No. 0648-0272

This information collection consists of applications and reports necessary for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to manage the Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program for the fixed-gear Pacific halibut and sablefish fisheries off Alaska, and the Western Alaska Community Development Quota (CDQ) Program halibut fishery. The information collected is used to identify and authorize participants in the halibut and sablefish fisheries, to track and transfer quota share, to limit transfers to authorized participants, and to monitor quota share balances and harvest in these fisheries. Regulations implementing the IFQ and CDQ Programs are set forth at 50 CFR part 679. More information on the [IFQ Program](#) and [CDQ Program](#) can be found on the NMFS website.

Reason for Changing this Collection

NMFS requests to change this collection due to an associated rule (RIN 0648-BI65) for Amendment 118 to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area. A minor change to the information collected for one instrument, the Prior Notice of Landing (PNOL), is necessary under this action.

Amendment 118 authorizes retention of legal-size halibut in pot-and-line and longline pot gear used to fish for halibut or sablefish IFQ/CDQ in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI), provided the IFQ/CDQ holder holds sufficient halibut IFQ/CDQ for that IFQ regulatory area. Under this action, fishermen can choose to use pot gear to retain halibut in the BSAI or can continue using hook-and-line gear as they have previously. This action is necessary to improve efficiency and provide economic benefits for the IFQ and CDQ fleets and minimize potential fishery interactions with whales and seabirds.

This rule also affects information collection requirements approved under OMB Control Numbers 0648-0213 (Alaska Region Logbook and Activity Family of Forms) and 0648-0445 (NMFS Alaska Region Vessel Monitoring System Program). Concurrent with this change request, NMFS is submitting separate requests to revise 0648-0213 and 0648-0445.

Rationale for Using a Change Request Instead of a Revision for Amendment 118

Overlapping but slightly behind the rule for Amendment 118 is a second rule, RIN 0648-BJ07, which will also affect OMB Control No. 0648-0272.

Typically, in a situation such as this, changes by the first rule are made through a revision, and changes by the second rule are made through a change request. However, in this case, the second rule will more substantively change the collection than the first rule. Therefore, a change request is being used for Amendment 118, and a revision to 0213 for BJ07.

BJ07 will revise regulations governing medical and beneficiary transfers of IFQ. This will result in changes to the information collected, changes in the number of respondents and responses, and possibly changes in burden and costs (the analysis is still in progress). The changes from Amendment 118 are minor (see below). The revision for BJ07 will describe the timing of these two rules, the rationale for the change request and revision, and include the additional PNOL reporting requirements from this change request for Amendment 118.

Changes to PNOL due to Amendment 118

Under current regulations, the operator of any vessel making an IFQ landing must submit a PNOL to NMFS Office for Law Enforcement (OLE) no fewer than 3 hours before landing IFQ halibut, CDQ halibut, or IFQ sablefish, unless permission to commence an IFQ landing within 3 hours of notification is granted by a clearing officer. Vessel operators call NMFS OLE using a toll-free number to submit their PNOL.

Under this action, fishermen who choose to use pot gear will be required to report three additional things in their PNOL calls: number of pots set, number of pots lost, and number of pots left deployed on the fishing grounds. Vessels who choose to use longline pot gear in the Gulf of Alaska sablefish IFQ fishery are already required to report this additional information under [Amendment 101](#).

As NMFS currently requires all vessels in the IFQ or CDQ halibut and IFQ sablefish fisheries to submit a PNOL to NMFS, this action will not change the number of respondents or responses, or change the burden or costs already incurred by the respondents.

Submission with Proposed Rule and Solicitation of Comments

A proposed rule (RIN 0648-BI65) soliciting public comments will be published coincident with this submission.