



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Office of the Chief Information Officer
High Performance Computing and Communications
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Dominic J. Mancini
Deputy Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington DC

Subject: Temporary Information Collection for an Emergency Rule to Modify Halibut and Sablefish Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Transfers in 2020 (RIN 0648-BJ88)

Dear Dr. Mancini:

Pursuant to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 CFR Part 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public, I request approval of a temporary information collection to process applications for temporary transfer of IFQ in 2020. Given the urgent need to implement this emergency rule to provide additional IFQ transfer flexibility in the 2020 fishing season, I request that this information collection be processed as an Emergency Request in accordance with section 1320.13, Emergency Processing. This information collection is being submitted for approval under a new OMB control number and will be discontinued after the end of the 2020 IFQ fishing season.

I have determined that the information must be collected prior to the expiration of time period established under Part 1320, and that this information is essential to fulfill the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) mission to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources. The Government health mandates and travel restrictions during the 2020 fishing season is an unanticipated event that is unprecedented in the sudden and dramatic manner in which it is impacting the health and economic well-being of American citizens.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council developed the Individual Fishing Quota Program (IFQ Program) for the commercial Pacific halibut (halibut) and sablefish fisheries. Government health mandates and travel restrictions during the 2020 IFQ season (March 14, 2020 – November 15, 2020) may limit the ability of some IFQ fishery participants to travel to various ports in Alaska, and may constrain fishing operations while these provisions are in place. Existing regulatory limitations on the transfer of IFQ, the annual harvesting privilege issued under the IFQ Program, constrains the transfer of allocations to other fishery participants.



This emergency rule (BJ88) implements temporary IFQ transfer provisions for the 2020 IFQ fishing year. This emergency rule revises regulations at 50 CFR 679.41(h)(2) to modify the conditions under which IFQ may be transferred by referring to a new regulatory paragraph at § 679.41(p). This emergency rule adds a new regulatory paragraph at § 679.41(p) that describes the process for applying for, and completing a temporary IFQ transfer for the 2020 IFQ fishing year.

The temporary IFQ transfer process described at § 679.41(p) is separate and distinct from other transfer provisions under the IFQ Program, but it uses the same administrative process and requires the same information to be submitted to the Agency as other temporary transfer provisions approved under OMB control number 0648-0272.

We have put forward a Paperwork Reduction Act package in accordance with Section 1320.13, Emergency Processing. In keeping with the need to respond rapidly to these unprecedented circumstances, NOAA seeks publish this emergency rule requiring this information collection the week of June 15, 2020.

Given the unique conditions associated with the 2020 fishing season, NOAA cannot reasonably comply with the normal clearance process and requests emergency clearance. With your emergency approval, NOAA is positioned to publish the emergency rule, update the application form and make it available to the public, and begin processing applications under this emergency rule. The emergency rule will be published in the *Federal Register* within 30 days of approval. We appreciate your understanding of this urgent request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Zachary G. Goldstein
NOAA Chief Information Officer and
Director, High Performance Computing
and Communications.