

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
NMFS Alaska Region Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Program
OMB Control No. 0648-0445

Abstract

The National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS), Alaska Regional Office, is requesting extension of a currently approved information collection for the NMFS Alaska Region Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Program. There are no proposed changes to this information collection.

NMFS requires the owners and operators of selected vessels participating in federally managed groundfish and crab fisheries off Alaska to obtain, install, and maintain an operational, NMFS-approved VMS). VMS units automatically transmit the location of a vessel several times per hour using a Global Positioning System satellite. The VMS unit is passive and automatic, requiring no reporting effort by the vessel operator. A communications service provider receives the transmission and relays it to NMFS Office for Law Enforcement (OLE).

Tracking vessel location using VMS is required to monitor compliance with area-specific catch allocations, monitor compliance with requirements to redeploy or remove fishing gear from commercial fishing grounds, and monitor compliance with complicated time and area closures in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands designed to protect Steller sea lion or essential fish habitat.

VMS is an essential component of monitoring and management for complicated, geographically widespread fishing closures. NMFS uses information from VMS to identify where vessels are operating, to organize patrols so as to increase the number of fishing vessels visually examined, or to focus examination of vessels of greatest concern, and as evidence in prosecutions.

Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

NMFS Alaska Region manages the groundfish and crab fisheries in the exclusive economic zone of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) and the groundfish fisheries of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) under fishery management plans (FMPs) for the respective areas. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council prepared, and NMFS approved, the FMPs under the authority of the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#), 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.* The [Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982](#) at 16 U.S.C. 773–773k provides the Secretary of Commerce with the authority and general responsibility to carry out the requirements of the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea. Regulations implementing the FMPs appear at 50 CFR parts [679](#) and [680](#).

Tracking vessel location using VMS is required to monitor compliance with area-specific catch allocations, monitor compliance with requirements to redeploy or remove fishing gear from commercial fishing grounds, and monitor compliance with complicated time and area closures in the GOA and BSAI designed to protect Steller sea lion or essential fish habitat. Table 1 summarizes these VMS requirements by providing information about who must provide vessel location information to NMFS through VMS, references for the regulatory requirements, and a brief explanation of the reason for the VMS requirement.

NMFS has determined that traditional methods of relying on industry reports, observer reports, and periodic surveillance by the U.S. Coast Guard and NMFS OLE are not adequate to monitor the complex, overlapping, and numerous closure areas, area-specific allocations to individuals and entities, and other regulatory limitations. These determinations were made through the rulemaking process for the various actions implementing VMS requirements. More information about the background and history of the Alaska Region's VMS requirements may be found on the Alaska Region web site (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/enforcement#vessel-monitoring>) and in the proposed and final rules that implemented these VMS requirements.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

Table 1 summarizes the VMS requirements by providing information about who must provide vessel location information to NMFS through VMS, references for the regulatory requirements, and a brief explanation of the reason for the VMS requirement. The statutes that apply to all the requirements described below are governed by Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.* and The Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982 at 16 U.S.C. 773–773k and are not added to the table. No forms are required for these requirements so no column is added to the table for the form number.

Table 1. VMS Requirements in the Federally Managed Fisheries Off Alaska.¹

Who is required to carry an operational VMS?	Regulatory reference	Needs and Uses
Vessels that operate in a Federal reporting area when the vessel is authorized to participate in the Atka mackerel, Pacific cod, or pollock directed fisheries and the vessel's authorized species and gear type is open to directed fishing. These VMS requirements do not apply to vessels using jig gear.	§§ 679.7(a)(18), instructions for Federal Fisheries Permit application form, and 679.28(f)(6)(i)	To monitor compliance with time and area closures to protect Steller Sea lions.
Vessels named on a Federal Fisheries Permit or Federal Crab Vessel Permit while operating in the Aleutian Islands subarea or operating a federally permitted vessel ² in adjacent State of Alaska waters. In addition, vessels using trawl gear in the Aleutian Islands must set their VMS to transmit vessel location at least 10 times per hour.	§§ 679.7(a)(21), 679.28(f)(6)(ii) and (f)(6)(ix), 679.28(f)(7)	To monitor compliance with area closures to protect Essential Fish Habitat.
Vessels harvesting Crab Rationalization Program crab in the Bering Sea.	§§ 680.7(c)(2) and 680.23(d)	To monitor proper accounting of area-specific allocations.
Federally permitted vessels operating in the GOA with non-pelagic trawl or dredge gear on board.	§§ 679.7(a)(22), 679.28(f)(6)(iii)	To monitor compliance with area closures to protect Essential Fish Habitat.
GOA Rockfish Program — vessels assigned to a rockfish cooperative must use VMS at all times when operating in a reporting area off Alaska from May 1 until November 15; or until that rockfish cooperative has submitted a rockfish cooperative termination of fishing declaration that has been approved by NMFS. In addition, vessels assigned to a rockfish cooperative and subject to a sideboard limit must use VMS at all times when operating in a reporting area off Alaska from July 1 until July 31.	§§ 679.5(r)(7), 679.7(n)(3), 679.28(f)(6)(iv)	To monitor proper accounting of area-specific allocations.
Amendment 80 catcher/processors at all times while operating in the BSAI or GOA.	§§ 679.5(s)(7), 679.28(f)(6)(vi)	To monitor proper accounting of area-specific allocations.
Vessels operating in the Western and Central GOA (Federal reporting areas 610, 620, or 630) that receive and process groundfish from other vessels.	§§ 679.7(b)(4)(ii), 679.28(f)(6)(v)	To monitor compliance with area-specific processing caps in the Western and Central GOA and a requirement that Pacific cod harvested in the GOA may not be delivered to a vessel for processing in a different regulatory area.
Vessels fishing for individual fishing quota (IFQ) sablefish in the Bering Sea or Aleutian Islands IFQ regulatory areas (including vessels using pot gear).	§§ 679.28(f)(6)(vii), 679.42(k)(1)	To monitor proper accounting of area-specific allocations.
Vessels using pot gear to fish for IFQ or CDQ halibut or CDQ sablefish in the BSAI.	§§ 679.7(f)(26), 679.28(f)(6)(viii), 679.42(m)(4)(ii)	To monitor proper accounting of area-specific allocations, and to monitor vessels using pot gear to retain halibut IFQ or CDQ.

¹ In addition to the Federal requirements, the State of Alaska also requires VMS for vessels using some gear types in parallel groundfish fisheries under 5 AAC 28.087(c).

² “Federally permitted vessel” is defined at § 679.2 as a vessel that is named on either a Federal fisheries permit or a Federal crab vessel permit.

Who is required to carry an operational VMS?	Regulatory reference	Needs and Uses
Vessels operating in a GOA IFQ regulatory area and using longline pot gear to fish IFQ sablefish or to retain halibut incidentally in longline pot gear.	§§ 679.7(f)(25), 679.28(f)(6)(viii), and 679.42(k)(2) and (l)(7)(ii), Annual halibut management measures (85 FR 14586, 3/13/2020)	To monitor compliance with requirements to redeploy or remove pot gear from the fishing grounds within a specified time period.
OPTIONAL Any vessel that carries a transmitting VMS while fishing for halibut in Area 4A, 4B, 4C, or 4D, and until all halibut caught in any of these areas is landed, is exempt from vessel clearance requirements.	Annual halibut management measures (85 FR 14586, 03/13/2020) No. 16--Vessel Clearance in IPHC Regulatory Area 4, No. (16)	To monitor proper accounting of area-specific allocations. These requirements in the halibut annual management measures are not subject to the PRA. See further explanation under paragraph 2(d) below.

What type of information is collected? VMS units automatically transmit the location of a vessel several times per hour using a Global Positioning System satellite. The VMS unit is passive and automatic, requiring no reporting effort by the vessel operator. A communications service provider receives the transmission and relays it to NMFS OLE.

Who must comply with this information collection? Owners and operators of vessels required to carry transmitting VMS units are the people required to comply with the components of this information collection. Between 2015 and 2019, an average of 550 commercial fishing vessels per year participating in the federally managed groundfish, crab, scallop, and halibut fisheries off Alaska transmitted vessel location via VMS.

How is the information collected? Vessel owners comply with the requirements to submit vessel location information to NMFS by purchasing, installing, and maintaining an approved and operational VMS unit. Prior to participating in operations requiring VMS, a vessel owner must obtain a NMFS-approved VMS transmitter and install it or have it installed on board the vessel. The VMS transmitter must be available for inspection by NMFS personnel, observers, or authorized officers. The vessel owner must ensure that the VMS transmitter is not tampered with, disabled, destroyed, or operated improperly, and must pay all charges levied by the VMS service provider agreement.

How frequently is the information collected? An average of 7,784,098 VMS transmissions per year were transmitted from these 550 vessels from 2015 through 2019. Most of these vessels were transmitting location information every half hour (two times per hour) when not in port and every hour while in port. Vessels using trawl gear to fish in the Aleutian Islands were required to transmit their location via VMS every ten minutes (six times per hour).

VMS transmissions are not considered responses or included in the burden hour estimates for this collection summarized in Question #12 because vessel position location is automatically transmitted from the VMS unit. The vessel transmission rates and total transmissions are used to estimate the communications costs associated with providing the vessel location information (see Question #13).

What is this information used for? VMS allows verification of where fishing is occurring in real time. VMS allows verification that vessels fishing in an area are permitted to fish in that area, facilitates enforcement of area closures in certain fisheries, and allows NMFS OLE to check the accuracy of vessel position information reported by the vessel operator in the daily logbooks. VMS also helps ensure harvested fish are properly debited or reported because NMFS can track vessels as they arrive in port to offload the product. In addition, NMFS OLE uses VMS to monitor compliance with requirements to redeploy or remove pot gear from the fishing grounds within a specified time period. VMS is used to track the management areas in which vessels are fishing on a given trip, and agents could then follow up with a dockside inspection to see what gear was returned to shore when making a landing. That information can be compared to the recorded number of pots that are registered to the vessel for that area, or areas, in the pot tag database.

VMS data also is used by NMFS and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to analyze the impacts of current fisheries and proposed fishery conservation and management actions.

Is this information shared? 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. Data submitted by VMS units is aggregated, synthesized, summarized, and presented in a non-confidential format to the public in reports and analyses of fishery conservation and management measures. Public dissemination of these data is governed by NOAA's information quality guidelines, which were issued on October 30, 2004 (http://www.cio.noaa.gov/services_programs/IQ_Guidelines_103014.html).

Reports and analyses prepared with VMS data generally fall under NOAA's information quality category "synthesized products." These products have been developed through analysis of original data by applying methods that require some scientific evaluation and judgment; however, these methods of analysis generally are well documented and relatively routine. Therefore, peer review is generally not required for reports and analyses prepared using VMS data.

Reports and analyses undergo internal agency review by people familiar with the underlying data and fisheries being described. In addition, analyses presented to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council are reviewed by its Scientific and Statistical Committee.

Data from the VMS unit registration are maintained and used primarily by NMFS OLE to monitor compliance. This information may periodically be made available to the public in summary form as was done to prepare the projections used in this analysis.

How have the collection requirements changed? Since the last extension, this collection was revised due to the rule to implement Amendment 118 to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (RIN 0648-BI65). This action revised who is required to use VMS to include vessel operators who choose to use pot gear to retain halibut in the BSAI. The revision also removed three collection instruments from this collection because they were no longer necessary.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and

the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

The VMS collection-of-information is automated and integrates current information technology in the fishery management and monitoring process.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Question 2.

No other management agency requires the submission of VMS data from fishermen participating in the federally managed fisheries off Alaska. In general, Alaska Region information collections are prepared and reviewed by staff familiar with all of the information collection requirements for the region. Staff work together to develop information collection requirements for new programs. In addition, NMFS staff work closely with the staff of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the International Pacific Halibut Commission to reduce duplication in information collection requirements to the extent possible given overlapping jurisdictions and complex fisheries. Senior staff at the Alaska Region, NMFS headquarters, and the Department of Commerce General Counsel review all new and revised information collection requirements that are associated with rulemakings. This process minimizes the potential for duplication of information collection requirements for participants in the Federal fisheries off Alaska.

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

This collection-of-information does impact some small entities. NMFS has attempted to minimize the burden of the VMS requirements on small entities primarily through the VMS Reimbursement Program to offset the cost of purchasing a VMS unit. More information about this program is in the response to Question #13.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

The VMS is an integral part of the management of the fisheries in the Alaska Region for reasons described in more detail in the response to Questions #1 and 2. The inability to collect vessel location through VMS would reduce NMFS's ability to monitor and enforce complex, overlapping, and numerous closure areas, area-specific allocations to individuals and entities, and other regulatory limitations.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

Although VMS units transmit the location of a vessel several times per hour, the VMS unit is automatic and requires no reporting effort by the vessel operator. Therefore, this information collection does not require respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

NMFS Alaska Region published a notice in the *Federal Register* on June 24, 2020 (85 FR 37879), to solicit public comments. The comment period ended on August 24, 2020. One comment was received on the information collection requirements in this request. The commenter supports the continuation of this collection and acknowledged that the time and cost burden estimates are accurate.

In addition, NMFS contacted representatives of the affected fishing fleets to this information collection via email. One responded by submitting a comment to the *Federal Register*, as noted above. No other responses were received.

In 2019, the proposed and final rules for Amendment 118 to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (RIN 0648-BI65) solicited comments on the revisions to this collection due to the rulemaking, as well as comments on other aspects of this collection. No comments on this information collection were received.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payment or gift to respondents is provided under this program.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

All VMS units include systems to minimize the risk of direct or inadvertent disclosure of vessel position. The information collected, including VMS transmissions, is confidential under section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1881a *et seq.*), and also under [NOAA Administrative Order \(NAO\) 216-100](#), which sets forth procedures to protect confidentiality of fishery statistics.

All information collected is part of a Privacy Act system of records: [COMMERCE/NOAA #6: Fishermen's Statistical Data](#).

The Privacy Impact Assessment that covers this information collection is [NOAA NMFS Alaska Region Local Area Network \(NOAA4700\)](#).

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to

obtain their consent.

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

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

Information Collection	Type of Respondent (e.g., Profession)	# of Respondents/year (a)	Annual # of Responses/ Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hrs / Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hrs	Hourly Wage Rate (f)	Total Annual Wage Burden Costs (g) = (e) x (f)
VMS installation of replacement units	Vessel owner	33 annualized (100/3)	1	33 ^{1/}	6 hrs	200 hrs annualized (600/3)	1/	1/
VMS maintenance	Vessel owner	550	1	550 ^{1/}	4 hrs	2,220 hrs	1/	1/
VMS failure troubleshooting (assume 5% failure rate/year)	Vessel owner	28 (550*0.05)	1	28 ^{1/}	2 hrs	56 hrs	1/	1/
Total for collection		550		611^{1/}		2,476		\$0^{1/}

^{1/} The vessel owner is present during installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting operations, so there are burden hours associated with being required to be present for these activities. However, the vessel owner pays a technician an average of \$128/hour to perform this work, so the labor costs associated with these activities are recorded below under miscellaneous costs. Because there is no information collected by NMFS in advance, during, or after the installation, maintenance, or troubleshooting of the VMS units, these events do not contribute to the number of responses for this information collection.

Total estimated unique respondents are 550. Although, some additional vessels may install VMS, NMFS estimates that these few additional vessels are covered in the conservative estimates of respondents already included in this collection.

VMS transmissions are not considered responses or included in the burden estimates because vessel position location is automatically transmitted from the VMS unit.

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).

Table 13a. Summary of estimates of total annual cost burden to respondents, including capital and start-up costs and operations and maintenance costs, including the costs to hire technicians to do VMS installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting.

Information Collection	# of Respondents	Annual # of Responses / Respondent	Total # of Annual Responses	Cost Burden / Respondent	Total Annual Cost Burden
VMS purchase of new or replacement units	33 annualized (100/3)	1	33	\$3,100 per replacement unit	\$102,300
VMS daily transmission costs	550	^{1/}	^{1/} 550	\$720 ^{2/}	\$396,000 ^{2/}
VMS installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting	611	1	611	\$2,456hrs * \$128/hr (Table 13b below)	\$314,368
TOTALS			611		\$812,668

^{1/} The automatic transmission of vessel location data from the VMS unit is not considered a response under the PRA because the information is sent automatically from the unit with no need for any action by the vessel operator or crew.

^{2/} See explanation under heading "Response to Question 13 (continued)."

Table 13b. Explanation for calculation of miscellaneous costs to hire a technician to perform installation of new or replacement VMS units and maintenance and troubleshooting on all VMS units.

Information Collection	Number of respondents	Number of responses per entity per year	Total annual responses	Estimated time per response	Total annual hours	\$/hr labor cost	Total labor cost
VMS installation of new or replacement units	33 annualized (100/3)	1	33 annualized (100/3)	6 hrs	200 hrs annualized (600/3)	\$128 ^{1/}	\$25,600
VMS maintenance	550	1	550	4 hrs	2,200 hrs	\$128 ^{1/}	\$281,600
VMS failure troubleshooting (assume 5% failure rate/year)	28 (550*0.05)	1	28	2 hrs	56 hrs	\$128 ^{1/}	\$7,168
Total			611		2,456 hrs		\$314,368

^{1/} See explanation under heading "Response to Question 13 (continued)."

Response to Question 13 (continued).

As noted above, NMFS estimates that approximately 550 vessels are carrying operating VMS units in the groundfish, crab, and scallop fisheries off Alaska. Depending on which brand of VMS is chosen, NMFS estimates the price of a VMS unit ranges from about \$2,500 to \$3,200. All 550 of the currently operating VMS units have already been purchased. NMFS does not anticipate that any vessels without an operating VMS unit will be required to install a new VMS unit for the first time in the next three years.

In 2006, NOAA established a VMS Reimbursement Program to offset the cost of purchasing a new VMS unit for the purpose of complying with fishery regulations pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Act (see <http://www.psmfc.org/program/vessel-monitoring-system-reimbursement-program-vms>). The Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission in collaboration with NMFS OLE distributes the allocated reimbursement funds to eligible, confirmed vessel owners and operators. The reimbursement program is for eligible vessels that have not had a VMS unit installed before and reimburses the cost of the base unit of the first VMS unit up to \$3,100. Many of these reimbursements were made because of requirements to upgrade or replace outdated VMS units.

VMS units periodically wear out or break down and must be replaced, and some vessel operators voluntarily upgrade their VMS units. NMFS estimates that 100 units will be replaced over the course of the 3-year cycle of this information collection, or an annualized rate of 33 VMS replacements per year (100/3). These replacement units are not likely to be eligible for reimbursement due to the “one time” provisions of the reimbursement program. Each of these 33 replacement units are estimated to cost \$3,100 per unit for a total annual cost of \$102,300. NMFS selected \$3,100 as a cost estimate for the replacement units because it is the maximum allowed for new unit reimbursement and probably represents a good average cost of a new or replacement unit.

Depending on which brand of VMS is chosen, the average monthly cost of a VMS service provider agreement is approximately \$60 for transmission two times per hour and approximately \$190 for transmission ten times per hour (trawling in the Aleutian Islands). NMFS is unable to breakdown the total estimate of 7,784,098 VMS transmissions per year between three categories of transmission rates (ten times per hour, two times per hour, and one time per hour when a vessel is in port). Therefore, for purposes of estimating the average cost of VMS transmissions per vessel and overall, NMFS assumes that each vessel required to use VMS pays for a 12-month service provider agreement at the \$60/month rate. The majority of the vessels will be fishing in areas and fisheries that require transmission of location information two times per hour; however, the assumption that each vessel will be paying for VMS transmission the full 12-months of the year is conservative, so balances out the fact that some of the vessels will be paying a higher monthly charge for more frequent transmissions.

Based on these assumptions:

The cost for VMS transmission for a single vessel is \$720 (12 months * \$60/month).
The cost for VMS transmission for all vessels is \$396,000 (550 vessels * \$720/hour).

The hourly charges for installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting by a qualified marine electronics technician vary by location. Based on responses to informal interviews, Seattle rates are approximately \$115 per hour; Kodiak rates are approximately \$135 per hour; and Dutch Harbor rates are approximately \$142 per hour. Thus, the average of the high and low rates, \$128 per hour, has been used to estimate this burden.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

Alaska Region VMS data are monitored and interpreted by NMFS OLE. Currently, no officers are directly dedicated to VMS; however, a program manager and an enforcement technician work on VMS.

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
Federal Oversight	ZA-4	\$244,860	2%		\$4,897
	ZS-V	109,440	10%		\$10,944
Contractor Cost		-	-	-	\$0
Travel					\$0
Other Costs					\$0
TOTAL					\$15,841

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

There are no changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

NMFS has no plans to publish the results of this information collection.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”

The agency certifies compliance with 5 CFR 1320.9 and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3).