

intake guards that would prevent the sturgeon from accessing the area where the trash racks are located. The HCP does, however, include monitoring of the trash racks for sturgeon. Dominion will continue to inspect trash rack debris at the water surface, and debris removed from the trash racks, for sturgeon. Dominion has sturgeon handling procedures in the event a living or dead sturgeon is found among the debris floating in the water or in the debris removed from the trash racks. Monitoring will not, however, occur at the intake guards because it is not feasible due to the turbidity of the river and the safety risk for personnel.

We conducted intra-agency section 7 consultation to ensure that issuing the permit would comply with the ESA. The Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) Protected Resources Division issued a Biological Opinion on November 10, 2020, that considered the effects of the activities covered by this ITP as well as the effects to other ESA-listed species from the other activities reasonably expected to occur at CPS during the 5 year duration of the permit. Those other activities include the discharge of heated effluent and other pollutants resulting from CPS operations, and the barge traffic that is associated with deliveries of materials to and from CPS.

The Biological Opinion concluded that activities covered by this ITP (*i.e.*, entrainment of larval Atlantic sturgeon during CPS operations and entrainment/ collection during required sampling) may adversely affect but are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Chesapeake Bay DPS of Atlantic sturgeon. We also concluded that this action is not likely to adversely affect designated critical habitat for the DPS, or shortnose sturgeon, the Gulf of Maine, New York Bight, Carolina, and South Atlantic DPSs of Atlantic sturgeon, North Atlantic DPS green turtle, Kemp's ridley turtle, leatherback turtle, and Northwest Atlantic Ocean DPS of loggerhead turtle.

With respect to the other CPS activities and other ESA-listed species in the James River, the only activity that may affect other listed species is the shipment of materials to and from CPS by barge within the James River. In the Biological Opinion we concluded that the effects of those activities on shortnose sturgeon, the four other DPSs of Atlantic sturgeon, and leatherback, Kemp's ridley, green, and loggerhead sea turtles would be insignificant or extremely unlikely to occur and that, therefore, this action was not likely to adversely affect any of these species. Dominion has not indicated any plans

to conduct dredging or shoreline maintenance during the 5 year duration of the ITP. Therefore, effects to ESA listed species and critical habitat in the action area from dredging and shoreline maintenance activities are not reasonably certain to occur and do not meet the definition of "effects of the action." As a result, these activities were not considered further in the consultation. If Dominion applied for any Federal permits or authorizations for any future dredging or shoreline maintenance, ESA section 7 consultation would be necessary for any of those activities that may affect listed species or critical habitat. The full section 7 evaluation can be found in the Biological Opinion.

#### Permit 21516

NMFS authorizes the following lethal take for the Chesapeake Bay DPS of Atlantic sturgeon.

**Entrainment:** up to 54,745 larvae, total, for the 5-year duration of the permit with an anticipated average annual take of 10,949 per year during normal operation of CPS, and 1 larvae over the 5-year duration of the permit during sampling to complete CWA section 316(b) sampling.

**Impingement:** There is no authorized or anticipated incidental take by impingement based on the already implemented minimization measures.

The first 3 years of monitoring data collected under the permit will be analyzed to verify the requested total annual incidental take. As data are gathered and analyzed through monitoring, NMFS may amend the permit to reflect any changes in the take estimate, if appropriate.

The permit requires Dominion to prepare a report, due to NMFS within 90 days of issuance of the ITP, which details how observed take of Atlantic sturgeon will be extrapolated to generate an accurate and reliable estimate of total annual take at the facility. Dominion must also submit reports of any observed take of Atlantic sturgeon to NMFS within seven days, and must prepare an annual report detailing all observed takes of Atlantic sturgeon at CPS. NMFS review of the annual report provides an opportunity to monitor the ongoing amount of take at CPS and detect any trends that may indicate a potential exceedance of the anticipated take before such an event occurs.

#### National Environmental Policy Act

Issuing an ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit constitutes a Federal action requiring NMFS to comply with NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) as implemented by 40 CFR parts 1500–1508 and NOAA

Administrative Order 216–6A, Compliance with the NEPA (2016). NMFS prepared an EA to consider a range of reasonable alternatives and fully evaluate the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts likely to result from the authorization of this permit. NMFS found that issuing the ITP would have no significant impacts on the quality of the environment.

**Authority:** This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

Dated: January 6, 2021.

**Angela Somma,**

*Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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**BILLING CODE 3510–22–P**

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; West Coast Region Vessel Monitoring System Requirement in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery

**AGENCY:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice. Request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before March 12, 2021.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at [Adrienne.thomas@noaa.gov](mailto:Adrienne.thomas@noaa.gov). Please reference OMB Control Number 0648–0573 in the subject line of your comments. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or

specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Keeley Kent, National Marine Fisheries Service, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115, 206-247-8252, and [keeley.kent@noaa.gov](mailto:keeley.kent@noaa.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

This is a request for a revision and extension of a currently approved information collection. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) implemented a Vessel Monitoring Program in 2004, consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Under this program described at 50 CFR 660.13 and 660.14, all commercial fishing vessels fishing in the exclusive economic zone off the West Coast that take and retain groundfish in federal waters, or transit through federal waters with groundfish on board, are required to have a working vessel monitoring system (VMS). To support the VMS monitoring program, the following information must be submitted to NMFS: (1) VMS installation/activation certification reports, (2) position reports, (3) exemption reports, and (4) declaration reports. The VMS, along with the fishing declaration reporting requirements, allows for monitoring and enforcement of areas closed to fishing by gear type as traditional enforcement methods (such as aerial surveillance, boarding at sea via patrol boats, landing inspections and documentary investigation) are especially difficult to use when the closed areas are large-scale and the lines defining the areas are irregular.

The collection is being revised to remove the position report from the collection with regard to burden. The position reports are automatically transmitted location signals from the VMS unit that do not require any action on the part of the captain or crew.

##### II. Method of Collection

Affected commercial fishing vessel owners must submit VMS installation/activation certification reports, the VMS systems send automatic position updates, affected vessels captains must submit declarations reports via phone.

##### III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0573.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular submission, extension of a current information collection.

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

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 1000.

*Estimated Time per Response:* 5 hours to install and activate a VMS unit; 1 hour per year to maintain a VMS; 0 seconds for an automated position report; 5 minutes to complete and fax a check-in report or to complete an exemption report; 4 minutes for a declaration report.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 6,999.99.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$97,035.30.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Mandatory.

*Legal Authority:* 50 CFR 660.13 and 660.14.

##### IV. Request for Comments

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department/Bureau to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Evaluate ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this ICR. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

*Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Commerce Department.*

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#### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

##### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XA755]

##### Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of a public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a four-day webinar meeting to consider actions affecting the Gulf of Mexico fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

**DATES:** The webinar will convene Monday, January 25 through Thursday, January 28, 2021; 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. EST.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will take place via webinar; you may access the log-on information at [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org).

*Council address:* Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 4107 W Spruce Street, Suite 200, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Carrie Simmons, Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

##### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Agenda

*Monday, January 25, 2021; 9 a.m.–5 p.m.*

The meeting will begin with the Administrative/Budget Committee discussing the reappointment of the Reef Fish and Shrimp Advisory Panels due in 2021; review 2020 Budget and Expenditures; discuss logistics and estimated costs of conducting a Gulf-wide Fishery-Independent Offshore Abundance Study on Red Drum and an Independent Stock Assessment (*i.e.*, outside SEDAR) Process for Gray Triggerfish; and, review of 2021 Projected Budget and Activities.

Sustainable Fisheries Committee will review Final Action Amendment Reef Fish 48/Red Drum 5: Status Determination Criteria and Optimum Yield for Reef Fish and Red Drum, SSC Recommendations on Interim Analyses Species and Timing, and Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology for the Gulf of Mexico and Joint Fishery Management Plans.

Outreach and Education Committee will receive a presentation on Communication Analytics; review 2021