

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
West Coast Region Vessel Identification Requirements
OMB Control No: 0648-0355

Abstract

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requires vessel monitoring systems (VMS) and declaration reports to participate in the commercial sectors of the Pacific Coast groundfish fishery. These requirements allow NMFS to monitor vessel compliance with closed areas. The declaration reports also allow NMFS to determine which fishery a vessel is participating in to determine which regulations apply during a specific fishing trip.

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.

This submission requests renewal of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for a vessel identification requirement in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery.

The success of fisheries management programs depends significantly on regulatory compliance. The vessel identification requirement is essential to facilitate enforcement. The ability to link fishing or other activity to the vessel owner or operator is crucial to enforcement of regulations issued under the authority of the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) (including provisions at 16 U.S.C. 1853).

Vessel identification is required by all open access and limited entry commercial vessels over 25 ft. in length in the West Coast region. Vessel identification requirements are set forth in the regulations implementing the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fisheries Management Plan at [50 CFR 660 Subpart C](#).

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.

A vessel's official number must be displayed on the port and starboard sides of the deckhouse or hull, and on a weather deck. It identifies each vessel and should be visible from a distance at sea and in the air. The official number provides law enforcement personnel with a means to monitor fishing, at-sea processing, and other related activities, to ascertain whether the vessel's observed activities are in accordance with those authorized for that vessel. The identifying number is used

by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and other marine agencies in issuing violations, prosecutions, and other enforcement actions. Law enforcement personnel rely on this information to assure compliance with fisheries management regulations. Vessels that qualify for particular fisheries are readily identified and gear violations are more readily prosecuted, allowing for more cost-effective enforcement. Cooperating fishermen also use the number to report suspicious activities. Regulation-compliant fishermen ultimately benefit as unauthorized and illegal fishing is deterred and more burdensome regulations are avoided.

The information collected will not be disseminated to the public; as it consists solely of marking vessels with the appropriate vessel number. This information is not submitted to NMFS.

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 requirement that each vessel display an identification number on its deckhouse or hull, and its weather deck, does not lend itself to technology. Vessel monitoring system (VMS) units are currently required on all groundfish vessels consistent with regulations at 50 CFR 660.14. Although VMS signals, which are transmitted hourly, can be used to identify a vessel's fishing location, it is difficult for enforcement personnel aboard vessels and aircraft to use to identify specific vessels. Therefore a vessel identification number requirement continues to be useful for basic enforcement.

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

Existing Federal and State reporting requirements have been reviewed to ascertain that no duplication of information collection results from this action. There is no duplication with other collections. The USCG requires the name of the vessel and hailing port to be marked on its stern for documented vessels (46 CFR 67) and state-issued block numbers on the forward half of the vessel for undocumented vessels (i.e., small boats that are registered with the state) (33 CFR 173); however vessel names, ports, and block numbers may be changed, making tracking and identification of the vessel more difficult and complex. The USCG also requires documented vessels to have their official identification number permanently marked on the vessel. However, this is usually done on an interior structural beam in the engine room. For efficient enforcement and accurate reporting, an identifying number is required on the outside of the vessel in large numbers by the NMFS because a vessel's identification number does not change.

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

Although nearly all vessels in the respective fisheries are categorized as small businesses, the collection of information will not have a significant economic impact or burden on small businesses in terms of time and resources. Therefore, no special modifications of the requirements were considered necessary.

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 NMFS and the USCG could not enforce the fisheries management measures if this collection were conducted less frequently. The numbers must periodically be maintained to remain legible.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

This collection is consistent with the guidelines.

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.

A Federal Register Notice was published on January 22, 2021 (86 FR 6635). No comments were received.

NMFS reached out to several groundfish vessel captains participating in various affected fisheries in an effort to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. No responses were received.

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

No payments or gifts are provided.

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.

No confidentiality is promised. The information is on public display.

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.

There are no sensitive questions.

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

Table 1 provides an estimate in the total hours of burden from this collection of information. It also provides an estimate of wage burden costs. The estimated total number of vessels affected is 1,007 vessels - 415 limited entry permits and 592 open access vessels. This number is an overestimate because it includes vessels under 25 feet, and limited entry permits that may be stacked on the same vessel. The identifying number must be displayed on the vessel in three locations and maintained in good condition. SFD staff consulted with various groundfish vessel captains participating in various groundfish pot, longline, midwater trawl, bottom trawl fisheries, and determined that gear markings have a five-year life span. The estimated time to display or otherwise affix the number at each location is 15 minutes. Estimated burden of total annual response time: 1,007 vessels x 3 marking locations x 15 minutes = 755.25 hours, **with responses annualized to 201 responses and hours annualized to 151.05 hours** (Table 1.)

Labor costs in the fishing industry are estimated at \$21.00 per hour utilizing labor estimates provided via United States Bureau of Labor Statistics *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (<https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>) for occupation title “Painters, Construction, and Maintenance.”

Total fleet labor cost: \$15,860.25, **annualized over 5 years is \$3,172.05** (Table 1).

Table 1. Total Annual Burden Hours and Annual Wage Burden Costs

Information Collection	Type of Respondent (e.g., Occupational Title)	# of Respondents (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hrs / Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hrs (e) = (c) x (d)	Hourly Wage Rate (for Type of Respondent) (f)	Total Annual Wage Burden Costs (g) = (e) x (f)
Limited Entry Vessels	Painter	415	1	83*	0.75	62.25	\$21.00	\$1,307.25
Open Access Vessels	Painter	592	1	118.4*	0.75	88.8	\$21.00	\$1,865
Totals		1,007		201.4		151.05		3172.05

*Annualized over 5 years

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).

The cost to fishermen is minimal. Materials needed are paint and paintbrush, and possibly a stencil. Material costs are estimated as follows: 1 quart of exterior paint = \$14.95, 1 paintbrush = \$2.00, 1 small container of mineral spirits (cleaning) = \$4.45 (total \$21.40). A paint-on number stencil is optional, and optional custom printed stick-on numbers = \$120 (set of 3). Given the higher cost for the stick-on option, these vessel marking estimates provided assume that vessel captains would not choose the stick-on marking option. For 1,007 vessels, the material cost would be \$21,549.80, and **annualized over 5 years, would be \$4,301** (Table 2).

Table 2. Total Annual Cost Burden (excluding burden hours)

Information Collection	# of Respondents (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Cost Burden / Respondent (h)	Total Annual Cost Burden (i) = (c) x (h)
Limited Entry Vessels	415	1	83*	\$21.40	\$1,776.20
Open Access Vessels	592	1	118*	\$21.40	\$2,525
TOTALS	1,007		201.4		4,301

*Annualized over 5 years

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.

No costs are incurred by the federal government for this information collection as the maintenance/preparation for this information collection is less than 1% of a federal employee's effort annually.

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

Adjustment: Based on current permit numbers and estimates of 2020 participation and vessel landings, there are slightly less respondents, decreased from 1,201 to 1,007. Estimated materials costs per vessel are the same at \$21.40. Just as in the previous NMFS estimate based on consultation with fishing vessel captains representing various gear types (pot, longline, bottom trawl, midwater trawl, at-sea processors), we assumed vessel markings to have a five-year lifespan, reducing the estimate of annualized burden to **151.05** hours, at a materials cost of **\$4,301**.

Table 3. Program Changes in Burden Hours

Information Collection	Respondents		Responses		Burden Hours		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	

West Coast Region Vessel Identification Requirements	0	1201	0	240	0	180	ICS added as an administrative correction to give public more transparency into burdens of this collection. Burden decrease due to decrease in anticipated respondents based on current estimates
Limited Entry Vessels	415	0	83	0	62	0	
Open Access Vessels	592	0	118	0	89	0	
Total for Collection	1007	1201	201	240	151	180	
Difference		-194		-39		-29	

Table 4. Program Changes in Cost Burden

Information Collection	Labor Costs		Miscellaneous Costs		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current	Previous	Current	Previous	
West Coast Region Vessel Identification Requirements	0	\$3,783	0	5140	ICS added as an administrative correction to give public more transparency into burdens of this collection. Burden decrease due to decrease in anticipated respondents based on current estimates
Limited Entry Vessels	\$1,307	0	1776	0	
Open Access Vessels	\$1,865	0	2525	0	
Total for Collection	3172	3,783	4301	5140	
Difference		-611		-839	

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.

No results are published.

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.

This collection has no associated forms.

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\(b\)\(3\)](#).