

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Alaska Region Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Economic Data Reports
OMB Control No. 0648-0518

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

The Council developed the following purpose and need statement defining its rationale for considering this action:

As a part of its Bering Sea and Aleutian Island crab rationalization (CR) program, the Council developed a comprehensive economic data collection (EDR) program to provide information to analysts to assess the effects of the CR program and identify problems that may require future amendments to the EDR program.

The Council expressly wants to limit the EDR to the collection of data that have been demonstrated, through the development of the EDR metadata, and other reviews of the data, to be sufficiently accurate. Data collection should be structured and specific elements identified, to minimize costs while maintaining accuracy and providing the greatest information value to the management decision making process.

As analysts develop, refine, and verify methods for accurately collecting additional informative data elements, the Council will consider expansion of the data collection program to include those elements. This process can also inform the future Council action regarding other existing and future EDR programs.

This data collection process is in the form of a census; therefore, all vessel and plant owners are required to fill out the EDRs or certification section, as applicable. The response rate is expected to be 100 percent, as it was in 2024.

Information Collection

Information Collection	Number of respondents	Total annual responses
Annual Catcher Vessel Crab EDR	56 – full EDR	56
	1 – cert. only*	1
Annual Catcher/Processor Crab EDR	2 – full EDR	2
	0 – cert. only*	0
Annual Processor Crab EDR	18 – full EDR	18
	0 – cert. only*	0
Total for collection	77	77

* Respondents submit only the certification page indicating that they are not required to complete the full EDR.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,
- Estimation procedure,
- Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,
- Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and
- Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

Participation in the EDR program is mandatory under Federal fisheries regulations 50 CFR part 680.6 for all active vessel and processing sector participants in the CR Program fisheries. EDRs are collected from all vessels, plant owners, and registered crab receivers, participating in CR Program fisheries during each year. Owners of these vessels, plants, and receivers are identified through permits and landings data from previous years and the current year. We are not sampling from these populations, but rather conducting a census to gather the required economic data.

With the response (produced from completed and verified data forms), NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center analysts will construct statistical models for estimating key variable values for each strata. These data will also be used to develop cost functions from this data and to estimate changes in variable costs of operations, average gross earnings, and changes to net revenues arising from changes in the costs of elements collected. Data may be developed to estimate changes in purchases and economic impacts before and after CR Program implementation. Several methods are available to estimate these outputs. The analysts will select the best methods based on an assessment of the data in this collection and from other sources.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Each owner or leaseholder of a vessel or processing plant, or a holder of a registered crab receiver permit that harvested, processed, custom processed, or obtained custom processing for CR Program crab is required to submit an annual EDR. Therefore, the response to the mandatory data collection requirements should be very high. Those individuals who do not submit their EDR by the submission date will receive a follow-up phone call from Pacific States. If a solution cannot be reached at that point, their information will be referred to the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement. In addition, NMFS may withhold issuance of a permit or quota transfer request if respondents do not submit the EDRs. Therefore, we anticipate a 100 percent response rate.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Since the EDR program has been in place, informal testing has taken place by meeting with EDR submitters to discuss ways in which the forms used to request information could be improved. Pacific States (who administers the data collection as the Data Collection Agent) also conducts data verification procedures, as described in Supporting Statement Part A, that are separate from data verification audits. In conducting data verification, Pacific States documents ways in which the EDRs could be clarified, and we have used this information to clarify instructions and variable definitions.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

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