

collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 12, 1998.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.

[FR Doc. 98-12956 Filed 5-14-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Alaska Region Gear Identification; Proposed Collection

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before July 14, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Patsy A. Bearden, F/ AK01, NOAA/NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668 (907-586-7228).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Participants in the groundfish fishery in the Alaska Region are required to identify all longline marker buoys carried onboard or used by any vessel. This requirement is currently cleared under OMB Control Number 0648-0305, which dealt with all NOAA gear-marking requirements, but those

requirements will now be submitted on a regional basis.

II. Method of Collection

The vessel's name, Federal fisheries permit number, or the vessel's registration number shall be in characters at least 4 inches (10.16 cm) in height and 0.5 in. (1.27 cm) in width in a contrasting color visible above the water line and shall be maintained so the markings are clearly visible.

III. Data

OMB Number: New Number to be Assigned.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular Submission.

Affected Public: Individuals, Business and other for-profit (commercial fishermen).

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,916.

Estimated Time Per Response: 0.25 hour.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 3,450 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: The cost to fishermen is minimal. Materials needed are paint and paint brush, or permanent ink applicator, and possibly a stencil. Labor costs probably range between \$10 and \$15 per hour with the average estimated time varying from 1 to 5 minutes to paint/mark each buoy. Total estimated cost per vessel varies greatly with the type and amount of gear being used. Given the adverse weather conditions and salt water, we expect each number will need to be repainted, repaired, or replaced annually.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 12, 1998.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.

[FR Doc. 98-12957 Filed 5-14-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Northwest Region Gear Identification Requirements; Proposed Collection

ACTION: Proposed Collection; Comment Request.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before July 14, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to William L. Robinson, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115, 206-526-6140.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The success of fisheries management programs depends significantly on regulatory compliance. Requirements that fishing gear be marked are essential to facilitate endorsement. The ability to link fishing gear to the vessel owner or operator is crucial to endorsement of regulations issued under the authority of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act to govern domestic and foreign fishing, and the Atlantic Tunas Convention act. The marking of fishing gear is also valuable in actions concerning damage, loss, and civil proceedings.

The regulations specify fishing gear must be marked with the vessel's official number, federal permit or tag number, or some other specified form of identification. The regulations further specify how the gear is to be marked,

e.g., location and color. Law endorsement personnel rely on this information to assure compliance with fisheries management regulations. Gear that is not properly identified is confiscated. The identifying number on fishing gear is used by NMFS, the U.S. Coast Guard, and other marine agencies in issuing violations, prosecutions, and other enforcement actions. Gear marking helps ensure that a vessel harvests fish only from its own traps/pots/other gear and that traps/pots/other gear are not illegally placed. Gear violations are more readily prosecuted, and this allows for more cost-effective enforcement. Cooperating fishermen also use the number to report placement or occurrence of gear in unauthorized areas. Regulation-compliant fishermen ultimately benefit as unauthorized and illegal fishing is deterred and more burdensome regulations are avoided.

These requirements are currently cleared under OMB Control Number 0648-0305, which dealt with all NOAA gear-marking requirements, but those requirements will now be submitted on a regional basis.

II. Method of Collection

The physical marking of fishing buoys is done by the affected public (fishers in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery) according to regulation.

III. Data

OMB Number: New Number to be Assigned.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular Submission.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit (fishers in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery).

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,835.

Estimated Time Per Response: 15 minutes per marking (with an average of 11.20 buoy markings per vessel).

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 5,140.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$5,140 for materials to make markings (e.g. paint and paintbrush or permanent ink applicator, possibly a stencil; or a commercially available plastic tag that is fastened to the trap/pot).

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c)

ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 12, 1998.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.

[FR Doc. 98-12958 Filed 5-14-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Northwest Region Vessel Identification Requirements; Proposed Collection

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before July 14, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20230.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to William L. Robinson, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115, 206-526-6140.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act to govern domestic and foreign fishing, the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act, and the South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988. A vessel's official number (or international radio call sign—IRCS—if a foreign vessel or if fishing in the South Pacific Tuna Fisheries), under most regulations, is required to 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 at distances at sea and in the air.

Vessels that qualify for particular fisheries are readily identified, gear violations are more readily prosecuted, and this allows for more cost-effective enforcement. Cooperating fishermen also use the number to report suspicious activities that they observe. Regulation-compliant fishermen ultimately benefit as unauthorized and illegal fishing is deterred and more burdensome regulations are avoided.

These requirements are currently cleared under OMB Control Number 0648-0306, which dealt with all NOAA vessel-marking requirements, but those requirements will now be submitted on a regional basis.

II. Method of Collection

Fishing vessel owners physically mark vessel with identification numbers in three locations per vessel.

III. Data

OMB Number: New Number to be Assigned.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular Submission.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit (fishers in the Open Access and Limited Entry Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery).

Estimated Number of Respondents: 2,026.

Estimated Time Per Response: 45 minutes (15 minutes per marking).

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,519 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$60,780 (\$30 per vessel).

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information