

copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Walter Ikehara (808) 927-1805 or Walter.Ikehara@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requires U.S. vessels fishing for coral reef management unit species in the designated low-use Marine Protected Areas and open areas, *i.e.*, waters seaward of the inner boundary of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone in the western Pacific region, to obtain and carry a permit. This permit is also required for at-sea transshipment of coral reef management unit species. The permit application form provides basic information about the permit applicant, vessel, fishing gear and method, target species, projected fishing effort, *etc.*, for use by NMFS and the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council in determining eligibility for permit issuance. The information is important for understanding the nature of the fishery and provides a link to participants. It also aids in the enforcement of Fishery Management Plan measures.

II. Method of Collection

Information is submitted to NMFS, in the form of paper permit application forms.

III. Data

OMB Number: 0648-0463.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

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

Estimated Number of Respondents: 12.

Estimated Time Per Response: 2 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 30.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

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 17, 2005.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 05-10182 Filed 5-20-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Gear-Marking Requirement for Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan.

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

ACTION: Notice.

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.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before July 22, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6625, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at dHynek@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Kristy Long (301) 713-1401 or Kristy.Long@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The purpose of this proposed collection of information is to enable NOAA to reduce entanglements of large whales, especially right whales, in U.S. commercial fishing gear. Persons setting lobster trap/pot or gillnet gear in some areas of the Atlantic Ocean would be required to paint or otherwise mark their gear with two color codes, one color designating the type of gear, the

other designating the area where the gear is set depending on area. These marking requirements would apply in right whale critical habitats and in two other areas where right whales are seen on a regular basis. These areas are the southeast U.S. observer area and the Stellwagen Bank/Jeffreys Ledge restricted area.

The goals of this collection of information are to obtain more information on where large whales are being entangled and on what type gear responsible for the entanglement. This information will allow NMFS to focus further risk reduction measures on problem areas rather than instituting broader measures that affect the overall industry.

II. Method of Collection

This is a marking requirement and no information is submitted to NOAA.

III. Data

OMB Number: 0648-0364.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

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

Estimated Number of Respondents: 4,506.

Estimated Time Per Response: 6 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 2,572.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$27,313.

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 17, 2005.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 05-10183 Filed 5-20-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 051805A]

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Comprehensive Amendment for the Fishery Ecosystem Plan

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS); request for comments.

SUMMARY: The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) intends to prepare a DEIS to assess the impacts on the natural and human environment of the management measures proposed in its draft Fishery Ecosystem Plan Comprehensive Amendment.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of issues to be addressed in the preliminary DEIS will be accepted through June 30, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Comments and requests for copies of the scoping document should be sent to Robert K. Mahood, Executive Director, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699, PHONE: 1-866-SAFMC-10; FAX: 843-769-4520; email: FEPAR@safmc.net.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Iverson, Public Information Officer; toll free 1-866-SAFMC-10 or 843-571-4366; kim.iverson@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: There has been recent interest in using ecosystem-based management principles to complement the current fishery management regime. It is believed that the incorporation of ecosystem-based principles will improve upon a system that has largely been based on single-species stock assessment and management. Ecosystem principles include the consideration of information that has not been available in the past when managing fish stocks, including predator-prey interactions, the influence of weather and climate on the biological environment, the condition of the habitat/environment, and the role of

species diversity to ecosystem functions.

With the Habitat Plan as a cornerstone, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) is developing an ecosystem-based approach to resource management. In doing so, the Council is initiating development of a comprehensive resource document that will present fishery and resource information for fisheries in the South Atlantic Bight ecosystem. This document, here referred to as the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP), will build upon the detailed habitat information described in the Council's 1998 Habitat Plan for the South Atlantic. The FEP will describe the detailed ecological and socioeconomic information regarding southeast fisheries from an ecosystem perspective. Information will include the delineation of the geographical extent of the ecosystems, descriptions of species life histories, and the development of a conceptual model of the food web.

Based upon the information developed in the FEP, the Council plans to establish a process to incorporate ecosystem information obtained through the FEP (and future FEP updates) into the current policy-making and management process. The proposed system calls for the initial development of a FEP as described above, in addition to the implementation of a 5-year system-wide evaluation cycle. The FEP will be reviewed, amended, and updated every five years with new scientific knowledge about ecosystem interactions. Concurrent with the development of the FEP will be a determination if new regulations should be incorporated into the current management system. If needed, existing fishery management plans (FMPs) will be amended through a FEP Comprehensive Amendment and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

In determining the actions to be taken in the initial FEP Comprehensive Amendment, the Council is adopting several recommendations from an Ecosystem Principles Advisory Panel 1999 report to Congress. The report outlined eight basic principles that should be contained in a FEP. Included in these are delineation of geographical extents of ecosystems that occur within the Council's authority, development of a conceptual model of the food web, and calculation of total removals from an ecosystem as a function of fishery-related actions. Using these eight principles as guidance, the Council is considering the following actions in the initial FEP Comprehensive Amendment/DEIS:

1. In order to calculate and characterize total removals from the ecosystem as a consequence of fishery-related actions (i.e., landings, discards, bycatch), the Council is considering requiring a permit to fish for, harvest, or possess any resource in the EEZ for all recreational and commercial fishermen. Other alternatives to calculate and characterize total removals being considered include: Replace the current Snapper/Grouper and Mackerel paper logbook programs by implementing the use of electronic logbooks and implement the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program's (ACCSP) modules. These modules provide the minimum data elements to be collected by all ACCSP partners conducting data collection programs.

2. The following three actions are being considered in order to comply with the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) final rule (published at 67 FR 2343, January 17, 2002):

- a. Refine existing EFH and Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs) as necessary;

- b. Identify new EFH and/or EFH-HAPCs as necessary;

- c. Implement measures to reduce impacts of fishing and non-fishing impacts on EFH and EFH-HAPCs as necessary.

3. Establishment of deep water coral HAPCs, with possible gear limitations in the newly protected areas, is being considered.

4. For enforcement and data collection purposes, requiring Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) on commercial, for-hire, and/or private recreational vessels is being considered.

5. The Council is considering amending the Mackerel FMP (as part of the Comprehensive FEP Amendment) with the following ten actions:

- a. Add little tunny, bonita, false albacore, greater barracuda, and blackfin tuna to the fishery management unit;

- b. Revert to utilizing a control rule in place of a quota-based management system;

- c. Modifications to the mackerel framework;

- d. Implement a permit to include all fisheries with an endorsement for mackerel;

- e. Add new qualifications for king mackerel.

- f. Prohibit the sale of recreationally caught coastal migratory pelagics;

- g. Implement a standardized bycatch reporting protocol;

- h. Modify the current bag, size, and trip limits;

- i. Implement a moratorium and limited-entry for Spanish mackerel; and

- j. Modify the king mackerel management boundaries.