

NOTICE OF OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET ACTION

Date 03/26/2012

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIAL: Simon Szykman
FOR CLEARANCE OFFICER: Diana Hynek

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB has taken action on your request received 12/23/2011

ACTION REQUESTED: New collection (Request for a new OMB Control Number)
TYPE OF REVIEW REQUESTED: Regular
ICR REFERENCE NUMBER: 201112-0648-009
AGENCY ICR TRACKING NUMBER:
TITLE: Alaska Recreational Charter Vessel Guide and Owner Data Collection
LIST OF INFORMATION COLLECTIONS: See next page

OMB ACTION: Approved without change
OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0648-0647

The agency is required to display the OMB Control Number and inform respondents of its legal significance in accordance with 5 CFR 1320.5(b).

EXPIRATION DATE: 03/31/2015

DISCONTINUE DATE:

BURDEN:	RESPONSES	HOURS	COSTS
Previous	0	0	0
New	687	519	0
Difference			
Change due to New Statute	0	0	0
Change due to Agency Discretion	687	519	0
Change due to Agency Adjustment	0	0	0
Change Due to Potential Violation of the PRA	0	0	0

TERMS OF CLEARANCE:

OMB Authorizing Official:

Kevin F. Neyland
Deputy Administrator,
Office Of Information And Regulatory Affairs

List of ICs

IC Title	Form No.	Form Name	CFR Citation
Alaska Charter Boat Sport Fishing Cost and Earnings Survey	NA	Alaska Charter Boat Sport Fishing Cost and Earnings Survey	
Telephone follow-up/nonresponse survey	NA	Telephone follow-up	

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION

Please read the instructions before completing this form. For additional forms or assistance in completing this form, contact your agency's Paperwork Clearance Officer. Send two copies of this form, the collection instrument to be reviewed, the supporting statement, and any additional documentation to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Docket Library, Room 10102, 725 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20503.

1. Agency/Subagency originating request	2. OMB control number b. <input type="checkbox"/> None a. _____ - _____
3. Type of information collection (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> New Collection b. <input type="checkbox"/> Revision of a currently approved collection c. <input type="checkbox"/> Extension of a currently approved collection d. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired e. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired f. <input type="checkbox"/> Existing collection in use without an OMB control number For b-f, note Item A2 of Supporting Statement instructions	4. Type of review requested (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Regular submission b. <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency - Approval requested by _____ / _____ / _____ c. <input type="checkbox"/> Delegated
7. Title	5. Small entities Will this information collection have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8. Agency form number(s) (<i>if applicable</i>)	6. Requested expiration date a. <input type="checkbox"/> Three years from approval date b. <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify: _____ / _____
9. Keywords	10. Abstract
11. Affected public (<i>Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x"</i>) a. ___ Individuals or households d. ___ Farms b. ___ Business or other for-profit e. ___ Federal Government c. ___ Not-for-profit institutions f. ___ State, Local or Tribal Government	12. Obligation to respond (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary b. <input type="checkbox"/> Required to obtain or retain benefits c. <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory
13. Annual recordkeeping and reporting burden a. Number of respondents _____ b. Total annual responses _____ 1. Percentage of these responses collected electronically _____ % c. Total annual hours requested _____ d. Current OMB inventory _____ e. Difference _____ f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change _____ 2. Adjustment _____	14. Annual reporting and recordkeeping cost burden (<i>in thousands of dollars</i>) a. Total annualized capital/startup costs _____ b. Total annual costs (O&M) _____ c. Total annualized cost requested _____ d. Current OMB inventory _____ e. Difference _____ f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change _____ 2. Adjustment _____
15. Purpose of information collection (<i>Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "X"</i>) a. ___ Application for benefits e. ___ Program planning or management b. ___ Program evaluation f. ___ Research c. ___ General purpose statistics g. ___ Regulatory or compliance d. ___ Audit	16. Frequency of recordkeeping or reporting (<i>check all that apply</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Recordkeeping b. <input type="checkbox"/> Third party disclosure c. <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting 1. <input type="checkbox"/> On occasion 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-annually 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Annually 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Biennially 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____
17. Statistical methods Does this information collection employ statistical methods <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	18. Agency Contact (person who can best answer questions regarding the content of this submission) Name: _____ Phone: _____

19. Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

On behalf of this Federal Agency, I certify that the collection of information encompassed by this request complies with 5 CFR 1320.9

NOTE: The text of 5 CFR 1320.9, and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3), appear at the end of the instructions. *The certification is to be made with reference to those regulatory provisions as set forth in the instructions.*

The following is a summary of the topics, regarding the proposed collection of information, that the certification covers:

- (a) It is necessary for the proper performance of agency functions;
- (b) It avoids unnecessary duplication;
- (c) It reduces burden on small entities;
- (d) It used plain, coherent, and unambiguous terminology that is understandable to respondents;
- (e) Its implementation will be consistent and compatible with current reporting and recordkeeping practices;
- (f) It indicates the retention period for recordkeeping requirements;
- (g) It informs respondents of the information called for under 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3):
 - (i) Why the information is being collected;
 - (ii) Use of information;
 - (iii) Burden estimate;
 - (iv) Nature of response (voluntary, required for a benefit, mandatory);
 - (v) Nature and extent of confidentiality; and
 - (vi) Need to display currently valid OMB control number;
- (h) It was developed by an office that has planned and allocated resources for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected (see note in Item 19 of instructions);
- (i) It uses effective and efficient statistical survey methodology; and
- (j) It makes appropriate use of information technology.

If you are unable to certify compliance with any of the provisions, identify the item below and explain the reason in Item 18 of the Supporting Statement.

Signature of Senior Official or designee

Date

Agency Certification (signature of Assistant Administrator, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Line Office Chief Information Officer, head of MB staff for L.O.s, or of the Director of a Program or StaffOffice)

Signature

Date

Signature of NOAA Clearance Officer

Signature

Date

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
ALASKA RECREATIONAL CHARTER VESSEL GUIDE AND OWNER DATA
COLLECTION
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is the agency responsible for collecting and analyzing scientific data on the United States' (U.S.) living marine resources, including Alaska halibut. Under the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) (see Section 303), [Executive Order 12962](#) (Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics, Section 1(h)), and [Executive Order 12866](#) (Section 1(b)(6)), NMFS is required to provide economic analyses of Federal management actions and policies to improve the Nation's fisheries. This data collection project will meet these statutory and administrative requirements by providing resource managers with the information necessary to understand the likely future impacts of management actions on the Alaska charter boat-based halibut sport fishery.

The halibut sport fishery in Alaska is quite large. During 2009, for instance, over 440,000 halibut were harvested by sport anglers in the state.¹ In recent years, several regulatory changes have occurred and more have been proposed that could significantly impact the sport fishery, particularly the charter boat industry that facilitates much of the halibut sport fishing trips in the state. In February 2011, a program was implemented to limit entry into the saltwater charter boat recreational fishery in Alaska (75 FR 554). This policy sets a limit on the number of charter vessels that may participate in the guided sport halibut fishery in U.S. waters off Alaska. The limited entry program is separate from other policies intended to regulate harvest of halibut by the guided fishing sector, such as the guideline harvest limit (GHL) policy established in 2003 that sets an acceptable limit on the amount of halibut that can be harvested by the recreational charter fishery during a year and establishes a process for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) to initiate harvest restrictions in the event that the limit is met or exceeded. At present, numerous harvest restrictions have been adopted by the Council to address exceedances of the GHL that have occurred in recent years. These restrictions have primarily been aimed at limitations on fishing in the charter boat industry, such as restrictions on client or crew fishing behavior (e.g., bag and size limits). This year, maximum size limits for halibut caught on charter boat fishing trips were adopted. Moreover, NMFS and the Council are currently assessing a plan to implement a catch sharing plan to allocate halibut between the recreational and commercial sectors that would replace the GHL system (76 FR 14300). To assess the effect of regulatory restrictions (currently in place or potential) on Alaska charter boat fishing operator behavior and welfare, it is necessary to obtain a better general understanding of the industry. Some information useful for this purpose is already collected from existing sources, such as the State of

¹ From Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Statewide Harvest Survey website: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/index.cfm?ADFG=region.home>. Accessed June 28, 2011.

Alaska's charter logbook data program. However, information on vessel and crew characteristics, services offered to clients, spatial and temporal aspects of their operations and fishing behavior, and costs and earnings information are generally not available from existing data sources and thus must be collected directly from the industry through voluntary surveys.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

Information from this collection will be used by NMFS economists and social scientists in the Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) and Alaska Regional Office, and by staff at the Council, to address issues discussed in Question 1 above, and others that may arise. Using these data, analyses will be conducted to describe the charter industry, its value, and its economic impact on the regional and national economy, as well as assess the effects of regulatory changes in support of efforts to develop, implement, and monitor fishery management plans.

The information collection consists of conducting an annual survey sent to all licensed charter businesses who offer saltwater fishing trips in Alaska. That is, the survey will be conducted as a voluntary census. For this implementation, we will mail questionnaires to all licensed charter businesses, with follow-ups to encourage response. Among the follow-up efforts will be a postcard reminder, a telephone contact with non-responding charter businesses to encourage response and gather data for assessing non-response behavior, and a full second mailing. Respondents will also be given the option of filling out the survey on-line at a secure website. Due to issues of timing sensitivity discussed below, and the need for the first year of responses to be collected for the 2011 season, we do not anticipate being able to conduct a formal pretest to test the mail survey instrument.²

The charter boat fishing season in Alaska generally runs from mid-May through mid-September. After numerous discussions with charter boat operators, it was determined that April is the best month for collecting the type of information sought in this data collection. *Since the survey collects information about the previous year's activities, much of which is calculated as part of the businesses' tax preparations, it was determined that conducting the survey in April will maximize the probability that respondents will have access to the information being collected, and thus would minimize the burden on them by reducing the need to start those calculations earlier than they normally would for tax season.*

The mail survey and the follow-up telephone interview script are described below. The web-based survey is based on the mail survey, asking the same questions, but formatted to be presented and filled out on line. As a result, it will not be discussed separately. Moreover, the

² Due to the limited window for maximizing response rates, conducting a full formal pretest would push the full implementation back a season and issues currently in front of the Council and NMFS require understanding the information this data collection intends to provide.

survey instruments are configured for collecting data for the 2011 season, but surveys for 2012 and 2013 are expected to be identical and therefore are not included.

Mail/Web-based Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into six sections. The following is a discussion of how particular questions in the questionnaire will be used.

Section A is short and asks for information that identifies the respondent's charter business to enable linking the information collected in this survey to supplemental data on fishing trips (catch, number of clients, dates of trips) collected in ADF&G's charter logbook program.

Section B collects information on employees and employee compensation during the previous season. Questions are asked to identify the number of people hired as vessel operators and sport fishing guides (B1), deckhands or other crew (B2), and staff of on-shore business operations (B3). Since the fishing season has several distinct time periods, these questions ask respondents to break down employment numbers by time period. Question B4 asks respondents to indicate the total compensation provided to each of the employee classes asked about in B1 to B3, and B5 collects information on the structure of payments for each type of employee.

Section C asks respondents for information on the business' offerings – types of fishing trips offered, plus other services such as lodging, non-fishing trips, etc. Respondents are asked to identify the types of trips they offer in C1, and then are asked to identify the specific fishing trip offerings in C2 and C3. C4 collects information on additional services provided on fishing trips, such as food and beverage, fish cleaning services, etc. C5 identifies whether the business charters whole boats, and if they do, what they charge for the service. Some charter businesses in Alaska offer lodging services. Question C6 asks about offering those services to non-fishing clients. C7 collects information necessary to calculate the annual revenues from the business' activities.

Cost information is collected in Section D. The section begins with two questions to identify the number of halibut client endorsements that were leased by the respondent's business during the season (D1) and the community or city in which most of their business transactions occur (D2). Questions D3 and D4 collect the fixed costs and variable costs, respectively, associated with operating the business for the previous year. Together with information from Sections B and C, economic models of the firm can be estimated to assess cost efficiencies, profitability in the industry, and economic impacts.

The next section asks respondents for information about their clients. Questions E1 through E3 ask for the percentage of clients that were returning customers (E1), booked trips a month or more in advance (E2), and booked at the last minute (E3). E4 asks respondents to identify the percentage of clients that booked fishing trips through different sources.

The final section contains questions aimed at further classifying respondents and their businesses, and in understanding respondents' investment in the businesses. F1 and F2 are used

to identify the type of business structure utilized by the charter business. F3 asks respondents for the percent of the business they (and their families) own, F5 asks for the percent of their household income earned from the business, and F4 collects information on the number of people from the respondent's household involved in the business and their role(s) therein. To assess off-season activities undertaken by owners of charter businesses, question F6 asks the respondent to identify what they did in the off-season.

The survey concludes with an open-ended question intended to capture general feelings about the survey, and offers a place for respondents to provide comments about management or policy issues, or about anything else.

Telephone Follow-Up

Following the initial mailing and postcard reminder, we will contact non-respondents by telephone to encourage them to complete the mail or web-based survey and to collect limited information from those who decide not to participate in the survey.³ The information provided by these non-respondents will be compared with that from respondents to address issues concerning non-response bias. Selected questions from the survey regarding their business structure, along with a few key, relatively accessible, economic-related questions, are asked to statistically test whether non-respondents differ from respondents with respect to these characteristics. The business structure questions include a single question (Q1) that captures what is asked in questions F1 and F2 of the survey, a question (Q5) asking for the percentage of the respondent's household income was earned from the charter business, and a question (Q6) about what the respondent did during the off-season. These questions match questions in the survey. In addition, the telephone follow-up interview includes questions to better understand why the respondent may not have returned the survey, including a question asking whether the respondent has plans to operate the business in the upcoming season (Q3), and if so, whether and what changes will be made to their business model (Q3a) (There is a Q2, which is a lead-in question, about whether the business will operate in 2012). Additionally, respondents are asked whether the charter business operates in saltwater or only in freshwater (Q4). Together information from these questions can be used to evaluate and adjust the results for potential non-response bias in the data.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. As explained above, the information gathered has utility. NMFS will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to [Section 515 of Public Law 106-554](#).

³ In the telephone follow-up, a limited amount of information may also be collected from those agreeing to return the mail survey.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

Survey respondents will be given the option of completing the survey on line at a Web site designed specifically to securely host the survey. Each respondent will have a unique login name and password to access the secure website and complete the survey. The login information will be provided in the survey mailing letters.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

The information collected in this survey is not collected by other Federal, state, or local agencies. We have informed the Council, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) about this project. None of these entities have conducted or are conducting similar economic data collections. Although there is no economic content, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game administers a mandatory charter boat fishing logbook program that collects information on the clients and client harvests of halibut and other saltwater species aboard charter vessels in Alaska. Additionally, a joint NMFS and PSMFC pilot survey of charter boat operators in Alaska conducted in 2001 collected *trip-level* information (as opposed to seasonal or annual information collected in this data collection), including information on the services that were offered and amount clients paid for those services.

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

Considerable efforts have been made to minimize the burden of filling out the survey on charter boat businesses. Four focus groups (with a maximum of nine participants in each) and seven cognitive interview sessions⁴ were conducted with charter boat business operators to obtain their input on potential questions and ways of improving the questions to make them easier (and faster) for them to answer. Moreover, we have made considerable efforts to stay in contact with the charter boat associations in the state to keep them informed of the status of the survey and the questions that we intend to ask.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

If the data collection is not conducted, the Council and NMFS will not have information on charter boat operations and the effects of recent and proposed changes in fishing regulations on them and the regional economy of which they are a part. As a result, it will not be possible to monitor the impact of existing or proposed regulatory programs on the supply and behavior of saltwater-based charter boat fishing in Alaska.

⁴ Both the focus groups and cognitive interviews were conducted without a set list of questions.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

The collection is consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency 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.

A Federal Register Notice published on October 7, 2011 (76 FR 62374) solicited comments on the information collection. Several comments were received by e-mail. Twenty-three comments were received from charter boat operators in Alaska that expressed support for this survey. An additional comment was received from a charter boat operator that felt the survey was “too late to be meaningful” since the Council, NMFS, and IPHC have already put restrictive rules in place in 2011 regarding halibut harvest on charter boats, and generally expressing grave concerns for the health of his business and the industry as a whole. A response was provided to the individual acknowledging his concerns and assuring him that a primary goal of this work is to begin to collect the information necessary for decision makers to better understand the impacts on industry from current and potential future management actions.

Several individuals outside NMFS were consulted about elements of the survey, availability of existing data, data to collect, and other aspects of the project. These included staff at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Council, and the International Pacific Halibut Commission with experience in recreational fishing issues in Alaska.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

In the cover letter accompanying each mailing, respondents will be told that their responses are voluntary and will be kept strictly confidential. The initial mailing letter and the follow-up mailing cover letter also include the following statement:

“All information you provide in the survey is considered confidential under section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801, *et seq.*) and [NOAA Administrative Order 216-100](#). Only aggregated results from the survey will be released publicly. Your personal information will not be disclosed and will only be accessible to authorized personnel responsible for

management and research of fisheries under the authority of NOAA. All authorized personnel have signed nondisclosure agreements specifying penalties for unauthorized use and disclosure of confidential fisheries data.”

Following completion of the data collection, the cooperating agency implementing the survey (PSMFC) will delete any information identifying individuals (i.e., name, licenses, and addresses) before any data file is delivered to NMFS or any other participating researchers and agencies. The plan for collecting data and maintaining its confidentiality will adhere to NOAA Administrative Order 216-100 and Section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1996, as per the notice above.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature asked in the survey.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

Each year, the survey will be sent to all licensed charter businesses in Alaska. For 2011, this amounts to 643 charter businesses. The contact information for each business will be obtained from ADF&G’s license database that contains updated address and telephone information for each licensee. We expect a final response rate of approximately 50 percent, leading to 321 responding license holders returning completed surveys. Charter operator representatives we have spoken with have indicated that if they have completed their federal tax returns prior to filling out the survey, the survey should take no more than 90 minutes (which is why we have planned to implement the survey in April), the response time we assume for computing the potential burden hours. As a result, those ultimately completing the survey are expected to contribute up to 482 hours to the overall annual hour burden.

Based on our experience with other surveys, we expect 277 respondents to have returned a completed survey or completed the on-line survey following the initial mailing and postcard reminder (~86% of all completed surveys). Given that updated telephone numbers are available from the sampling frame (ADF&G license database) for all respondents, we expect to be able to contact 100% of those who have not yet responded to the mail or web survey (643 - 277 = 366 respondents). These 366 license holders will be contacted by telephone and encouraged to complete and return the survey and asked to answer a few questions if they indicate they will not be returning the survey. Thus, the telephone follow-up serves the dual purpose of increasing the number of mail responses and gathering information by telephone needed to estimate the impact of non-response. The phone interview is expected to take 6 minutes on average to complete, and assuming 100% of the 366 individuals for which there is a phone number are reached and complete phone interviews, the contribution of the phone interview to the total time burden totals 37 hours. Following the phone interviews, the second full mailing will be sent out to all individuals who have not returned a completed survey to date. As noted above, we expect an additional 44 individuals (321 - 277 = 44) to have completed surveys following the phone

interviews and second full mailing. Thus, totaling the time contribution of the 321 completed mail surveys (482 hours) with the time from the phone interviews (37 hours) yields a total of 519 hours per year (Table 1).

The total number of unique respondents to all contacts in the survey implementation will be 321 (mail survey respondents) + 366 (phone respondents) – 44 (phone respondents who also returned the mail survey) = 643 (the total population size). Over a 3-year period, the survey will be administered three times. Assuming a static population size, which is reasonable given the limited entry system, we anticipate the annual estimates of respondents and time burden will be identical across years. Thus, the total burden hours is expected to be 1,557 hours (3 years × 519 hours).

Table 1. Annual Burden Hours by Survey Instrument

Survey instrument	Estimated number of respondents per year	Estimated time per respondent (minutes) per year	Estimated total annual burden hours (hours) per year
Mail survey (from initial mailing, postcard reminder)	277	90	416
Follow-up phone survey	366 ^a	6	37
Mail survey (second full mailing)	44	90	66
Annual totals	643^b (687 with duplication)		519

^a Number of successful phone contacts of license holders that have not returned completed surveys following initial mailing and postcard reminder.

^b Total unique respondents reflect the total licensees who complete the initial survey and all who completed the phone interview, including those who completed the survey afterward (accounts for individuals who completed both).

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).

No additional cost burden will be imposed on respondents aside from the burden hours indicated above.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

Annual cost to the Federal government of survey implementation is approximately \$50,000 divided as follows: \$40,000 in contract award money and \$10,000 in staff time and resources. Services provided by a cooperating agency, specifically PSMFC, include conducting the survey implementation, entering and cleaning the data, and preparing a report that documents the survey procedures and response rates.

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

This is a new collection.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

The response rates, survey data, and analysis of the data will be described in a report. A separate paper describing economic models used to analyze the data and the results from estimating these models will be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. Statistical data summaries in tabular form will be made available at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center Web site.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

Not Applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not Applicable.

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
ALASKA RECREATIONAL CHARTER VESSEL GUIDE AND OWNER DATA
COLLECTION
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX**

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 governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

The potential respondent universe is all saltwater-based charter boat businesses in Alaska during the year(s) of interest. Each of these businesses must purchase a state license to provide fishing guide services. The sport fishing license program is administered by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). In 2011, there were approximately 643 licensed saltwater sport fishing charter businesses. Thus, the population consists of all saltwater charter boat businesses that were licensed to offer saltwater fishing charter boat trips off Alaska during the year.

A full census is expected to be conducted of the population each year, so no sampling or other methods will be employed. For the collection as a whole, an overall response rate of 50% is anticipated. This estimate is based on the Alaska Fisheries Science Center social scientists' previous experience with using the survey protocols that will be followed here, as well as accounting for the extensive outreach AFSC social scientists have conducted with members of the population.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

Since the survey will be conducted as a census, no sampling or sample selection methods will be employed.

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

Numerous steps have been, and will be, taken to maximize response rates and deal with non-response behavior. These efforts are described below.

Maximizing Response Rates

The first step in achieving a high response rate is to develop an appealing questionnaire that is easy for respondents to complete. Significant effort has been spent on developing a good survey instrument. The survey instrument has benefited from input on earlier versions from focus groups and one-on-one interviews with members of the target population. In the focus groups, participants helped identify questions and concepts that needed to be clarified or modified to make them easier to fill out for them, as well as provided useful information about ways of making the survey more useful and attractive for them and other charter boat operators to want to fill it out. The interviews were used to fine-tune survey design issues related to specific wording, flow, and comprehension issues. Additionally, the interviews were used to ensure the survey was a comfortable length and easy to complete. The result is a high-quality and professional-looking survey instrument.

Also, charter boat operators have made it clear to us that the optimal time for conducting the survey to minimize burden on them and maximize the accuracy of the information they provide is April of each year. During April and May, they will have the previous year's tax information (profit and loss sheets) available—much of which we ask for in one form or another in the survey. Moreover, this is the time of year where they are gearing up for the upcoming season, which usually begins in late May and ends in early to mid September. As a result, conducting the survey in April and May will ensure that most charter boat operators are able to provide accurate information and have the time to do so before the season begins.

The implementation techniques that will be employed are consistent with methods that maximize response rates. Implementation of the mail survey will follow the Tailored Design Method (Dillman, Smyth, and Christian, 2009), which consists of multiple contacts. The specific set of contacts that will be employed is the following:

1. An **advance letter** notifying respondents a few days prior to the questionnaire arriving. This will be the first contact with the sample.
2. An **initial mailing** sent a few days after the advance letter. Each mailing contains a personalized cover letter, instructions and credentials for accessing the online survey, a printed questionnaire, and a pre-addressed stamped return envelope,
3. A **postcard follow-up reminder** to be mailed 5-7 days following the initial mailing.
4. A **follow-up phone call** to encourage response.
5. A **second full mailing** will be mailed after the follow-up phone calls.

Non-respondents

To better understand why non-respondents did not return the survey and to determine if there are systematic differences between respondents and non-respondents, those contacted in the follow-up phone call and identified as non-respondents will be asked a few questions to gauge their reasons for not responding to the mail survey. These include select classification questions related to the structure of their business and participation in the fishery in the past year and plans for the future. Information collected from non-respondents will aid in improving the survey implementation and to correct for non-response bias where necessary (e.g., using the Heckman method).

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

Several focus groups with fewer than ten members of the target population in each group, as well as a handful of cognitive interviews¹, were conducted during the survey design phase to test survey materials. Moreover, the survey design and implementation plan have benefited from review by individuals with expertise in fishing economic survey design and implementation.

Note that since the timing of the survey requires fielding the survey in April, and the industry, ADF&G, the Council, and NMFS have requested information about 2011 charter boat activities, we do not anticipate being able to conduct a formal pretest implementation.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the 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.

The following individuals were consulted on the statistical aspects of the design:

Dr. Dan Lew
Economist
NMFS
Alaska Fisheries Science Center
(530) 752-1746
Dan.lew@noaa.gov

Dr. Brian Garber-Yonts
Economist
NMFS
Alaska Fisheries Science Center
(206) 526-6301
Brian.Garber-Yonts@noaa.gov

¹ Both the focus groups and cognitive interviews were conducted without a set list of questions.

Dr. Amber Himes-Cornell
Social Scientist
NMFS
Alaska Fisheries Science Center
(206) 526-4221
Amber.Himes@noaa.gov

Drs. Dan Lew, Brian Garber-Yonts, and Amber Himes-Cornell are responsible for analyzing the data.

The survey will be conducted in cooperation with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission:

David Colpo
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
205 SE Spokane Street, Suite 100
Portland, OR 97202
(503) 595-3100

Reference:

Dillman, D. A., J. D. Smyth, and L. M. Christian. 2009. Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Total Design Method. 3rd Edition. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

SURVEY CORRESPONDENCE

ADVANCE LETTER

<DATE>

<First name> <Last name>
<Address>
<City>, <State> <Zip>

Dear <First name>,

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is conducting a study to learn more about saltwater charter businesses like yours. With your help, the information we collect will enable us to better assess the economic effects of management and regulatory actions (currently in place or potential) on Alaska charter boat fishing businesses and the communities in which they operate. The Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) is working with us to administer the survey.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game records indicate that you registered a saltwater charter business for 2011. . In the next few days, you will receive a packet in the mail from NOAA and PSMFC containing a survey booklet and a postage-paid return envelope, as well as instructions for how to complete the survey on-line if that is preferable.

The survey asks about your involvement in charter fishing, including information about your vessel(s) and crew, services you offer to clients, and cost and earning information associated with your business.

All information you provide in the survey is considered confidential under section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801, *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100. Your information will not be disclosed publicly and will only be accessible to authorized personnel. Only aggregated results from the survey will be released publicly.

Your response is voluntary, but important. The information you provide may be used to help shape decisions about federal government actions on saltwater charter boat fishing in Alaska. However, if too few responses are obtained, the results of the analysis cannot pass scientific standards, and thus will not be used to inform decision makers. Therefore, to make sure that the best possible information is obtained about Alaskan charter businesses, we need to hear from you.

If you have any questions about this study, please call toll free (877) 741-8913 and speak with Geana Tyler.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Drs. Dan Lew, Brian Garber-Yonts, and Amber Himes
Project Directors
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

INITIAL LETTER

<DATE>

<First name> <Last name>
<Address>
<City>, <State> <Zip>

Dear <First name>,

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is conducting a study to learn more about saltwater charter businesses like yours. With your help, the information we collect will enable us to better assess the economic effects of management and regulatory actions (currently in place or potential) on Alaska charter boat fishing businesses and the communities in which they operate. The Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) is working with us to administer the survey, and you have received this survey packet because Alaska Department of Fish and Game records indicate that you registered a saltwater charter business for 2011.

The survey asks about your involvement in the charter fishing industry in Alaska. Some of the questions may require you to consult your records or work with other members of your charter business to answer. It is important that the information you provide is as complete and accurate as possible.

We have included instructions for accessing a secure online version of the survey, which requires a unique login ID and password. The online survey is designed to minimize the time required to complete the survey. We have also included a printed copy of the survey and a postage-paid return envelope. Both versions of the survey ask identical questions, and we ask that you use whichever version is most convenient for you.

This survey takes most people about 90 minutes to complete. After you've completed the survey, please return it to PSMFC in the enclosed self-addressed and postage-paid envelope.

All information you provide in the survey is considered confidential under section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801, *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100. Only aggregated results from the survey will be released publicly. Your personal information will not be disclosed and will only be accessible to authorized personnel responsible for management and research of fisheries under the authority of NOAA. All authorized personnel have signed nondisclosure agreements specifying penalties for unauthorized use and disclosure of confidential fisheries data.

Your response is voluntary, but important. The information you provide may be used to help shape decisions about federal government actions on charter fishing in Alaska. However, if too few responses are obtained, the results of the analysis cannot pass scientific standards, and thus will not be used to inform decision makers. Therefore, to make sure that the best possible information is obtained about Alaskan charter businesses, we need to hear from you.

Please complete the survey to the best of your ability and return it no later than [DATE]. If you have any questions about this study or about any of the questions in the survey, please call toll free (877) 741-8913 and speak with Geana Tyler. Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Drs. Dan Lew, Brian Garber-Yonts, and Amber Himes
Project Directors
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

POSTCARD FOLLOWUP

Last week a survey was mailed to you seeking information about your business' involvement in saltwater charter boat fishing in Alaska.

If you have already completed and returned the paper survey, or completed the online survey, please accept our sincere thanks. If you have not, we ask that you do so today.

Your response is voluntary, but important. The information you provide may be used to help shape decisions about federal government actions on saltwater charter boat fishing in Alaska. To make sure that enough responses are returned for the data to be useful, and the best possible information is obtained about Alaskan charter businesses, we need to hear from you. Please complete the enclosed survey to the best of your ability and return it no later than [DATE].

If you need another paper copy of the survey or instructions on accessing the survey online, please call toll free (877) 741-8913 and speak with Geana Tyler and one will be mailed to you today.

Thank you for your help.

Drs. Dan Lew, Brian Garber-Yonts, and Amber Himes
Project Directors
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

SECOND MAILING

<DATE>

<First name> <Last name>
<Address>
<City>, <State> <Zip>

Dear <First name>,

A couple weeks ago, a survey was mailed to you seeking information about your business' involvement in Alaskan charter fishing.

If you have already completed and returned the paper survey, or completed the online survey, please accept our sincere thanks. If you have not, we ask that you do so today. We have enclosed another copy of the survey and instructions on accessing the secure online version of the survey in case you have misplaced the original mailing package we sent. We understand that you personally might not have all of the answers to the questions, and we fully expect you to collaborate with as many people as needed within your business to complete the survey. The key is that the information you provide is as complete and accurate as possible.

All information you provide in the survey is considered confidential under section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801, *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100. Only aggregated results from the survey will be released publicly. Your personal information will not be disclosed and will only be accessible to authorized personnel responsible for management and research of fisheries under the authority of NOAA. All authorized personnel have signed nondisclosure agreements specifying penalties for unauthorized use and disclosure of confidential fisheries data.

This survey takes most people about 90 minutes to complete. After you've completed the survey, please return it in the enclosed self-addressed and postage-paid envelope.

Although your participation is voluntary, your response will help us get a better understanding about charter businesses in Alaska, information that may be used to help shape decisions about federal government actions on charter fishing in Alaska. To make sure that the best possible information is obtained about Alaskan charter businesses, we need to hear from you. So please complete the enclosed survey to the best of your ability and return it to PSMFC no later than [DATE].

If you have any questions about this study or any of the questions in the survey, please call toll free (877) 741-8913 and speak with Geana Tyler. Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Drs. Dan Lew, Brian Garber-Yonts, and Amber Himes
Project Directors
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

TELEPHONE FOLLOW-UP

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission in Portland, Oregon, on behalf of National Marine Fisheries Service's Alaska Fisheries Science Center. I am trying to reach [name on address].

[IF NOT AVAILABLE] Thank you, I will call back later. When would be a good time to reach [name on address]?

[IF QUALIFIED RESPONDENT IS ON THE PHONE]

QA Recently, we mailed you a questionnaire asking you about your charter business structure, costs and revenue. The survey had a picture of charter boats on the cover and was titled the Alaska Charter Boat Sport Fishing Cost and Earnings Survey. Do you remember receiving that questionnaire?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO [*SKIP TO QA2*]

QA1 As of today, we have not received your completed questionnaire. As a member of the charter fishing industry in Alaska, you are probably aware of the smaller number of charter operators that remain in operation in Alaska and their importance to local economies. As one of the remaining operators, your response is very important, and we would greatly appreciate it if you would participate in the survey. The online version of the survey is most convenient for computer users— would it be possible for you to complete the online survey in the next week?

- 1 YES [*SKIP TO VERIFY 1*]
- 2 NO TO INTERNET [*SKIP TO QA3*]
- 3 NO TO SURVEY [*SKIP TO QB*]
- 4 SURVEY HAS ALREADY BEEN RETURNED [*THANK YOU, SKIP TO CONTINUE*]

QA2 We are collecting information about saltwater charter businesses like yours to help the federal government better assess the economic effects of management and regulatory actions (currently in place or potential) on Alaska charter boat fishing businesses and the communities in which they operate. Your input is very important since if too few people respond, the results of the analysis cannot pass scientific standards, and thus will not be used to inform decision makers on the charter boat sector and how it may be affected by their decisions. The online version of the survey is most convenient for computer users – would it be possible for you to complete the online survey in the next week?

- 1 YES [*SKIP TO VERIFY 1*]
- 2 NO TO INTERNET [*SKIP TO QA3*]
- 3 NO TO SURVEY [*SKIP TO QB*]
- 4 SURVEY HAS ALREADY BEEN RETURNED [*THANK YOU, SKIP TO CONTINUE*]

QA3 Okay, If we send you another survey, could you find the time to complete the survey and return it to us by mail within a week of receiving it?

- 1 YES – *[SKIP TO VERIFY 2]*
- 3 NO - *[SKIP TO QB]*

VERIFY 1: (If they indicate they'll take survey online)

To ensure the security of information provided in the online survey, we included a user id and password to access our website in the survey packet we sent you in April. For your convenience I can email your id, a new password, and the web address for the survey if you don't still have it. Is your email address *[GIVE EMAIL ADDRESS ON FILE]*?

- 1. YES, BUT DON'T NEED NEW PASSWORD*[SKIP TO CONTINUE]*
- 2. YES, SEND NEW PASSWORD *[FLAG FOR RESET]*
- 3. NO *[RECORD NEW EMAIL ADDRESS and FLAG FOR RESET]*

Thank you, I will email you the information today. *[GO TO CONTINUE]*

VERIFY 2 (If new survey needs to be sent)

I would like to verify the address for [name of business] as...

STREET ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE _____

Is this correct?

- 1- NO – *[RECORD NEW ADDRESS.]*
- 2- YES

Okay, I will send another questionnaire out today. *[GO TO CONTINUE]*

CONTINUE (If they indicate survey has been or will be returned)

Thanks for your participation. *[GO TO QB]*

QB It is very important for our analysis that we understand how those who haven't returned the survey compare to those who did. This way we will not misinterpret the results. Could I take about 5 minutes to ask you a few questions that will help us with our work? I'd like to remind you that all of your answers are confidential and your name will not be revealed to anyone.

- 1 YES [*SKIP TO Q1*]
- 2 NO [*ASK FOR A MORE CONVENIENT TIME, OTHERWISE, THANK AND TERMINATE*]

CHARTER BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Q1 Which of the following business structures best describes your business? *Check the best answer.*

- 1 C Corporation
- 2 Sole proprietorship
- 3 Limited liability partnership (LLP), Limited liability company (LLC), or S corporation
- 4 Other
- 5 Don't know

Q2 Do you plan on operating this charter business in 2012?

- 1 YES [*SKIP TO Q3*]
- 2 NO [*GO ON TO Q2a*]

Q2a Why are you not going to operate in 2012? (indicate all that apply)

- 1 The business isn't profitable.
- 2 Regulatory requirements are too stringent.
- 3 Reporting requirements are too stringent.
- 4 I'm retiring.

[After Q2a is answered, skip to Q4]

Q3 Do you plan to change your business model in any way, for example, by changing the types of fishing trips you offer or adding other services besides guided fishing?

- 1 YES [*GO ON TO Q3a*]
- 2 NO [*GO ON TO Q4*]

Q3a How do you expect to change your business model? (Indicate any that apply)

- 1 I will not offer trips to fish for halibut any more or offer fewer trips for halibut.
- 2 I plan to offer more non-fishing trips.
- 3 I plan to offer trips to fish for multiple species in the same trip.

Q4 Does your business offer trips only in saltwater, only in freshwater or do you offer trips in both saltwater and freshwater?

- 1 Only saltwater
- 2 Only freshwater
- 3 Both saltwater and freshwater

Q5 During 2011, about what percentage of your total annual household income was earned from your charter business?

- 1 0-25%
- 2 26-50%
- 3 51-75%
- 4 75-100%

Q6 Which of the following best describes what you did during the 2010-11 off-season? *Check all that apply.*

- I continued work related to your charter business, including travel outside of Alaska
- I worked in Alaska in a fishing-related job not related to your charter business
- I worked in Alaska in a non-fishing related job
- I lived in Alaska, but do not work
- I worked outside of Alaska in a fishing-related job not related to your charter business
- I worked outside of Alaska in a non-fishing related job
- I lived outside of Alaska, but did not work

[IF RETURNING SURVEY] Thank you, this will help with our preliminary analysis. Receiving your completed survey will greatly help improve our understanding of charter business operations in Alaska. Thanks again, and have a good evening.

[IF NOT RETURNING QUESTIONNAIRE] That's all the questions I have for you. Do you have any comments that you would like to add? Thank you for your time. We really appreciate your participation in this brief survey. Thanks again, and have a good evening.

TERMINATE

[TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWER]

Respondent gender: MALE
 FEMALE

LANG Language or other barrier:

- 1 YES, POSSIBLE LANGUAGE BARRIER
- 2 YES, DEFINITE LANGUAGE BARRIER
- 3 NO LANGUAGE, BUT OTHER TYPE OF BARRIER [*SPECIFY*]
- 4 NO BARRIERS

OTHER RESPONDENT COMMENTS

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS AND ANSWERS

[If concerned about purpose of the call] This is not a marketing or sales call. We are collecting public input for government, industry, and citizen groups to consider when evaluating ways to manage fish species, like halibut, that are targeted by charter businesses in Alaska. I want to assure you that your answers will be kept confidential and your name will not be revealed to anyone.

[If asking about the study sponsor] This survey is sponsored by NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service, a U.S. government agency charged with understanding the effects of federal management actions and policies affecting the nation's saltwater and freshwater fisheries.

ONLINE SURVEY INFORMATION

The following are instructions for accessing and using the online Charter Operator Survey, which provides a safe, quick method for completing the survey. This secure method will allow you to login to the survey and work at your own pace. At any time, you can save your answers and re-login at a later time to pick up where you left off.

If you would like to use the online version of the survey, please point your web browser to:

<http://www.psmfc.org/am80edr/edr>

For ADF&G Saltwater Charter License No: 1111

Your Login ID is: 2011A-1000A

Your password is: 4we7i5b

Please keep your Login ID and password secure. If this information gets misplaced or you are concerned about unauthorized access, please contact PSMFC and password will be reset.

We have taken several measures to protect the confidentiality of the data you submit through the online survey. These include:

1. Access to data you enter is password protected, and your user id and password are delivered to you by certified mail.
2. All logins to the website (successful and unsuccessful) are logged and the log will be monitored for signs of unauthorized access.
3. The database is password-protected on PSMFC's secure network.
4. Data traveling between your PC and the PSMFC Web server is encrypted for security using an SSL certificate from GoDaddy.com, Inc. (<http://www.godaddy.com/gdshop/ssl/ssl.asp>). The GoDaddy web site certificate safeguards sensitive data by securing online

If you have any questions about the online version of the EDR or need assistance with any questions on the EDR, please call toll free (877) 741-8913 and speak with Geana Tyler.

Alaska Charter Boat Sport Fishing Cost and Earnings Survey



This survey is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a U.S. government agency charged with making decisions about halibut management.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at 60 minutes, including time for reviewing instructions, reviewing existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

OMB Control #: 0648-XXXX
Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

- ◇ Your responses to the survey questions should reflect information about your charter fishing business.
- ◇ If you have questions or anything is unclear, please contact Geana Tyler at the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, (877) 741-3450.
- ◇ If you are unable to answer the question, please write why you are unable to answer in the margin (e.g., data unavailable).

RESPONDENT IDENTIFICATION

All questions relate to you and the sport fishing charter business you licensed during 2011.

- A1** What are the business name and license number of your business as listed on the ADF&G Sport Fish Business Owner license?

_____ *Sport fish business name*

_____ *ADF&G sport fish business owner license number*

- A2** Please list the DMV-issued Alaska Vessel Number or U.S. Coast Guard Vessel Documentation Number for all vessels that this business operated during the 2011 season and indicate if the vessel was owned by the business or if it was leased from another person or business. *Include only saltwater vessels.*

Vessel license number	Owned <input type="checkbox"/>	Leased <input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 1: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 2: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 3: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 4: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 5: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 6: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 7: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 8: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 9: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel 10: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EMPLOYMENT IN 2011

The next few questions are about employment and compensation of vessel operators/ licensed guides, deckhands and other crew members, and other individuals employed by this business in 2011.

For these questions:

- The early shoulder season refers to the period from April 1 to mid-June
- The main season refers to the period from mid-June to mid-August
- The late shoulder season is from mid-August to the end of September
- The off-season is the period from October through March

B1 How many individuals worked for the business primarily as hired vessel operators and/or licensed sport fishing guides during each period in 2011, *not including owners of this business*? For each period, please report the number of individuals who worked full-time and part-time separately.

	Early shoulder	Main season	Late shoulder	Off- season
Full-time (at least 35 hours per week during most of the period)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Part-time (less than 35 hours per week during most of the period)	_____	_____	_____	_____

B2 How many individuals worked for the business primarily as hired deckhands or other on-board crew during each period in 2011, *not including owners of this business*? For each period, please report the number of individuals who worked full-time and part-time separately.

	Early shoulder	Main season	Late shoulder	Off- season
Full-time (at least 35 hours per week during most of the period)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Part-time (less than 35 hours per week during most of the period)	_____	_____	_____	_____

B3 How many individuals were hired and worked for the business primarily on-shore during each period in 2011 (e.g., business manager, guest services, administrative employees, etc)? *Do not include independent contractors that provide the same service to multiple businesses, or owners of this business.* For each period, please report the number of individuals who worked full-time and part-time separately.

	Early shoulder	Main season	Late shoulder	Off-season
Full-time (at least 35 hours per week during most of the period)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Part-time (less than 35 hours per week during most of the period)	_____	_____	_____	_____

B4 For work performed in 2011, how much did you pay in total to hired vessel operators and guides, deckhands and other crew, and on-shore employees? *Include only payment of wages and other monetary compensation; do not include non-wage benefits (e.g., health insurance), other payroll expenses (e.g., unemployment insurance), or any payments to owners of this business.*

Worker type	Total payments
Vessel operators/guides	\$ _____
Deckhands and other on-board crew	\$ _____
On-shore employees	\$ _____

B5 What forms of compensation were used for hired vessel operators and guides, deckhands and other crew, and on-shore employees in 2011? For each worker type, please check the box for each form of compensation that was used to pay one or more individuals, *not including owners of this business. Check all that apply.*

Worker type	Daily/hourly wage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Salary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Revenue share <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (please describe). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vessel operators/guides	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Deckhands and other on-board crew	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
On-shore workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

YOUR 2011 FISHING TRIP OFFERINGS AND SERVICES

C1 During 2011, which of the following trip types did you offer? *Check all that apply.*

- Fishing only
- Combination fishing and hunting
- Combination fishing and dedicated eco-tour/wildlife-viewing
- Eco-tour/wildlife viewing only (no fishing)
- Outfitting (e.g., saltwater fishing gear rental)
- Game transport
- General transportation/water taxi (no outfitting/game transport)
- Event-hosting services
- Research or oil spill monitoring and response
- Other, please specify: _____

C2 Many businesses offer fishing trips targeting multiple species (“combination fishing trips”). During 2011, what was the **average price per person** that you charged clients for the following types of **combination** fishing trips you may have advertised offering? *If you did not advertise or offer, please check the box indicating that type of fishing trip was not offered.*

Type of combination fishing trip	Not offered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Average price per person
<u>Two-species combination fishing trip</u>		
“Half day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Three-quarter day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Full day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Overnight” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Multi-day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
<u>Three-species combination fishing trip</u>		
“Half day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Three-quarter day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Full day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Overnight” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Multi-day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____

C3 During 2011, what was the **average price per person** that you charged clients for **halibut, king or silver salmon, or other** fishing trips targeting a single species that you may have advertised offering? *If you did not advertise or offer, please check the box indicating that type of fishing trip was not offered.*

Type of fishing trip	Not offered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Average price per person
<u>Halibut fishing trip</u>		
“Half day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Three-quarter day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Full day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Overnight” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Multi-day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
<u>King or silver salmon fishing trip</u>		
“Half day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Three-quarter day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Full day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Overnight” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Multi-day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
<u>Other species fishing trip</u>		
“Half day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Three-quarter day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Full day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Overnight” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
“Multi-day” trip.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____

C4 Of the following fishing-related services, which did you typically include as part of each fishing package you offered in 2011, which were offered for an added fee, and which were not offered? *For services offered for an additional fee, please indicate how much the fee is per person.*

	Not offered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Included in one or more trip package? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Added fee? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount of added fee per person (indicate if fee is charged on other basis)
Fishing-related services				
Long-distance fishing locations (including fuel surcharge).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Fish cleaning (head/gut).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Fish cleaning (skinning, scaling, filleting, etc).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Packing and shipping.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Transport to/from charter vessel.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Lodging at charter home port.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Remote lodging.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Cooked meals (breakfast/lunch/dinner)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Beverages/snacks.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Bait.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Ice.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Fishing gear.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Other gear.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____
Souvenirs/keepsakes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____

C5 Some charter businesses offer a full-boat daily charter fee, which is charged for any number of people (up to the permitted capacity) to use the boat for their exclusive charter services. Do you offer a full-boat daily charter fee?

- Yes, the full-boat daily charter fee is \$ _____ per day
- No

C6 During 2011, did you offer paid lodging to visitors that were not customers of the charter business?

- Yes
- No

C7 What sales and revenue were generated from your charter business in 2011? *For each source of revenue, please indicate the number of units sold and total revenue received.*

Revenue source	Number of units sold	Total revenue
Charter trips reported in charter logbook – payment received directly from client	_____ total clients (seats sold) _____ total trips	\$ _____
Charter trips reported in charter logbook – payment received from booking agent or other service	_____ total clients (seats sold) _____ total trips	\$ _____
Non-fishing charter trips – not reported in charter logbook (e.g., transport, hunting-only, eco-tours)	_____ total clients _____ total trips	\$ _____
Client referrals/booking commissions	_____ total client referrals/bookings	\$ _____
Federal Charter Halibut Permit (CHP) sales	_____ total endorsements sold	\$ _____
Federal Charter Halibut Permit (CHP) leases	_____ total endorsements leased	\$ _____

YOUR COSTS IN 2011

D1 How many total halibut client endorsements did you lease during 2011?

_____ Number of leased halibut client endorsements

D2 In which community do your business expenses primarily occur?

Question D3 asks about your business overhead costs, and Question D4 asks about vessel operating costs that depend upon for the number of vessel trips taken.

D3 During 2011, approximately how much money did you spend on each of the following business cost items? These are business overhead and other fixed costs that do not vary directly with the number of trips or clients you had during the season. *Do not include costs that your clients pay directly to people that you contract with (e.g., fish processing and shipping).*

Item	Total amount spent in 2011
Vessel mortgage (principal and interest), rental, or lease costs....	\$ _____
Business and other licenses and permits (except CHP).....	\$ _____
Charter Halibut Permit (CHP) lease and/or purchase costs.....	\$ _____
Major gear and equipment expenses.....	\$ _____
Routine maintenance of vessel	\$ _____
Vessel and mechanical repairs.....	\$ _____
Fishing gear and equipment: purchase, maintenance, and repair...	\$ _____
Insurance (include all types – vessel, hull, liability, etc.).....	\$ _____
Vehicle purchases.....	\$ _____
Vehicle rentals (passenger vans, trucks, etc.).....	\$ _____
Slip fees, moorage costs (loan payment or rent/lease costs).....	\$ _____
Boatyard and equipment storage	\$ _____
Office space and shore-side facilities (not including storage).....	\$ _____
Employee salary costs (not on-board guide/crew wages).....	\$ _____
Non-wage employee benefits (not per-hour payroll costs).....	\$ _____
Professional services fees (legal, accounting, etc.).....	\$ _____
Financial services fees (bank service and merchant charges).....	\$ _____
Advertising.....	\$ _____
Telephone and internet.....	\$ _____
Property taxes.....	\$ _____
Credit card fees.....	\$ _____
Other: _____	\$ _____
Other: _____	\$ _____
Other: _____	\$ _____

D4 During 2011, approximately how much money did you spend on each of the following vessel operating cost items? The costs listed here tend to vary upon how much business you do. *Do not include costs that your clients pay directly to people that you contract with (e.g., fish processing and shipping).*

Item	Total amount spent in 2011
Boat fuel.....	\$ _____
Fish Haulers.....	\$ _____
Boat Washers.....	\$ _____
Fish processing, packaging, and shipping	\$ _____
Broker/agent or referral/commission fees.....	\$ _____
Food and beverage supplies.....	\$ _____
Bait.....	\$ _____
Ice.....	\$ _____
Launch fees.....	\$ _____
Subcontractor fees.....	\$ _____
Passenger fees paid to municipalities or other entities.....	\$ _____
Other: _____.....	\$ _____

YOUR CLIENTS IN 2011

E1 During 2011, about what percentage of your clients were return customers or personal referrals from previous customers? *Check the box of the best answer.*

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 75-100%

E2 During 2011, about what percentage of your clients booked their trips one month or more in advance? *Check the box of the best answer.*

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 75-100%

E3 During 2011, about what percentage of your clients booked their trips less than 48 hours in advance? *Check the box of the best answer.*

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 75-100%

E4 During 2011, about what percentage of your clients were booked independently, through a cruise ship, through a specialty charter booking service, or through a general travel agent?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Independent bookings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 0-25%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 26-50%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 51-75%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 75-100%</p> | <p>Specialty charter booking service (or charter business)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 0-25%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 26-50%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 51-75%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 75-100%</p> |
| <p>Cruise ship-based booking</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 0-25%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 26-50%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 51-75%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 75-100%</p> | <p>General travel agent (or other booking service)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 0-25%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 26-50%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 51-75%</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 75-100%</p> |

OTHER BUSINESS AND HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

F1 Is your business structured as a C corporation? *A C corporation is taxed separately from its owners.*

- Yes → **skip** to the end of the survey
- No → continue to F2

F2 Which of the following business structures best describes your business? *Check the best answer.*

- Sole proprietorship
- Limited liability partnership (LLP), Limited liability company (LLC), or S corporation
- Other: _____

F3 Please indicate the total percentage ownership share of this business held by you and other members of your household during 2011. *Your household includes family members and others who share your residence. Do not include family members that have their own residence outside of yours.*

My household's ownership share: _____%

F4 During 2011, how many members of your household, including yourself, worked for the business as vessel operators and guides, deckhands and other crew, and in work based primarily on-shore? *If an individual did more than one job, include them in the count for the job they did the most.*

- _____ Vessel operators/guides
- _____ Deckhands and other on-board crew
- _____ On-shore work

F5 During 2011, about what percentage of your total annual household income was earned from this business? *Check the best answer.*

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 75-100%

F6 Which of the following best describes what you did during the 2010-11 off-season? *Check all that apply.*

- Continued work related to your charter business, including travel outside of Alaska
- Worked in Alaska in a fishing-related job not related to your charter business
- Worked in Alaska in a non-fishing related job
- Lived in Alaska, but do not work
- Worked outside of Alaska in a fishing-related job not related to your charter business
- Worked outside of Alaska in a non-fishing related job
- Lived outside of Alaska, but did not work

Is there anything we overlooked, or do you have any comments about how your charter business has been affected in the last 5 years or will likely be impacted in the next five years, either positively or negatively? Please use the space below or attach separate sheets to provide us your comments.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

industrial stakeholders, and to advance a dialogue between these groups.

NIST invites members of the public, especially cloud computing community stakeholders to participate in this event as exhibitors. On November 2 and 3, 2011, space will be available for NIST would like to invite 30 academic, industry, and standards developing organizations to exhibit their respective cloud computing work at a demonstration booth or table which is co-located with the event. Interested organizations should contact Romayne Hines by e-mail at romayne.hines@nist.gov or by phone at (301) 975-4500. Exhibitors will be accepted in the order in which their responses are received. The first 30 organizations which respond will be accepted. Responses must be submitted by an authorized representative of the organization. Logistics information will be provided to accepted exhibitors. NIST will provide the exhibit location space and one work table free of charge. Exhibitors are responsible for the cost of the exhibit, including staffing and materials. NIST reserves the right to exercise its judgment in the placement of exhibits. General building security is supplied; however, exhibitors are responsible for transporting and securing exhibit equipment and materials.

All visitors to the NIST site are required to pre-register to be admitted and have appropriate government-issued photo ID to gain entry to NIST. Anyone wishing to attend this meeting must register at <http://www.nist.gov/itl/cloud/cloudworkshopiv.cfm> by close of business Wednesday, October 26, 2011.

Dated: October 4, 2011.

Willie E. May,

Associate Director for Laboratory Programs.

[FR Doc. 2011-26024 Filed 10-6-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Alaska Recreational Charter Vessel Guide and Owner Data Collection

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

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 December 6, 2011.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 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 Amber Himes-Cornell, (206) 526-4221, or Amber.Himes@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Numerous management measures have recently been proposed or implemented that affect recreational charter boat fishing for Pacific halibut off Alaska. On January 5, 2010, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued a final rule establishing a limited entry permit system for charter vessels in the guided halibut sport fishery in International Pacific Halibut Commission Areas 2C (Southeast Alaska) and 3A (Central Gulf of Alaska) (75FR554). This permit system is intended to address concerns about the growth of fishing capacity in this fishery sector, which accounts for a substantial portion of the overall recreational halibut catch in Alaska. On March 16, 2011, a size limit on Pacific halibut caught while charter boat fishing for the 2011 fishing season was established (76FR14300). In addition, on July 22, 2011, a Halibut Catch Sharing Plan (76FR44156) was proposed that would alter the way Pacific halibut is allocated between the guided sport (*i.e.*, the charter sector) and the commercial halibut fishery.

To assess the effect of regulatory restrictions (currently in place or potential) on charter operator and owner behavior and welfare, it is necessary to obtain a better general understanding of the Alaska recreational charter boat industry. Some information useful for this purpose is already collected from existing sources, such as charter vessel logbooks administered by Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). However, information on vessel and crew characteristics, services offered to clients, spatial and temporal aspects of their operations and fishing behavior, and costs and earnings information are

generally not available from these existing data sources and thus must be collected directly from the industry through voluntary survey efforts.

In order to address this information gap, NMFS' Alaska Fisheries Science Center proposes to conduct a survey of charter vessel owners to collect annual cost and earnings data that will supplement logbook data collected by ADF&G. The proposed data collection will provide basic economic information about the charter sector, including revenues produced from different products and services provided to clients, fixed and variable operating costs and locations of purchases. These data will support improved analysis and of the effects of fisheries regulations on the charter fishing industry, information that is increasingly needed by the Council and NMFS to deal with ongoing halibut resource issues and other fishery management issues involving the charter industry.

II. Method of Collection

The method of data collection will be a survey of charter vessel owners implemented through a mailed questionnaire.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: None.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (request for a new information collection).

Affected Public: Individuals or households; business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,200.

Estimated Time per Response: 60 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,200.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

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: October 4, 2011.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2011-25966 Filed 10-6-11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 110921597-1591-01]

RIN 0648-XA636

Endangered and Threatened Species; 90-Day Finding on Petitions To Delist Coho Salmon Under the Endangered Species Act

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

ACTION: Notice of 90-day petition finding.

SUMMARY: We, NMFS, announce a 90-day finding on three petitions to delist coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). We find that the petitions do not present substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that the petitioned action may be warranted.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the petitions and related materials are available upon request from the Assistant Regional Administrator, Protected Resources Division, NMFS, Southwest Regional Office, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rosalie del Rosario, NMFS, Southwest Region Office, (562) 980-4085; or Dwayne Meadows and Kristy Beard, NMFS, Office of Protected Resources, (301) 427-8403.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 4 of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1533) contains provisions allowing interested persons to petition the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) to add a species to, or remove a species from, the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and to designate critical habitat. The Secretary has delegated the authority for these actions to the NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries.

On May 9, 2011, we received a petition from Dr. Richard Gierak requesting that we delist coho salmon under the ESA. We also received two similar petitions from the Siskiyou County Water Users Association on June 9 and June 28, 2011, requesting that we delist coho salmon. The June 28 petition cites Dr. Gierak as a preparer. Both the June 9th and June 28th petitions include text that is the same as some of the text in the May 9th petition. Because we received three petitions that requested the same action within a short period of time, we are considering all three petitions jointly in making our 90-day finding.

ESA Statutory and Regulatory Provisions and Evaluation Framework

Section 4(b)(3)(A) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1533(b)(3)(A)) requires that we make a finding as to whether a petition to list, delist, or reclassify a species presents substantial scientific or commercial information indicating the petitioned action may be warranted. ESA implementing regulations define “substantial information” as the “amount of information that would lead a reasonable person to believe the measure proposed in the petition may be warranted” (50 CFR 424.14(b)(1)). In determining whether a petition presents substantial scientific or commercial information to list or delist a species, we take into account information submitted with, and referenced in, the petition and all other information readily available in our files. To the maximum extent practicable, this finding is to be made within 90 days of the receipt of the petition, and the finding is to be published promptly in the **Federal Register** (16 U.S.C. 1533(b)(3)(A)). In evaluating a petition and making a 90-day finding, our regulations require that we consider whether the petition: (1) Clearly indicates the administrative measure recommended and gives the scientific and any common name of the species involved; (2) contains detailed narrative justification for the recommended measure, describing, based on available information, past and present numbers and distribution of the species involved and any threats faced by the species; (3) provides information regarding the status of the species over all or a significant portion of its range; and (4) is accompanied by the appropriate supporting documentation in the form of bibliographic references, reprints of pertinent publications, copies of reports or letters from authorities, and maps (50 CFR 424.14(b)(2)). If we find that a petition presents substantial information indicating that the requested action may

be warranted, section 4(b)(3)(A) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1533(b)(3)(A)) requires the Secretary to conduct a status review of the species.

The ESA defines an “endangered species” as “any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range” (16 U.S.C. 1532(6)). A “threatened species” is defined as “any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range” (16 U.S.C. 1532(20)). Under section 4(a)(1) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. 1533(a)(1)), a species may be determined to be threatened or endangered as a result of any of the following factors: (1) The present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range; (2) over-utilization for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes; (3) disease or predation; (4) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; or (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence. Regulations implementing the ESA instruct us to consider these same factors when determining whether to delist a species, a subspecies, or a distinct population segment (including Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESUs)) (50 CFR 424.11(d)). Listing determinations are made solely on the basis of the best scientific and commercial data available, after conducting a review of the status of the species, and taking into account efforts made by any state or foreign nation to protect such species. In addition to considering the factors listed above, the ESA implementing regulations state that a species may be delisted only if such data substantiate that it is neither endangered nor threatened for one or more of the following reasons: the species is extinct; the species is recovered; or subsequent investigations show the best scientific or commercial data available when the species was listed, or the interpretation of such data, were in error (50 CFR 424.11(d)).

Analysis of the Petitions

The contents of the three petitions are largely similar and our analysis is based on a consideration of the four regulatory criteria for the minimum requirements for determining whether a petition presents substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that the petitioned action may be warranted (50 CFR 424.14(b)). Our analysis of the petitions with regard to these criteria is as follows:

(1) The petitions do not clearly indicate the administrative measure recommended, and contain