NOTICE OF OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET ACTION

Date 09/22/2014

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIAL: Simon Szykman
FOR CLEARANCE OFFICER: Jennifer Jessup

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB has taken action on your request received 06/27/2014

ACTION REQUESTED: New collection (Request for a new OMB Control Number)
TYPE OF REVIEW REQUESTED: Regular
ICR REFERENCE NUMBER: 201406-0648-006
AGENCY ICR TRACKING NUMBER:
TITLE: Gathering Observational Data on Historical and Current Biological Trends among Populations of Alewife (Alosa pseudoharengus) and Blueback Herring (A. aestivalis)
LIST OF INFORMATION COLLECTIONS: See next page

OMB ACTION: Approved with change
OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0648-0701
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: 09/30/2017 DISCONTINUE DATE:

BURDEN:	RESPONSES	HOURS	COSTS
Previous	0	0	0
New	500	208	0
Difference			
Change due to New Statute	0	0	0
Change due to Agency Discretion	500	208	0
Change due to Agency Adjustment	0	0	0
Change due to PRA Violation	0	0	0

TERMS OF CLEARANCE:

OMB Authorizing Official: Dominic J. Mancini
Acting Deputy Administrator,
Office Of Information And Regulatory Affairs

List of ICs			
IC Title	Form No.	Form Name	CFR Citation
Survey of river herring observations	NA	Rivver herring observation survey	

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
DOC/NOAA/NMFS

2. OMB control number b. [✔] None
a. 0648 -

3. Type of information collection (*check one*)
a. [✔] New Collection
b. [ ] Revision of a currently approved collection
c. [ ] Extension of a currently approved collection
d. [ ] Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired
e. [ ] Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired
f. [ ] Existing collection in use without an OMB control number
For b-f, note Item A2 of Supporting Statement instructions

4. Type of review requested (*check one*)
a. [✔] Regular submission
b. [ ] Emergency - Approval requested by ____/____/____
c. [ ] Delegated

5. Small entities
Will this information collection have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities? [ ] Yes [✔] No

6. Requested expiration date
a. [✔] Three years from approval date b. [ ] Other Specify:____/____

7. Title
Gathering Observational Data on Historical and Current Biological Trends among Populations of Alewife (Alosa pseudoharengus) and Blueback Herring (A. aestivalis)

8. Agency form number(s) (*if applicable*) N/A

9. Keywords Fishermen, Fishing

10. Abstract

The purpose of this information collection is to gather historical and current population and biological information from commercial and recreational harvesters of the two species of river herring; alewife (Alosa pseudoharengus) and blueback (A. aestivalis). Given that commercial and recreational fishermen have a unique and important understanding of the long term status of the species for which they are fishing, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) intends to contact both current and retired recreational and commercial harvesters of river herring from Maine to North Carolina, to inquire about recent and long-term observations of changes in run-timing, abundance, distribution, individual size and species composition. Results will be used to assist NOAA in identifying observational trends among river herring populations throughout their range so as to make more informed decisions with respect to their management.

11. Affected public (*Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x"*)
a. P Individuals or households d. ___ Farms
b. x Business or other for-profit e. ___ Federal Government
c. ___ Not-for-profit institutions f. ___ State, Local or Tribal Government

12. Obligation to respond (*check one*)
a. [✔] Voluntary
b. [ ] Required to obtain or retain benefits
c. [ ] Mandatory

13. Annual recordkeeping and reporting burden
a. Number of respondents 500
b. Total annual responses 500
1. Percentage of these responses collected electronically 0 %
c. Total annual hours requested 208
d. Current OMB inventory 0
e. Difference 208
f. Explanation of difference
1. Program change
2. Adjustment

14. Annual reporting and recordkeeping cost burden (*in thousands of dollars*)
a. Total annualized capital/startup costs 0
b. Total annual costs (O&M) 0
c. Total annualized cost requested 0
d. Current OMB inventory 0
e. Difference 0
f. Explanation of difference
1. Program change
2. Adjustment

15. Purpose of information collection (*Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "X"*)
a. ___ Application for benefits e. P Program planning or management
b. ___ Program evaluation f. x Research
c. ___ General purpose statistics g. ___ Regulatory or compliance
d. ___ Audit

16. Frequency of recordkeeping or reporting (*check all that apply*)
a. [ ] Recordkeeping b. [ ] Third party disclosure
c. [✔] Reporting
1. [ ] On occasion 2. [ ] Weekly 3. [ ] Monthly
4. [ ] Quarterly 5. [ ] Semi-annually 6. [ ] Annually
7. [ ] Biennially 8. [✔] Other (describe) One time

17. Statistical methods
Does this information collection employ statistical methods
[✔] Yes [ ] No

18. Agency Contact (person who can best answer questions regarding the content of this submission)
Name: Dan Kircheis
Phone: (207) 866-7320

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 signed by Perry Gayaldo, Ph.D.	Date 6/10/2014
Signature of NOAA Clearance Officer	
Signature BRABSON.SARAH.1365710488 Digitally signed by BRABSON.SARAH.1365710488 DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=DoD, ou=PKI, ou=OTHER, cn=BRABSON.SARAH.1365710488 Date: 2014.09.30 13:20:52 -04'00'	Date

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
GATHERING OBSERVATIONAL DATA ON HISTORICAL AND CURRENT BIOLOGICAL TRENDS AMONG POPULATIONS OF ALEWIFE (*ALOSA PSEUDOHARENGUS*) AND BLUEBACK HERRING (*A. AESTIVALIS*)
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

In 2013, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) completed a comprehensive review of the status of river herring (alewife and blueback herring) in response to a petition submitted by the Natural Resources Defense Council requesting that we (NMFS) list alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*) as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) throughout all or a significant portion of their range, or as specific distinct population segments. Based on the best available information at the time, in August 2013 we determined that listing alewife or blueback as threatened or endangered under the ESA was not warranted. At that time we also acknowledged that both species are at low abundances compared to historical levels and that continued and improved monitoring of both species is needed. We agreed with the Status Review Team that there are significant data deficiencies for both species and there is uncertainty associated with the available data. For these reasons we committed to re-assessing the status of both species within the next 5 years.

We recognize that commercial, recreational, and sustenance fishermen have detailed local knowledge of river herring and that this knowledge can help address some of the data gaps identified in the listing determination. In order to have the most complete understanding of river herring before making future ESA listing decisions, it will be necessary to document and analyze fishermen's observations in a comprehensive way. For this reason we intend to contact commercial, recreational, and personal use/sustenance river herring harvesters to inquire about recent and long-term observations of changes in run-timing, abundance, distribution, fish size, species composition, as well as perceptions of the greatest threats to these species.

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.

This will be a one-time survey that will take place from August through November of 2014. Phone interviews will be conducted by NMFS and contractors working on behalf of the Agency for the purposes of documenting fishermen's observations of changes in in run-timing, abundance, distribution, individual fish size, and species composition, as well as fishermen's perceptions of the greatest threats to these species and how to best address those threats. We are seeking to document fishermen's observations from Maine to North Carolina in order to help assess range-wide trends and threats.

We recognize that, generally speaking, commercial fishermen will be better able to describe the changes we are interested in documenting because they, for the most part, likely put more effort

in the fishery as compared to recreational or personal use fishermen. However, we know that in many states (e.g. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New York) recreational fishing made up a large portion of river herring landings over the past decade (personal communication with Robert Eckert, New Hampshire Fish and Game; Steve Gephard, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection; Kathy Hattala, New York Department of Environmental Conservation; Doug Kalweit, Town of Barnstable Department of Natural Resources; Mike Stangle, Delaware Department of Fish and Wildlife). It is not possible to identify who fished recreationally and who fished commercially in certain areas based on license lists alone. For example, the state of New York and the town of Barnstable, Massachusetts (and likely other towns in Massachusetts as well) issued licenses for river herring that applied to both commercial and recreational fishermen. It is impossible to separate these license lists into commercial and recreational components. The first question in our survey asks respondents to identify themselves as commercial, recreational, personal uses/sustenance, or another type of harvester. When analyzing survey responses we will consider each of the categories of harvester separately in order to assess differences in their answers and to address the different amounts of time and effort that commercial fishermen put into the fishery as compared to non-commercial fishermen.

Questions 2-8 of the survey instrument are designed to collect information about where, when, how, and for which species (alewives, bluebacks, or both) the respondent fished. This information will help to put the answers to the other questions in context and will allow us to look for effects of gear type, habitat type, and time frame on participants' answers to questions about changes in their local river herring runs.

Question 9 asks whether or not and how the respondent distinguishes between alewives and bluebacks. Not all fishermen distinguish between the two. This information will help us identify who is able to notice trends on a species-specific basis, rather than for the two species collectively.

Questions 10-14 of the survey are directed at identifying the fishermen's observations of run timing, abundance, distribution and fish condition. These represent key range-wide data gaps for these species and are essential pieces of information in terms of monitoring their populations.

Question 15 aims to identify the fishermen's perspective of the health of river herring populations.

Questions 16-18 address fishermen's perspectives of the threats to river herring and the best ways to restore river herring populations. NMFS wants to restore river herring populations throughout their range and fishermen's perspectives on local threats can help NMFS identify priorities for restoration.

Question 19 asks if the respondent has anything additional to tell us about river herring. This will allow participants to share insights that may be useful for NMFS to know about but that are not addressed by the other survey questions.

Question 20 asks for recommendations of organizations that may be able to help us identify other harvesters call as part of this survey. This will help us expand our call list and will be especially useful for finding harvesters whose phone numbers may have changed since they last bought a

fishing license, who were not required to purchase a license, or who fished in states that were unable to give us contact information for license holders. We will not ask survey respondents to provide contact information for other harvesters in order to avoid potential privacy issues.

The final questions ask for the email or mailing address of participants so that we may share the final report on the survey with them.

The question list was designed to help NMFS collect information related to key data gaps on river herring. Information from this survey may be used to help inform decisions related to future status reviews, though only in conjunction with other scientific data. Given the limited available data on river herring, the information gathered from this survey will be used as a means to validate whether data gathered by scientists and managers is consistent with the observations of the fishing community. Monitoring and scientific data collection on river herring have been limited to a select few rivers and streams throughout the species range and the methods of collecting the data have been inconsistent between states. Commercial, recreational, and sustenance fishing effort are (or, in some states, were) spatially and temporally much more wide spread and cover a greater duration of the run then what is being sampled by scientists. Fishermen's knowledge can therefore be very useful to help fill data gaps and identify future research needs and potential future management actions.

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 Question 10 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. Although the information collected is not expected to be disseminated directly to the public, results may be used in scientific, management, technical or general informational publications. Should NMFS decide to disseminate the information, it will be subject to the quality control measures and pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

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.

NMFS will initiate contact with potential survey respondents by telephone. At that time, the interviewer will either schedule a time to conduct the survey, or if convenient for the interviewee, conduct the survey over the telephone. The interviews will be recorded with sound recording software if the interviewee gives his or her permission to do so. If the interviewee does not want the conversation to be recorded, the interviewer will take notes instead. Upon request, respondents will be mailed a paper version of the survey with a postage-paid envelope to complete and return; however, we will highly encourage all respondents to answer the survey questions over the phone to avoid any confounding effects that differences in survey implementation may have on responses.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

We are aware of two somewhat similar efforts. In the spring of 2014 Maine Sea Grant collaborated with NMFS to interview four river herring fishermen in Downeast Maine as part of

a small oral history project (for more details see http://www.seagrant.umaine.edu/oral-histories-alewife-eel). The question list for the oral history project was very similar to what is proposed for the phone survey. Participants were informed that they may be contacted in the future to participate in the phone survey. Another similar interview effort was carried out by the Alewife Harvesters of Maine (AHM) in 2013. This effort focused on the goals and vision of the organization, but also asked some similar questions to what we are proposing (e.g. what are the greatest threats to river herring populations?). The intent of the AHM survey was quite different from the intent of this survey. We have included language in the survey's introductory script to explain to participants from Maine that this survey may feel redundant with the Alewife Harvesters of Maine survey, but is different in scope and intent.

In early 2014, NMFS and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission began to assemble a river herring Technical Expert Working Group (TEWG). We have reached out to the TEWG to explain the intent of the survey and have asked for feedback and support for this effort. No one has notified us of similar survey efforts.

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

The survey will target commercial, recreational, and personal use/sustenance harvesters of river herring. We are uncertain of the percentage of the commercial fishermen who would be classified as a small business, but the amount of burden would be minimal. The total time to schedule the interview is expected to take between five and ten minutes to accommodate introductory statements and the time to conduct the interview is expected to be approximately 15 minutes unless the interviewees have additional statements or questions of their own. Individuals have no obligation to participate in the survey if they are not interested.

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

This survey is needed to accurately represent the best available data in respect to population and biological trends of river herring. Alewives and bluebacks are data poor species and are currently considered to be "species of concern". NMFS has committed to re-assessing their status under the Endangered Species Act within the next five years. The amount of scientific data on these species that is currently collected in a consistent manner is very limited. Fishermen have valuable knowledge that can help us address major data-gaps related to these species. If we do not proactively and comprehensively document fishermen's knowledge, we risk leaving data-gaps unfilled and making future management decisions based on an incomplete understanding of these species.

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

Not Applicable.

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 March 25, 2014 (73 FR 16300) solicited public comments.

One comment was received expressing support of this effort and recognizing the importance of this information in respect to its ability to inform the management of river herring.

We appreciate the support of this effort and we will collaborate with the fishery management councils and the TEWG to provide them information from this effort that will be useful in their efforts to manage these species.

We have reached out to various NOAA staff, state biologists and managers, and academic researchers who work with river herring to solicit feedback on the methodology of this survey. We received helpful feedback that we used to craft our proposed survey methodology.

We ran a test-run of the survey with four commercial river herring fishermen from Maine. They provided very helpful comments that were used to update the introductory survey script and the question list. After the survey script and question list were updated we surveyed two additional harvesters from other states. The survey went smoothly with them and we feel confident that we have developed a comprehensible and effective survey implement.

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

Not Applicable.

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

The survey results are intended for internal use by NMFS to better understand biological trends within river herring populations, and the survey information will be kept separate from the respondents name and contact information. However, there are no assurances of confidentiality, and this will be explained to each interviewee prior to the interview being conducted, and will be part of the interview script.

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.

Not Applicable.

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

The number of interviews we intend to conduct will not exceed 500. The amount of time to schedule the interviews with each respondent is not expected to exceed 10 minutes, and the amount of time to conduct each interview will be approximately 15 minutes. The maximum anticipated time to schedule interviews will not exceed 83 hours, and the maximum anticipated time to conduct the interviews will not likely exceed 125 hours. The total maximum burden of participating in the surveys will not exceed 208 hours.

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).

There will be no burden to the respondents outside of the time to participate in the interview. Those choosing to complete paper surveys will receive them in postage-paid envelopes.

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

We anticipate an estimated 150 hours for survey development and preparation; 215 hours will be needed to conduct the surveys; and 260 hours to do the analysis and write up the results. The estimated total time to fully implement the project is 625 hours, with an estimated total cost to the Federal government of $23,000.00: 150 hours at the GS-12 level and 15 hours at the GS-14, with a subtotal of $6,150; the rest are contractor costs.

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

This is a new information collection.

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

Individual survey records will not be published. There will be internal documentation of the sampling procedures as well as statistical summaries. The analytical results will be disseminated through internal reporting, NOAA's Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office's website, and possibly through peer-reviewed publication. Interviewees will also be asked during the survey if they wish to receive a report of the aggregated results and will be given the option to receive them either by mail or email.

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
GATHERING OBSERVATIONAL DATA ON HISTORICAL AND CURRENT BIOLOGICAL TRENDS AMONG POPULATIONS OF ALEWIFE (*ALOSA PSEUDOHARENGUS*) AND BLUEBACK HERRING (*A. AESTIVALIS*)
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.

Our survey will focus on the coastal states from Maine to North Carolina. Maine and North Carolina represent the northern and southern extent of where alewives and bluebacks have recently been harvested in any significant quantities in the United States. The potential respondent universe includes all individuals who have harvested river herring commercially, recreationally, or for personal use/sustenance in any of the coastal states from Maine to North Carolina for at least three years in total, at least one of which was within the past twenty years. Because the goal of this survey is to document observations of changes in river herring runs through time, we are limiting our efforts to individuals who have harvested these species for a period of time long enough to notice changes and recently enough that they will remember the changes that they noticed.

The number of individuals who meet these criteria is unknown. Our best estimates of how many individuals meet these criteria and expected response rates are displayed in Table 1. The estimates in Table 1 are based on conversations with state natural resource employees in each of the states in our focus area.

Table 1: Number of potential respondents for which we have names and phone numbers (as of 9-22-2014), estimated potential number of respondents, and estimated response rates. Expected numbers are based on conversations with state natural resource employees.

State	Current number of names and phone numbers	Estimated Number of Potential Respondents	Estimated Proportion Commercial	Expected Overall Response Rate	Explanation for Expected Response Rate
Connecticut	1	50	Very low	20%	Harvest prohibited since 2002
Delaware	45	50	Moderate	20%	Many individuals on this list caught a few river herring as bycatch but did not target them
Maine	75	85	Very high	75%	Based on prior experience interacting with Maine's commercial river herring fishermen
Maryland	47	150	Low	50%	Likely many individuals caught river herring as bycatch but did not target them
Massachusetts	21	150	Low	40%	Harvest prohibited since 2005 but was once a popular fishery
New Hampshire	1	200	Low	75%	Harvest is still allowed and a state fisheries biologist is helping to inform potential respondents of the survey
New Jersey	0	100	Unsure	Unsure	Waiting to hear back from New Jersey Fish and Wildlife employee who is working on a list of contacts for us
New York	181	200	Moderate	50%	A mix of commercial and

					recreational, expecting lower response rates from recreational fishermen
North Carolina	2	100	Moderate	50%	Commercial and recreational harvest prohibited since 2007, but prior to 2007 were many harvesters
Virginia	299	299	High	30%	About half of the people on this list are no longer fishing for any maripecies
Rhode Island	1	50	Unsure	20%	Harvest prohibited since 2006
Total	**673**	**1434**			

Numbers based on overall expected rates total 619, but allowing for unavailable and nonworking telephone numbers, we do not expect more than 500 completed surveys.

Most river herring harvests take place in state waters and so we are working with state agencies and the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program to generate our call list. Some states (or in the case of Massachusetts, some towns) required a license to harvest river herring commercially, and in rare cases, required a license for recreational harvest as well. Where river herring harvesters can be identified from license lists, we are working with state and municipal agencies to obtain names and phone numbers of those individuals. In may locations in our focus area it is impossible to identify who harvested river herring. In other locations (e.g. New Hampshire) the appropriate natural resource management agency is not able to provide us with contact information for harvesters. In these cases we are relying on personal recommendations from state biologists and other individuals who are knowledgeable of the fishery to generate our call lists.

Recreational and personal use/sustenance harvesters will be particularly difficult to identify because these individuals usually fish under general fishing licenses and are rarely required to report catch data. We expect that the number of individuals who have harvested river herring non-commercially with enough regularity to answer most of our survey questions will be relatively small; however, we are committed to interviewing as many of these individuals as possible because we recognize that they have very valuable information to contribute to this survey effort. From talking with fisheries managers and biologists in all of the states in our focus area, we know that in some locations recreational harvest represented a major component of the fishery.

Although we have estimated a potential survey respondent universe of approximately 1400 individuals, we do not expect to obtain phone numbers for more than 800 individuals. Of those 800 numbers, we expect that many will be out of service or assigned to new owners. We will not

make any efforts to stratify our call list. We will call every number on the list. We expect to successfully interview less than 500 individuals.

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.

There are no complete lists of commercial, recreational, or personal use/sustenance river herring harvesters for us to rely on for this survey. River herring are mostly harvested within state waters where most fishing takes place under general commercial or recreational fishing licenses. Recreational and personal use/sustenance harvesters are rarely required to report data on catches, which will make it impossible to locate these individuals from licenses lists and landings data. Recreational and personal use/sustenance harvesters have valuable knowledge to add to this survey and so we are seeking to identify these individuals by soliciting recommendations from state biologists and managers, as well as from other fishermen. In addition, because some states allow(ed) commercial harvest of river herring under general fishing licenses, we will also rely on personal recommendations to supplement our list of commercial fishermen. Though this could be considered a "sample of convenience" there is no other way to generate a complete call list of all individuals who meet our criteria for participation in this survey.

Because we know that our call list is incomplete and is still a work in progress, we will not make any attempts to stratify or narrow down this list in any way. We expect that our final call list will be short enough that we can call every harvester on the list.

This will be a one-time survey and so there will be no periodic data collection cycles.

We will analyze survey responses with a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses. The responses to many of the questions on our list can be easily summarized numerically; however, we expect very valuable information to come from descriptive answers that cannot be easily summarized numerically.

Qualitative assessments and summaries of fishermen's observations are commonly used in assessments of data poor species. For example, fishermen's knowledge was collected during listening sessions and used in the status reviews of both Atlantic bluefin tuna and Atlantic wolffish. Our survey effort is similar to those listening sessions in intent; however, in this case we are reaching out to harvesters instead of relying on them to come to us. We believe that harvesters can help us answer questions that cannot be answered with quantitative analyses. Sufficient numerical data simply does not exist to help us address many of the key data-gaps for this species, especially on a range-wide scale.

Our qualitative analysis will likely consist mostly of descriptive summaries of responses. We have purchased NVivo, a qualitative analysis software commonly used by social scientists, to help us analyze and describe complexities in the descriptive responses to our questions. This software was recommended to us by NOAA's Social Science Branch. One of the collaborators on this project is familiar with this software and is trained in common social science

methodologies used in surveys such as this. Our analysis of survey responses will be in line with established social science methods.

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.

We are widely advertising the intent of this survey. Our hope is that if fishermen learn of the survey before we ask them to participate in it, they will be more likely to agree to participate. We have sent fliers and other information about the survey to over 50 state managers and biologists as well as academics who work with river herring. We asked them to help us spread the word and have already received inquiries from a handful of fishermen who are interested in participating. We have interacted with many river herring fishermen in Maine who are willing to participate. We recently gave a presentation on the intent of this project at a river herring symposium at the American Fisheries Society's Annual Meeting. We posted web stories. We have announced the survey in one newsletter and are planning to publish similar announcements in other papers. Fishermen, biologists, managers, and academics seem generally excited about this survey and are anxious to either participate or learn about our results.

We expect that personal recommendations will help to increase the response rate because individuals may be more likely to participate if they know that an acquaintance recommended them.

We will make calls at various times during the day, including evenings, and various days of the week. Up to three callbacks will be made for each individual. We will leave messages when possible.

We will examine non-response bias by comparing respondents and non-respondents using what demographic information we have available. Ideally this information will include active vs. retired status, sector (commercial, recreational, or personal use/sustenance), and state.

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 NOAA and Sea Grant staff have provided feedback on the proposed survey questions.

In the spring of 2014 NOAA Fisheries and Maine Sea Grant collaborated on a small oral history project focusing on river herring and eels in Downeast Maine. Four river herring fishermen were interviewed and the question list used was very similar to the proposed question list for this phone survey. The oral history interviews were recorded on camera and participants were encouraged to go off on tangents and elaborate on some of their answers. The four river herring fishermen who participated in the oral history project found the questions to be straight forward and easy to answer, but they also consistently wanted to add much additional detail beyond what was asked. We expect that participants in the phone survey will also want to add additional

comments to the straight-forward questions that we will ask them, which is why we have committed to doing a combination of simple quantitative analysis and more descriptive qualitative summaries of their response.

The survey implement was pre-tested on six individuals. Four are fishermen from Maine who were already familiar with the interviewer (Julia Beaty) and with the intent of the survey. One is a fisherman from New York who called Dan Kircheis after receiving an email about the survey from a friend. The sixth person is a fisherman from Maryland who had no prior knowledge of the survey.

When Julia initiated the survey with the first four participants (the four from Maine) she presented it as if it were a trial run and encouraged them to interrupt her when they had comments and to give her feedback on the introductory script and question list. Their comments were very helpful and were used to update the script before calling the final two fishermen. The participants from New York and Maryland were not informed that they were being called as part of a trial run. The survey went smoothly with these two participants.

<u>Summary of changes made after trial run</u>

- The first three participants in the trial run thought the introductory script was too long. It was shortened based on their feedback.
- The tone of the introductory script was changed based on participant feedback to send the message that NOAA is asking for help from the participants as opposed to trying to get information out of them.
- A line about a similar survey carried out last year by the Alewife Harvesters of Maine was added to inform participants from Maine that this survey is similar to that previous effort in some ways, but different in scope and intent.
- A sentence about how the results will be reported and how that relates to confidentiality was added to the introductory script.
- The question “Do you currently fish for alewives and/or bluebacks?” was changed to “Did you fish for alewives and/or bluebacks this year?” Survey pre-test respondents took “currently” to mean September 2014.
- Questions added based on participant feedback:
    - Do you harvest at multiple locations?
        - Answers to several of the survey questions might be different depending on the location that respondents are thinking of when they answer.
    - In your opinion, what do you think is the most important thing that we could do to help these populations grow and maintain themselves at a sustainable level?
        - This question is closely related to the question about the best way to address threats. Two pre-test participants thought that by asking these two similar questions we might get slightly different answers. For example, one participant thought that maintaining access to spawning habitat is the best way to keep the runs sustainable but he did not see this as an appropriate answer to the question about how to address threats. He did not see impeded access to spawning habitat as a threat because it is a problem that he works to address every year on the stream where he harvests.

- Other questions added:
  - A question about whether they consider themselves commercial, recreational, or personal use/subsistence harvesters was added.
    - The responses from each of these categories will be summarized separately.
    - For some of the states in our focus area it is impossible to tell from the call list who considers themselves commercial as opposed to recreational fishermen. Additionally, there are some gray areas in the definition of commercial vs. recreational fishermen. This question will allow participants to sort themselves into the category they most identify with.
  - Added question about gear type.
  - Added question for recommendations of other people to call.

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.

Dan Kircheis (project lead)
Fisheries Biologist
NOAA's - Maine Field Station
Protected Resources Division
17 Godfrey Drive
Orono, Maine 04473
(dan.kircheis@noaa.gov)
(207)866-7320

Julia Beaty (interviewer)
Environmental Specialist I
NOAA's - Maine Field Station
Protected Resources Division
17 Godfrey Drive
Orono, Maine 04473
(Julia.beaty@maine.edu)
(207)866-7262

Dan Kircheis and Julia Beaty are working together to design and implement this survey. Julia will conduct the interviews. Dan and Julia will work together to analyze and summarize the survey responses.

Both Dan Kircheis and Julia Beaty have both worked on social science surveys such as this and relied on their past experience to develop the methodology for this survey effort. Julia has been formally trained in survey methodology as part of her masters degree in marine policy and through an undergraduate sociology class.

Staff at NOAA's Social Science Branch (SSB) provided input on our survey design. Dr. Tammy Murphy (phone: 508-495-2137), an economist with SSB, Dr. Patricia Pinto da Silva (phone: 508-

495-2370), a social scientist with SSB, and Anna Henry (phone: 508-495-2262), also a social scientist with SSB, provided helpful feedback and advice which we have incorporated into our survey design.

References:

Atlantic bluefin tuna status review team. 2011. Status review report of the Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*). National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service.

Atlantic wolffish biological review team. 2009. Status review of the Atlantic wolffish (*Anarhichas lupus*). National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service.

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Act
Listing Determination for Alewife and Blueback Herring. 78 FR 155 (August 12, 2013), pp. 48944 – 49994.

Hutchins Bieluch, Karen. 2014. Planning a Future for Maine's Alewife Fisheries: Outreach and Interviews with Local Stakeholders. Alewife Harvesters of Maine (http://www.alewifeharvesters.org/).

Maine Sea Grant. 2014. Harvester Perspectives on Alewives, Blueback Herring, and American Eels in Downeast Maine. Webpage. http://www.seagrant.umaine.edu/oral-histories-alewife-eel

OMB Control No. 0648-xxxx
Expiration Date: xx/xx/xxxx

Coast-wide Phone Survey of Alewife and Blueback Herring Harvesters

Interview script
My name is Julia. I'm calling on behalf of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—often referred to as NOAA. We are conducting a survey of current and past alewife and blueback herring harvesters to gather information about observations made while fishing. I'm calling because we have identified you as someone who has fished for alewives or bluebacks. Is this correct?

Great! If you are willing, I would like to do a short interview over the phone with you. I'll tell you more about it before you decide if you want to participate or not.

[For people from Maine: I know that Karen Hutchins Bieluch and the Alewife Harvesters of Maine did some interviews last year. Did you participate in that? This survey is similar in some ways, but different in scope and intent so I hope you'll bear with me and let me ask you some of the same questions.]

We are doing this survey because we want to get a better idea of how alewife and blueback populations are doing along the east coast. We need your help with that. You, as a harvester, have detailed knowledge about the fish in your local rivers. We are reaching out to harvesters like you from Maine to North Carolina with the goal of documenting your observations of the fish in your local areas. We want to use this information to make better-informed management decisions in the future and to help us identify opportunities for restoration and research needs.

Does this survey sound like something you would be interested in participating in?

That's great! The survey should only take about 15 minutes. Do you have time to do it now or would you like me to call you back at another time?

(Schedule a time if necessary)

I would like to record this interview if that's okay with you. It's not necessary, but recording it is the best way for me to make sure that I accurately document your responses. Is it alright with you if I record this interview?

(If yes) Okay, I'm going to start recording.
(If no) Okay, I'll just take notes.

There's just one more thing that I want you to know about before we begin. When we report on the results of this survey - and I will send you copy of the final report - we will combine everyone's answers into summaries. We won't report your individual responses unless you

have a really great quote. We do not plan to share your individual responses with people outside of NOAA, but under the Freedom of Information Act, anyone can request information from us because we are a government agency. That's something I want you to be aware of before you agree to participate in this interview. You can always decline to answer a question if it makes you uncomfortable. "I don't know" is also an acceptable answer to any of the questions.

Is that all okay with you?

Question list

1) When it comes to alewives and bluebacks, would you describe yourself as a commercial harvester, a recreational harvester, a personal use harvester, or something else?
2) Did you fish for alewives or bluebacks this year?
    a. If no, when did you last fish for them?
3) For how many years did/have you fished for alewives and/or bluebacks?
4) Did you fish for them consistently every year?
5) Have you fished for them in any states other than [STATE NAME]?
    a. If yes, which states?
    b. If yes, in which state did most of your alewife and/or blueback fishing effort take place?
6) Do/did you fish for them in multiple locations?
7) What type of habitat do/did you fish for them in?
8) What type of gear do/did you use?
    a. If multiple types of gear, which is/was your primary?
9) Do/did you make any effort to identify the fish you catch as either alewives or bluebacks?
    a. If yes, how do you tell the difference?
    b. If yes, do you tend to catch more of one than of the other?

When answering the following few questions, please answer based on your own personal observations rather than what you may know from outside sources

10) Based on your observations made while alewife and/or blueback fishing, at what time of year do they usually show up in your area?
11) When does the run usually end?
12) Over the years that you fished for alewives and/or bluebacks, did you notice any changes in the timing of when the fish were in your area?
    a. If yes, please describe.
13) When fishing for alewives and/or bluebacks, did you notice any changes in their overall abundance?
    a. If yes, please describe.
    b. If yes, did you notice any changes in the abundance of alewives relative to bluebacks?
14) When fishing for alewives and/or bluebacks, did you notice any changes in the size of the individual fish?

a. If yes, please describe.

15) Based on your observations while fishing, how would you describe the current status of alewife and blueback populations in your area?
16) What do you think are the biggest threats to these species, if any?
17) What do you think is the best way to address those threats?
18) Your answer to this question might be the same as the last question, and that's okay. In your opinion, what do you think is the most important thing that we could do to help these populations grow and maintain themselves at a sustainable level?
19) Is there anything else that you think is important for us to know about?
20) Do you know of any groups or organizations in your area that I should contact to help find other fishermen to call as part of this survey?
21) Would you like to receive a report on the results of this survey either by email or by regular mail?

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other suggestions for reducing this burden to Dan Kircheis, Protected Resources Division, Maine Field Station, 17 Godfrey Drive, Orono, Maine 04473 or dan.kircheis@noaa.gov.

The survey results are intended for internal use by NMFS to better understand biological trends within river herring populations, and the survey information will be kept separate from the respondents name and contact information. However, there are no assurances of confidentiality, and this will be explained to each interviewee prior to the interview being conducted, and will be part of the interview script. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subjected 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.

LUND'S FISHERIES INCORPORATED
Phone: (609) 884 - 7600 Fax: (609) 884 - 0664 lundsfish@lundsfish.com
997 Ocean Drive, Cape May, New Jersey 08204, U.S.A.
Email to: jreichle@lundsfish.com

March 27, 2014

Ms. Jennifer Jessup
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer
Department of Commerce, Room 6616
14th and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230 - By email: JJessup@doc.gov

Dear Ms. Jessup:

I am writing on behalf of the 150 employees of our family-owned, vertically-integrated seafood processing facility, and the company-owned and independently-owned commercial fishing vessels who work to support our facility here, in the port of Cape May. Thank you for the opportunity to support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's request to gather historical and current population and biological information, from commercial and recreational harvesters of river herring species, to inquire about recent and long-term observations of changes in run-timing, abundance, distribution and individual size and species composition.

As you may know, the incidental catch of river herring species in the Atlantic herring and Atlantic mackerel fisheries has become a significant fishery management issue in recent years and the recent establishment of politically-generated, ultra-conservative catch caps on these species, by both the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils' (MAFMC), seriously threatens the long-term realization of optimum yield from the Atlantic herring and mackerel resources, which we believe is contrary to National Standard One of the National Fishery Management Program.

The request to gather historical and current population information on river herring species has practical utility in its ability to inform the development of biologically relevant catch caps in the future and will help to inform the work of the collaborative River Herring Technical Expert Working Group (TEWG) and the MAFMC's River Herring and Shad Committee. It is vitally important for the future of the region's Atlantic herring and mackerel fisheries that the mortality represented by the incidental catch of river herring species in these fisheries is balanced against the myriad other sources of mortality that jeopardize the restoration of river herring species, throughout their range. In addition, the collection of this information should not create any significant burden on respondents.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide you with any additional information.

With best regards,

Jeff Reichle

Jeffrey B. Reichle
President

CC: NEFMC, MAFMC, Dan Kircheis (Dan.Kircheis@noaa.gov)

Proposal: Conduct interviews of current and retired commercial and recreational harvesters of alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and blueback herring (*A. aestivalis*) from Maine to North Carolina.

Objectives:

Obtain information from harvesters on their observations of river herring while participating in the fishery. We hope to gather information on topics such as:

- How long they have/were engaged in the fishery
- What their target species was (alewife/blueback/both)
- Primary and secondary gear types used for fishing
- Observations of changes in abundance, run timing, distribution, and individual size
- Changes in effort relative to annual catch
- Knowledge of external differences between alewife and blueback and to what extent they made an effort to distinguish between the two and why

Purpose:

To obtain historical and current observational data from key stakeholders (e.g., fishermen that rely(ied) on the resource) that can be used in conjunction with scientific data to make more informed decisions in respect to the current and future management of both species.

The purpose of this information collection is to gather historical and current population and biological information from key stakeholders (e.g., commercial and recreational harvesters) of the two species of river herring. Given that commercial and recreational fishermen have a unique and important understanding of the long term status of the

species for which they are fishing, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) intends to contact commercial and recreational harvesters of river herring to inquire about recent and long-term observations of changes in run timing, abundance, distribution, individual size and species composition. Respondents will represent both current and retired commercial and recreational harvesters of river herring from Maine to North Carolina. Results will be used to assist NOAA in identifying observational trends among river herring populations throughout their range to make more informed decisions in respect to their management.

attest to these certifications cannot participate):

- Certify that the products and services that it intends to highlight as examples at the workshop would be in compliance with U.S. export controls and regulations;
- Certify that it has identified to the Department of Commerce for its evaluation any business pending before the Department that may present the appearance of a conflict of interest;
- Certify that it has identified any pending litigation (including any administrative proceedings) to which it is a party that involves the Department of Commerce; and
- Certify that it and its affiliates (1) have not and will not engage in the bribery of foreign officials in connection with a company's/participant's involvement in this mission, and (2) maintain and enforce a policy that prohibits the bribery of foreign officials.

Timeframe for Recruitment and Participation

Recruitment for participation in the IFNEC Workshop as a representative of the U.S. nuclear industry will be conducted in an open and public manner, including publication in the **Federal Register,** posting on the Commerce Department trade mission calendar, notices to industry trade associations and other multiplier groups. Recruitment will begin immediately and conclude no later than April 4, 2014. The ITA will review applications and make selection decisions on a rolling basis beginning on or about April 4, 2014. Applications received after April 4, 2014, will be considered only if space and scheduling permit.

Contact

Jonathan Chesebro, Senior International Trade Specialist, Industry and Analysis, Office of Energy and Environmental Industries, International Trade Administration, Phone: (202)-482–1297, Email: *jonathan.chesebro@trade.gov.*

Dated: March 18, 2014.

Edward A. O'Malley,

Director, Office of Energy and Environmental Industries.

[FR Doc. 2014–06506 Filed 3–24–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–DR–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Gathering Observational Data on Historical and Current Biological Trends among Populations of Alewife (Alosa pseudoharengus) and Blueback Herring (A. aestivalis)

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 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 May 27, 2014.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at *JJessup@doc.gov*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Dan Kircheis, (207) 866–7320 or *Dan.Kircheis@noaa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The purpose of this information collection is to gather historical and current population and biological information from commercial and recreational harvesters of the two species of river herring; alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and blueback (*A. aestivalis*). Given that commercial and recreational fishermen have a unique and important understanding of the long term status of the species for which they are fishing, NOAA intends to contact both current and retired recreational and commercial harvesters of river herring from Maine to North Carolina, to inquire about recent and long-term observations of changes in run-timing, abundance, distribution, individual size and species composition. Results will be used to assist NOAA in identifying observational trends among river herring populations throughout their range so as to make more informed decisions with respect to their management.

II. Method of Collection

Respondents will be contacted by phone to schedule an interview. Interviews will be held either face to face with the respondent or by phone.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: None.

Form Number: N/A

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

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

Estimated Number of Respondents: 400.

Estimated Time Per Response: 1 hour.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 400.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: $0.

IV. Request for Comments

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

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

Dated: March 19, 2014.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2014–06431 Filed 3–24–14; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P