NOTICE OF OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET ACTION

Date 08/08/2016

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB has taken action on your request received 07/06/2016

ACTION REQUESTED: New collection (Request for a new OMB Control Number)
TYPE OF REVIEW REQUESTED: Regular
ICR REFERENCE NUMBER: 201607-0648-001
AGENCY ICR TRACKING NUMBER:
TITLE: Fishery Observer Retention Survey
LIST OF INFORMATION COLLECTIONS: See next page

OMB ACTION: Approved without change
OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0648-0740
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: 08/31/2019 DISCONTINUE DATE:

BURDEN:	RESPONSES	HOURS	COSTS
Previous	0	0	0
New	785	262	0
Difference			
Change due to New Statute	0	0	0
Change due to Agency Discretion	785	262	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
Fishery Observer Retention Survey	NA	Observer Retention 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/ST

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 Fishery Observer Retention Survey

8. Agency form number(s) (*if applicable*)

9. Keywords NOAA Fisheries, Observer, Retention, Satisfactory

10. Abstract

NOAA Fisheries utilizes observers to collect catch, bycatch data and other information from U.S. commercial fishing and processing vessels. More information on the observer population is needed to support the agency's conservation and management goals, to improve fishery management decision-making, and to satisfy legal mandates under the Reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, Executive Order 12866, and other pertinent statutes. The National Observer Program (NOP) is conducting a survey of fishery observers in order to investigate incentives and disincentives for remaining an observer and to identify their subsequent career choices. Observers are often the only independent data collection source for federal agency and scientists to collect at-sea data and are crucial in fishery management. The data from this survey will be used by the NOP and regional observer programs to improve observer recruitment and retention rates. Improved retention of qualified and experienced observers is expected to reduce training efforts and costs, and improve data quality.

11. Affected public (*Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x"*)
a. P 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 (*check one*)
a. [✔] Voluntary
b. [ ] Required to obtain or retain benefits
c. [ ] Mandatory

13. Annual recordkeeping and reporting burden
a. Number of respondents 785
b. Total annual responses 785
1. Percentage of these responses collected electronically 100 %
c. Total annual hours requested 262
d. Current OMB inventory 0
e. Difference
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
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. ___ Program planning or management
b. P Program evaluation f. ___ Research
c. P 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) ____

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: Jane DiCosimo
Phone: (301) 427-8109

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 Dr. Ned Cyr, Director, Science & Technology	Date 7/5/2016
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: 2016.08.19 13:57:52 -04'00'	Date

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
FISHERY OBSERVER RETENTION SURVEY
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX

INTRODUCTION

This document is submitted in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, in support of an investigation of marine fishery observer retention in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). This request is for a new information collection.

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) utilizes observers to collect information on catch, bycatch, fishing efforts, biological characteristics, interactions with protected species, as well as socioeconomic information, from U.S. commercial fishing and processing vessels. More information on the observer population is needed to support the Agency's conservation and management goals, to strengthen and improve fishery management decision-making, and to satisfy legal mandates under the Reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act, Executive Order 12866, and other pertinent statutes.

Observers are usually the only independent data collection source for NMFS to collect at-sea data and are crucial in fishery management. The National Observer Program (NOP) is conducting a survey of fishery observers in order to identify and respond to the incentives and disincentives of observers to continue in the field and to identify their subsequent career choices. Improving the retention of qualified and experienced observers may help to reduce training efforts and costs, and at the same time, improve data quality as shown by Williams et al. (2006). The survey data will be considered, in order to attempt to improve observer recruitment and retention by regional fishery observer programs. Without an accurate understanding of the motivations of observers, these management programs would suffer.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used.

Data will be collected via a voluntary survey. The NOP plans to distribute the surveys to current and former observers, including at-sea monitors. Because the universe of former observers is unknown, NOP will encourage observers to share the survey with former observers. The participation of former observers will help to evaluate the program over time.

We propose that this survey would be a one-time data collection, which would allow a comprehensive understanding of observers' attitudes toward their observer program(s). A

follow-up collection may be conducted in the future, as needed, to identify the effects of any changes to incentives to retain observers.

The proposed use of the information from the each section is provided below. The survey is designed only for observers who have been deployed in a U.S. fishery. Corresponding information will be collected at the beginning of the survey. Questions No. 1 - No.4 of the survey, "Facts about observer" is intended to identify the demographic information, including the gender, age group, and education level of the respondent. This information is important to classify perceptions of observers with different gender, age, and education categories. The comparison between initial degree and most recent educational degree will be helpful to understand if the observer pursued a higher degree and if they returned to work as observer after obtaining a higher educational degree.

Questions No. 5 - No. 12, "Background of observing experience", are intended to identify the start/end time of the observing period, sea days, region and program type, motivation, and initial time span intended to work as observer. All observers are grouped into one of five categories: (1) Northeast, (2) Southeast, (3) West Coast, (4) Pacific Island and (5) Alaska. Next, fishery types are put into categories. Because of the large variation of fishery type in each region, no general subcategory is used here. For the Northeast, observers are divided into observer, at-sea monitor, and industry funded scallop observer. For Alaska, observers are divided into groundfish and halibut full coverage and partial coverage. For the West Coast, there are four subcategories: groundfish non catch-share, groundfish catch-share, California gillnet fisheries, and California longline fishery. For the Pacific Islands, observers are divided into Hawaii pelagic longline and Samoa longline fisheries. For the Southeast, there are five types: pelagic longline, shark bottom longline, gillnets, reef fish and shrimp trawl. Because former observers are also included in the survey and some programs changed or were eliminated over time, there will be another subcategory 'Not listed above' available for each region. This method of stratification results in 23 strata including total populations for current observer and unknown populations for former observers. Answers to these questions will describe fundamental information about the working history of observers by observer program.

Questions No. 13 - No. 26, "Working condition and satisfactory level", are intended to identify basic working conditions, identify the level of satisfaction by observers to certain aspects of the observer experience and their experience regarding harassment during deployment. These aspects are the major complaints that have been reported over time. These aspects are further divided into three categories: observer program, provider company, and captain/crew. Answers to these questions will aid the observer programs to address observer dissatisfaction.

Questions No. 27 - No. 32, "Recognition as an observer and attitude for future", are intended to investigate the category of the observer's current job, motivations for remaining or leaving their observer positions, the role of observer experience in their career paths, and their attitudes towards using electronic monitoring/electronic data collection systems as tools for observing.

Questions No. 33 - No. 49, "International and Regional Questions", is intended to investigate some specific questions regarding observers' experiences in international fisheries and observer programs in three regional fisheries. For international fisheries, the questions are designed to

gauge how many observers have experience working on foreign fisheries and through which international organization the observer has been deployed. Additional questions are designed to gauge their preference between foreign and U.S. fishery for certain aspects. For North Pacific observers, additional questions are designed to gauge the satisfaction for longline lead level 2 versus non-lead level 2 observers. For Northeast observers, additional questions address the difference between "observer" and "at-sea monitor" positions. For West Coast observers, satisfaction of observers between catch-share fisheries and non-catch-share fisheries are surveyed.

Questions No. 50 - No. 52, "Comment and follow-up interview", are intended to collect contact information of former or current observers who want to share their experience or give additional comments. A separate link will be provided to collect name and contact information so that their information are not linked to their survey responses. A sample of observers who provide their contact information will be contacted by NOP to share their thoughts. The sample size depends on how many observers are willing to be contacted. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on privacy.

A final report of the results of the survey will be posted on the NMFS website. The report will include descriptive statistics (such as mean and standard deviation) by region and observer program. No identification information will be revealed via this report. Aggregated results may also be reported through journal publications, presentations at conferences, and policy guidelines.

The information collected through this survey will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. The NMFS Office of Science and Technology will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on 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. <u>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.</u>

NMFS is proposing to collect the information identified above by providing intended survey respondents (former and current observers) with a web link to the survey. The surveys will be completed via 'Survey Monkey' and automatically will be transferred into a database for analysis. Using electronic means to transfer the responses will reduce the burden on the public since they will not have to take the time to mail a paper form in order to respond. Data entered online will be saved in real time.

The survey will be pretested with nine former observers who currently are NOAA Fisheries staffs. The feedback obtained from pretesting will not be included in the database for analysis, because necessary changes may take place afterwards.

The survey offers an opportunity for observers to indicate their willingness to be contacted by NOP for follow-up phone interviews. A sample of observers who provide their contact information will be contacted by NOP for follow-up interviews. The interview would allow observers to expand on their opinions and comments and provide examples of issues that concern them.

A telephone number will be provided in pre-notice and survey emails to provide potential respondents with a way to ask general questions (e.g., purpose, need, and privacy) or specific questions about the survey.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

NOAA/NMFS is the only agency/bureau/line office that utilizes fisheries observers, and all observer program employees are aware of the survey.

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

The collection of this information will not have a significant impact on small entities such as small businesses, organizations, or government bodies, as the participants will be individuals. The estimated time to complete the survey is 20 minutes per person. Participation in the survey is voluntary.

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

The collection of this information is essential to increase observer retention that will optimally decrease the training costs and increase the quality of data collected in regional observer programs. Lack of information on observer retention severely limits the ability of regional observer programs to evaluate observers' behavioral responses to changes in regulations, recruitment, and observing conditions. Lack of information, actions that attempt to increase observer retention and performance as a whole may be incomplete and inaccurate.

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

The collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with OMB Guidelines.

8. <u>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.</u>

A Federal Register Notice published on March 3, 2016 [81 FR 12472] solicited public comments. One comment was received from one former observer as following:

> *Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the National Observer Program (NOP)'s request to conduct a survey of fishery observers in order to investigate incentives and disincentives for remaining an observer and to identify their subsequent career choices. I was a periodic observer in the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program from 1991-2000 and 2005 and may have continued to be an observer had incentives been different. In addition, as a researcher, I have analyzed observer data while working on several projects to reduce seabird bycatch in Alaska fisheries.*
>
> *The proposed collection of information is necessary as changes to current recruitment and retention systems improve the quality of data inputs needed by NOAA Fisheries to manage our public resource. Observer data is utilized by National Marine Fisheries Service regional offices to manage fisheries in real time as well as hundreds of scientists at the science centers for stock assessment, catch-at-age relationships, and general ecology. Observers are the best source of independent fisheries-dependent data that is collected globally. Not only does NOAA Fisheries depend on observer-collected data, several other agencies (e.g. US Fish and Wildlife Service) and hundreds of university researchers have used observer data for various fisheries-related projects. The observer job is difficult and can take many deployments to become proficient. Any steps the agency can take to retain observers who collect high-quality data are worthwhile. Any time the quality of observer data is called into question, the integrity of fisheries management as well as any other research based on that data can be called into question.*
>
> *If the agency wants substantive information, the survey will need to take more than 10 minutes. It could take 5 minutes just to get the relevant and necessary background information.*
>
> *Within the U.S. there is a range of observer employment scenarios ranging from extremely temporary to full-time with benefits. Data collected should be summarized by program or program model at the very least. The NOP should also mandate that each region make every effort to contact observers from their programs for the last decade in order to get an adequate sample size per region/program or alternatively, provide all of the contact information to the NOP. Questions will need to be designed well and it will be useful for respondents to be assured that the information collected will actually be utilized to instigate changes such as the creation of 'best practices' the regional programs should utilize to increase retention. The NOP contracted the Association for Professional Observers to perform a recruitment and retention study in the early 2000's which should have some valuable ideas for a new survey (see also Appendix VII of this document where they suggested a longitudinal survey on this topic to be deployed in 3 phases). Unfortunately, the final submitted report met with so much resistance*

from the regional programs that the report was never made public by the agency. In addition, there was a 2nd survey effort done by a professional survey outfit which also seemed to go nowhere.

Ideally, the survey would be web-based so that current and former observers have access to it from anywhere.

Thank you for your time.

The commenter identified the difficulty of working as an observer and the proficiency that could be achieved after several deployments. Thus retaining observers within the program is important to improve data quality. The comment also noted the proposed time span for data collection may not sufficient for responding. The amount of time estimated for survey completion for each individual was modified from 10 minutes to 20 minutes. See response to Question 12 of this Supporting Statement for more information on estimation of individual responding time. The comment regarding summarizing the result by program is consistent with the design of the survey. Observers from all programs will be contacted to voluntarily respond to the survey.

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

There are no plans to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

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

NMFS will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for privacy and electronic information and this assurance is included in the survey. In particular, data concerning observer retention will be collected anonymously and will not be released for public use. Contact information collected for follow-up interview will not be linked to their survey responses. See response to Question 2 of this Supporting Statement for more information on collecting contact information.

11. <u>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.</u>

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

12. <u>Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.</u>

In the year 2015, there were 974 observers. There are no major changes to the program; therefore, we expect the number to remain about the same. The response rate for current observer is estimated around 60%, which would result in 585 returned surveys. Because of an unknown number of former observers, the universe of participants is not available. An estimate of 500 former observers may receive the survey. The corresponding response rate for former observers

is expected around 40%, which would result in 200 returned surveys. We estimate that approximately 785 surveys will be returned in total. The estimate to complete the survey is 20 minutes per respondent. This includes the time required to read the introductory statement and gathering information necessary to complete the survey. As a result, the survey is expected to impose a total of 262 hours. An hourly rate of $25.20 is based on the average for all civilian workers from the National Compensation Survey (preliminary, October 2015; http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost). There are no other costs to the respondent. Because the survey is a one-time collection, the total of 262 burden hours is anticipated, resulting in a cost to the public of approximately $6,602.40.

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).

The collection would be conducted through an internet web-based survey tool, so no additional cost burden would be incurred in purchasing equipment.

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

No additional full-time equivalent government employees were hired to conduct the survey. A Knauss Fellow was contracted to perform the survey and analysis, along with other assignments. The associated cost is $13,500. Up to an additional $500 could be spent to print the final report. Total estimated cost to the federal government is $14,000. A table of itemized costs is presented below.

Description	Estimated Cost
Data Collection	
Printing	$500
Data preparation	
Project management	$13,500

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

This is a new collection.

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

Numerical and textual survey information will be a product of this study. Survey data will be analyzed using standard data analysis methods. A final report will be posted on the NMFS website. Survey results may be released as a NMFS Technical Memorandum or submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

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

Not Applicable.

18. <u>Explain each exception to the certification statement.</u>

Not Applicable.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
FISHERY OBSERVER RETENTION SURVEY
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.

Potential Respondent Universe

The potential respondent universe consists of all former/current observers that have been an observer in U.S. fisheries. Current observers are defined as holding a validated contract and serving as observer on a U.S. commercial fishing vessel during 2016. Former observers are defined as serving as an observer on a U.S. commercial fishing vessel but under a contract that ended before 2016. For instance, there were 974 current observers with validated contacting information in 2015. An unknown number of former observers without any validated contacting information also are potential respondents.

Sampling and Other Respondent Selection Methods

The survey relies on voluntary responses of former and current observers. The survey will rely on notices to observers from observer provider companies, national and regional observer program managers and staff, observer program newsletters, regional fishery management council newsletters, observer professional associations, social networks, direct communications among observers, and "word of mouth."

Expected Response Rate

One hundred percent of completed voluntarily-reported surveys will be used in reporting our results. In the year 2015, there were 974 observers. There are no major changes to the program; therefore, we expect the number to remain about the same. The response rate for current observers is estimated to be approximately 60%. Because of an unknown number of former observers, the universe of participants is not available. An estimate of 500 former observers may receive the survey. The corresponding response rate for former observers is expected around 40%. Approximately 785 surveys will be returned in total.

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.

The survey is designed to collect information on incentives and disincentives for scientists who work as fishery observers to remain in their position and identify potential actions or requirements to improve observer retention. A link for an online survey will be distributed to former and current observers. The observer sample populations are stratified by region and fishery type. All observers are grouped into one of five categories: (1) Northeast, (2) Southeast, (3) West Coast, (4) Pacific Island and (5) Alaska. Next, fishery types are put into categories. Because of the large variation of fishery type in each region, no general subcategory is used here. For the Northeast, observers are divided into observer, at-sea monitor, and industry funded scallop observer. For Alaska, observers are divided into groundfish and halibut full coverage and groundfish and halibut partial coverage. For the West Coast, there are four subcategories: groundfish non catch-share, groundfish catch-share, California gillnet fisheries, and California longline fishery. For the Pacific Islands, observers are divided into Hawaii pelagic longline and Samoa longline fisheries. For the Southeast, there are five types: pelagic longline, shark bottom longline, gillnets, reef fish and shrimp trawl. Because former observers are also included in the survey and some programs changed or were eliminated over time, there will be another subcategory 'Not listed above' available for each region. This method of stratification results in 23 strata including total populations for current observer and unknown populations for former observers.

<u>Application</u>

A basic application of the survey data will be the inference of non-surveyed observer retention estimates from the surveyed observer retention. Data from this survey will be used to provide clarity on the factors that contribute to observer retention and to ensure NMFS is providing the necessary support for a robust observer program. The feedback from this survey will be used to improve regional observer programs and to support observers in their career development.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with non-response. 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.

A considerable amount of effort will be implemented to increase the responses, in order to make significantly meaningful and statistically sound inferences about the population. Dillman et al. (2008) suggested several approaches that could improve response rates. In this survey, we will follow several of these approaches.

1. Multiple modes of communications will be used in order to contact potential survey respondents. Studies have shown that implementing multiple modes of contact could

improve response rate and reduce non-response errors in mail surveys (Dillman et al. 1974, 2008; Heberlin and Baumgartner, 1978). Below we explain our multiple mode of contacts:

   a. A pre-notice email and flyer will be developed and distributed to all current observers through regional office and/or observer provider company. The email and flyer will inform observers about the survey and the value and use of this data. The regional office/provider company also will be requested to inform observers during their briefings or trainings. Research has shown that pre-notice improves response rates by 3 to 6 percentage points (Dillman 1991; Kanuk and Berenson 1975).
   b. One week following distribution of the flyer, regional office and/or observer provider company will be asked to send the survey email that includes an internet link to the survey. The email will explain participation is voluntary and how responding to the survey will provide valuable information to NOAA and to observers.

2. A telephone number will be set up to address any questions or concerns that the respondents may have regarding the survey.
3. Outreach during International Fisheries Observer and Monitoring Conference
4. Facebook posting
5. Outreach to Association of Professional Observers
6. Observers will distribute the survey link through social networks.

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.

The survey instrument will be pretested with nine former observers who currently are NOAA Fisheries staff. The feedback obtained from pretesting will not be included in the database for analysis, because necessary changes may take place afterwards.

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.

NMFS/Northeast Fishery Science Center – Dr. Drew Kitts 508-495-4702
NMFS/Northeast Fishery Science Center – Dr. Patricia Clay 301-427-8116
NMFS/Office of Science and Technology – Dr. Rita Curtis 301-427-8122
NMFS/Office of Science and Technology – Dr. Kristy Wallmo 301-427-8190
NMFS/Office of International Affairs and Seafood Inspection– John Henderschedt 301-427-8314
NMFS/Alaska Fishery Science Center - Chris Rilling 206-526-4194
NMFS/Northeast Fishery Science Center - Amy Martins 508-495-2266
NMFS/Pacific Islands Observer Program – Richard Kupfer 808-725-5105
NMFS/Southwest Fishery Science Center - Charles Villafana 562-980-4033

NMFS/Northwest Fishery Science Center – Ryan Shama 541-867-0538
NMFS/Southeast Fishery Science Center – Dr. Elizabeth Scott Denton 409-766-3571
NMFS/Office of Sustainable Fisheries - Carolyn Doherty 301-427-8562

The internal NMFS survey design team consists of Dr. Yuntao Wang (301-427-8124) and Jane DiCosimo (301-427-8109).

REFERENCES:

Dillman, D. A. 1991. The design and administration of mail surveys, *Annual Review of Sociology, 17*, 225-249.

Dillman, D. A., J. D. Smyth, and L. M. Christian. 2008. Internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method. (3rd ed.), Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Dillman, D. A., K. A. Christenson, E. H. Carpenter and R. Brooke. 1974. Increasing mail questionnaire response: A four-state comparison. *American Sociological Review, 39*, 744-756.

Haberlein, T.A and R. Baumgartner. 1978. Factors affecting response rates to mailed questionnaires: A quantitative analysis of the published literature, *American Sociological Review, 43*, 447-462.

Kanuk, L and C. Berenson. 1975. Mail surveys and response rates: A literature review, *Journal of Marketing Research, 12*, 400-453.

Williams, I. D., W. J. Walsh, B. N. Tissot and L. E. Hallacher. 2006. Impact of observers' experience level on counts of fishes in underwater visual surveys, *Marine Ecology Progress Series, 310*, 185-191.

Pre-notice Email

{DATE}

Dear Observer,

Thank you for your interests and contributions for the management and conservation of U.S. marine resources. NOAA Fisheries values your experience as an observer. Within the next few days you will be receiving a survey link from the National Observer Program (NOP) in Silver Spring, MD.

The survey will ask you a number of questions on your experience working as an observer. We are collecting this information so that NMFS can better understand incentives and disincentives that affect observer retention. This information in turn will help to improve regional observer programs. Thus, it is important to NOAA Fisheries that you complete the survey. The survey is voluntary, but by completing it, you will help us understand how fishery management policies affect your experience and provide you an opportunity to affect the programs in areas where you work.

The survey will be available online at a secured site through 'Survey Monkey'. You will be able to access it from any computer with access to the internet. Please only response once to the survey, since you may receive multiplies requests from us to enter your information, since we rely on the regional observer programs and your observer provider employers to contact you. We estimate the survey will take about twenty minutes to complete. If you have any questions or concerns related to this survey, you can contact {NOP CONTACT} at {NUMBER} or {E-Mail}.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,
{Signed}

Survey Email

{DATE}

Dear Observer,

As you may recall, we recently sent an email to you through your regional observer program or employer letting you know that you about a new survey of fishery observers. Enclosed you will find a survey link from NOAA Fisheries/National Observer Program.

The survey will ask you a number of questions about your observer experiences. NOAA Fisheries will use this information to better understand how fisheries management practices affect observer retention and how regional observer program may be improved for observers. Thus, it is important to NOAA Fisheries that you complete the survey as soon as possible. The survey is voluntary, but by completing it, you will help us understand how to increase observer retention and ensure NOAA Fisheries is providing the necessary support for a robust observer program. The online version of the survey is available via {web address}.

Answering the questions will take about twenty minutes. If you have any questions or concerns related to this survey, you can contact {NOP CONTACT} at {NUMBER} or {E-Mail}.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,
{Signed}

National Observer Program
Observer Retention Survey

NOAA FISHERIES

Office of Science and Technology

National Observer Program

Why is NOAA Fisheries asking for your help with this survey?

Maintaining a strong observer workforce now and in the future is a priority for NOAA Fisheries. This survey for present and past observers was created to provide clarity on the factors that contribute to observer retention and to ensure NOAA Fisheries is providing the necessary support for a robust observer program.

On all U.S. coasts, observers provide catch and bycatch information that is used in stock assessments and is essential for sustainable fisheries management. In order to fulfill their duties, observers go through a rigorous training program to be able to quickly identify species and collect data. Because the technical skills observers possess take time to hone and are essential to good data collection, retaining knowledgeable and hardworking observers is important to NOAA Fisheries. The feedback from this survey will be used to continue improving the observer program and to support observers in their career development.

NOAA Fisheries wants to know the factors that contribute to observer retention. This survey is only for current and past observers.

Participation in this survey is voluntary and all information supplied is safeguarded by the National Observer Program.

For more information, please visit:

http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/index

What type of information will be collected?

The types of information collected will include demographic information, education and work history information, pre-employment motivation, observer experience, job satisfaction information, job difficulty information, future plans, opinions about electronic monitoring, and regional information.

How long will it take to complete the survey?

You should be able to complete the survey in about 20 minutes.

Is participation voluntary?

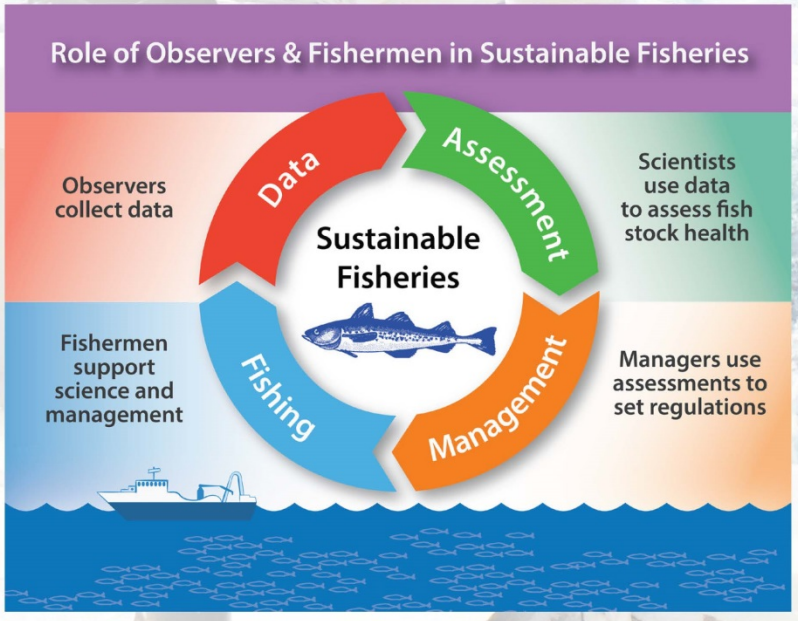
Your participation in this survey is voluntary. The information will be collected anonymously.

How will respondents be sure their data is confidential and anonymous?

NOAA Fisheries takes your privacy seriously. NOAA Fisheries will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for privacy and electronic information. This assurance is included in the survey. In particular, data concerning observer retention will be collected anonymously and will not be released for public use. Contact information collected for follow-up interviews are not linked to survey responses.

How will the data collected be used by NOP?

Our goal is to retain highly qualified, hardworking people like you. NOAA Fisheries will use information from the survey to improve the National Observer Program to meet that goal.



Observer Facts:

- Observers have collected catch and bycatch data since 1972.
- They are the only independent data collection source for some types of at-sea information.
- The National Observer Program supports the activities of 6 regional programs, which observe a total of 47 fisheries.
- In recent years, nearly 1000 observers spent over 83,000 days at sea.
- Data collected by observers help monitor fishery performance and complete stock assessments.
- Data collected by observers help provide a national picture on bycatch.
- The National Observer Program has aided in the development of observer programs internationally.
- Observers are essential to help test innovation in fishing gear, such as bycatch reduction devices.

Access the survey:

QR Code

Website link

Observer Retention Survey

United State Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Observer Program
1315 East-West Hwy, Silver Spring, MD 20910

This survey is designed to investigate factors that contribute to observer retention. The collection of information in turn will improve regional observer programs. The survey is voluntary, but by completing it, you will help us understand how national and regional observer policies and practices affect your experience and provide you with an opportunity to affect the programs in areas where you work. Please respond to this survey if you are a current or former observer in a U.S. fishery.

Your responses will be anonymous. We estimate it will take approximately 20 minutes to respond to the survey. Please take the survey once. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please indicate if you have observed in a U.S. fishery? ☐Yes (Start the survey) ☐No (End the survey)

1. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. What is your age (years)?

☐ Less than 20 ☐ 20 – 29 ☐ 30 – 39 ☐ 40 – 49 ☐ 50 – 59 ☐ 60 or More

3. What level of education did you have when you became an observer?

☐ High school or less ☐ Associate's degree ☐ Bachelor's degree
☐ Master's degree ☐ Doctorate or higher

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

☐ High school or less ☐ Associate's degree ☐ Bachelor's degree
☐ Master's degree ☐ Doctorate or higher

5. When did you first become an observer? Year _____

6. Please specify the month, if 2015 or later _____

7. When did you stop being an observer? ☐ Currently active or Year _____

8. Please specify the month, if 2015 or later _____

9. How many sea days have you observed in total?

☐ Less than 10 ☐10 – 30 ☐31 – 90 ☐91 – 270 ☐271 – 900 ☐More than 900

10. Please indicate each period of continuous work, where observing was your primary form of employment? (Please limit your responses to the 5 most recent periods)

Region	*Program Type*	*Start/Leave*	*Region*	*Program Type*	*Start/Leave*
North Pacific	Groundfish and halibut (full coverage)		**Northeast**	NEFOP observer	
	Groundfish and halibut (partial coverage)			At-sea monitor	
	Not listed above			Both NMFS and ASM	
West	Groundfish non-catch share			Industry funded scallop	

Coast	Groundfish catch share			Not listed above	
	California gillnet fisheries		**Southeast**	Pelagic longline	
	California longline fishery			Shark bottom longline	
	Not listed above			Gillnets	
Pacific Islands	Hawaii pelagic longline			Reef fish	
	Samoa longline fisheries			Shrimp trawl	
	Not listed above			Not listed above	

11. How long did you intend to work as an observer when you first decided to become an observer?

☐ A few months ☐ One year ☐ Two years
☐ Between two and five years ☐ More than five years ☐ Not decided at that time

12. Why did you want to become an observer? (Choose all that apply)

☐ Contact with the ocean ☐ Seasonal work schedule ☐ Fill an education/employment gap
☐ Protect environment ☐ Good pay ☐ Travel opportunity ☐ Field work
☐ Adventure ☐ Advancement in my field ☐ Other: _____

<u>For question 13 to 20, please respond based on your most recent experience as an observer</u>

13. What type of contract did you have with your employer during your most recent observer experience?

☐ Trip based ☐ Less than 3 months ☐ 3 to 6 months ☐ 7 to 11 months
☐ Yearly or longer ☐ No contract ☐ Other: _____

14. How many sea-days do/did you work during a typical month?

☐ 1 – 5 ☐ 6 – 10 ☐ 11 – 15 ☐ 16 – 20 ☐ 21 – 25 ☐ More than 25

15. Please indicate your level of satisfaction concerning the number of sea days you worked.

☐ Too many days ☐ More than expected ☐ About right ☐ Less than expected ☐ Too few days

16. How often are/were trips cancelled?

☐ Never ☐ less than 5% ☐ 6% – 20% ☐ 21% – 50% ☐ 51% – 80% ☐ More than 80%

17. How far in advance are/were you usually notified before being deployed on a trip?

☐ Less than 6 hours ☐ 6 – 12 hours ☐ 12 – 24 hours ☐ 24 – 48 hours ☐48 – 72 hours ☐ 72 hours or longer

18. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of the observer program?

	Type	*Very dissatisfied*	*Dissatisfied*	*Neutral*	*Satisfied*	*Very satisfied*	*Not applicable*
(1)	Tools and technical support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(2)	Debriefing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(3)	Outreach and conferences	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(4)	Resolving observer-reported incidents (e.g., harassment, safety, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(5)	Dealing with staff from NMFS/ Observer Program office	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your employer/provider company?

	Type	*Very dissatisfied*	*Dissatisfied*	*Neutral*	*Satisfied*	*Very satisfied*	*Not applicable*
(1)	Wage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(2)	Health insurance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(3)	Advance notice of upcoming trip	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(4)	Advance notice of trip cancellation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(5)	Types of contracts available	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(6)	Emergency response	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(7)	Technical support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(8)	General support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(9)	Ease of switching employer/provider company	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(10)	Resolving observer-reported incidents (e.g., harassment, safety, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of captain/crew that you have worked with?

	Type	*Very dissatisfied*	*Dissatisfied*	*Neutral*	*Satisfied*	*Very satisfied*	*Not applicable*
(1)	Setting up deployment details (e.g., phone call, text, email, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(2)	Cooperation with data collection activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(3)	Verbal interactions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(4)	Physical interactions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(5)	Safety	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(6)	Condition of accommodations (e.g., sleeping area, bathroom)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

<u>For question 21 to 32, please respond based on your entire experience as an observer</u>

21. Have you experienced harassment during your deployment?

☐Yes (If yes, continue to Q22) ☐No (If no, continue to Q27)

22. Did you report the incident(s) of harassment?

☐Yes (If yes, continue to Q23 - 25) ☐No (If no, continue to Q26)

23. Who did you directly report the incident to? (Please mark all that apply)

☐Employer ☐NMFS Observer Program ☐NMFS OLE ☐Coast Guard ☐Other

24. Were you kept informed until there was a resolution to your report?

☐Yes ☐No

25. How satisfied are you with the handling of your report?

☐Very dissatisfied ☐Dissatisfied ☐Neutral ☐Satisfied ☐Very satisfied

26. Why didn't you report the incident? (Please mark all that apply)

☐Worried about retaliation or damage to my professional reputation ☐Resolved situation at sea myself
☐Just wanted to put the experience behind me and not relive it ☐Didn't think NMFS would do anything about it
☐Upon return, the situation didn't seem as bad as I had originally thought ☐ Other: _____

27. What is your current job?

☐ Fishing industry ☐ Observer ☐ Observer provider company ☐ NMFS (observer program)
☐ NMFS (other than observer program) ☐NOAA NOS ☐Other NOAA office ☐ DOI ☐ DOE
☐ USGS ☐ BOEM ☐State agency ☐Other U.S. Government ☐NGOs
☐International agency ☐University/College ☐Others: _____

28. How interested are you in continuing to work in a marine related field, after having worked as an observer?

☐ Less ☐ Same ☐ More ☐ Not sure

29. Do you think being an observer is helpful for advancing a career in marine related field?

☐ Very useless ☐ Useless ☐ Neutral ☐ Helpful ☐ Very helpful

30. Do you think fishery community value the contribution of observers?

☐ Strongly unvalued ☐ Unvalued ☐ Neutral ☐ Valued ☐ Strongly valued

31. What is your attitude towards the use of technology for data collection? (e.g., use of tablets, laptops, electronic scales)

☐ Very unsupportive ☐ Unsupportive ☐ Neutral ☐ Supportive ☐ Very supportive

32. What is your attitude towards the use of electronic monitoring? (e.g., the use of camera, computer vision)

☐ Very unsupportive ☐ Unsupportive ☐ Neutral ☐ Supportive ☐ Very supportive

International / Regional Questions (North Pacific, Northeast, West coast)

33. Were you ever deployed in a foreign fishery?

☐Yes (If yes, continue to Q34 –36) ☐No (If no, continue to Q37)

34. What organization(s) have you worked with? (Please mark all that apply)

☐ IATTC – Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission ☐ IOTC – Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
☐ ICCAT – International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas ☐ SPTT – South Pacific Tuna Treaty
☐ NPFC – North Pacific Fisheries Commission ☐ FFA – Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
☐ WCPFC – Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission ☐ IPHC – International Pacific Halibut Commission
☐ CCAMLR – Convention for Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources ☐ Other: _____

35. What kind of vessel(s) did you work with? (Please mark all that apply)

☐ Commercial fishing vessel ☐ Transshipment vessel ☐ Other: _____

36. For each of the following categories as it relates to your experience in an international fishery, please indicate whether you prefer working in a foreign or U.S. fishery.

Preference	*Foreign fishery*	*U.S. fishery*	*No preference*	*Not applicable*
Interaction with Captain/Crew				
Safety (emergency response, vessel equipment etc.)				
Communication				
Length of trip				
Working conditions				
Pay				
Travel to deployment				
Availability of deployment				
Health concerns (bedbug, accommodation etc.)				

37. What are the major reasons you didn't observe in a foreign fishery? (Check all that apply)

☐Deployment unavailable ☐Safety ☐Worries about language and communication
☐Low pay ☐Length of trip ☐Far away from home ☐Others: _____

38. Were you an observer in the North Pacific region after 1999?

☐ Yes (If yes, continue to Q39-41) ☐ No (If no, continue to Q42)

39. How satisfied are you with each type of deployments you participate in?

	Type	*Very dissatisfied*	*Dissatisfied*	*Neutral*	*Satisfied*	*Very satisfied*	*Not applicable*
(1)	Fixed gear Catch-Processor (CP)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(2)	Mothership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(3)	Trawl CP	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(4)	Trawl non-CP	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(5)	Processor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(6)	Catcher vessel (CV)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(7)	Pot vessel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(8)	Longline CP	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(9)	Longline CV	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

40. How satisfied are/were you with the variety of deployment opportunities?

☐ Very dissatisfied ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Neutral ☐ Satisfied ☐ Very satisfied

41. Please indicate your most recent certification level in the North Pacific observer program.

☐ 3-week certification (If checked, continue to Q42 – 43) ☐ Lead Level 2 (If checked, continue to Q44 – 45)
☐ Not applicable (If checked, continue to Q46)

42. Please indicate your interest for pursuing a higher level of observer certification.

☐ Very uninterested ☐ Uninterested ☐ Neutral ☐ Interested ☐ Very interested

43. Why do you think there may be a shortage of Lead level 2 observers? (Please mark all that apply)

☐Lead level 2 is not prestigious ☐ Too much responsibility ☐ Difficult to fulfill performance requirement
☐Deployments are not flexible ☐Too much work ☐Few opportunities to fulfill fixed gear requirement
☐Safety ☐Low salary ☐I am unsure ☐Others: _____

44. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with being a Lead Level 2 observer

☐ Very dissatisfied ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Neutral ☐ Satisfied ☐ Very satisfied

45. Why do you think there may be a shortage of Lead level 2 observers? (Please mark all that apply)

☐Lead level 2 is not prestigious ☐ Too much responsibility ☐Difficult to fulfill performance requirement
☐Deployments are not flexible ☐Too much work ☐Few opportunities to fulfill fixed gear requirement
☐Safety ☐Low salary ☐I am unsure ☐Others: _____

46. Did you observe in the Northeast Region after 2000?

☐ Yes (If yes, continue to Q47) ☐ No (If no, continue to Q48)

47. How satisfied are you with each type of deployments that you have participated in?

	Type	*Very dissatisfied*	*Dissatisfied*	*Neutral*	*Satisfied*	*Very satisfied*	*Not applicable*
(1)	Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(2)	At-Sea Monitoring Program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(3)	Industry-Funded Scallop Program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

48. Did you observe in the West Coast Region after 2011?

☐ Yes (If yes, continue to Q49) ☐ No (If no, continue to Q50)

49. How satisfied are you with each type of deployments you participate in?

	Type	*Very dissatisfied*	*Dissatisfied*	*Neutral*	*Satisfied*	*Very satisfied*	*Not applicable*
(1)	Catch-share Program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(2)	Non catch-share Program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

50. If you have any comments, suggestions or statements for the National Observer Program, please write them in the following space. All information in this survey should be anonymous.

51. Are you interested in sharing or giving additional comments to your observing experience with National Observer Program by a follow-up interview?

☐ Yes (If yes, continue to Q52 in a separate link to provide contact information) ☐ No (If no, end of the survey)

*52. Please leave your name and email or phone number in the following space. Your contact information will be not linked with your response to the survey. You may be contacted by National Observer Program by the method you provided.

_____

We greatly appreciate your efforts and contributions to the management and conservation of marine resources. Safe travels.

Thank you!

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 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 or any other suggestions for this burden to Dr. Yuntao Wang and Jane DiCosimo, NOAA NMFS, 1315 East-West Hwy., Silver Spring, MD 20910.

This is a voluntary survey, and responses are anonymous as required by section 402(b) of the Magnuson Stevens Act and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Confidentiality of Fisheries Statistics, and will not be released for public use except without identification as to its source. 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.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 206.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: $21,024.

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 3, 2016.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016–05227 Filed 3–8–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Fishery Observer Retention Survey

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 May 9, 2016.

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 Jane DiCosimo, NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology, 1315 East-West Highway, SSMC3, Room 12551, Silver Spring, MD, 20910, (301) 427–8109 or *Jane.DiCosimo@noaa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for a new information collection.

NOAA Fisheries utilizes observers to collect information on catch, bycatch, fishing efforts, biological characteristics, interactions with protected species, and socioeconomic information from United States (U.S.) commercial fishing and processing vessels. More information on the observer population is needed to support the Agency's conservation and management goals, to strengthen and improve fishery management decision-making, and to satisfy legal mandates under the Reauthorization of the *Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act* (MSA), the *Regulatory Flexibility Act* (RFA), the *Endangered Species Act,* and the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA), *Executive Order 12866* (EO 12866), and other pertinent statutes.

The National Observer Program (NOP) is conducting a survey of fishery observers in order to investigate incentives and disincentives for remaining an observer and to identify their subsequent career choices. The data will be used by the NOP and regional observer programs to improve observer recruitment and retention rates. The survey results will be used by regional program managers to evaluate current observer provider contract requirements to increase observer retention. With a greater understanding of these data observer retention may increase as a result of improved recruitment for observers. Improved retention of qualified and experienced observers is expected to reduce training efforts and costs, and improve data quality. Observers are often the only independent data collection source for federal agency and scientists to collect at-sea data and are crucial in fishery management.

II. Method of Collection

Data will be collected via an electronic voluntary survey. We plan to distribute approximately 2000 surveys to the universe of active and former observers. The data will be collected anonymously and will not be released for public use, except in aggregate without identification as to its source.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–XXXX.

Form Number(s): None.

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

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 600.

Estimated Time per Response: 10 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 100.

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: March 3, 2016.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016–05228 Filed 3–8–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XE298

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permit; Correction

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

ACTION: Notice; request for comments; correction.