NOTICE OF OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET ACTION

Date 03/02/2017

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB has taken action on your request received 02/01/2017

ACTION REQUESTED: Extension without change of a currently approved collection
TYPE OF REVIEW REQUESTED: Regular
ICR REFERENCE NUMBER: 201701-0648-012
AGENCY ICR TRACKING NUMBER:
TITLE: Mandatory Shrimp Vessel and Gear Characterization Survey
LIST OF INFORMATION COLLECTIONS: See next page

OMB ACTION: Approved without change
OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0648-0542
The agency is required to display the OMB Control Number and inform respondents of its legal significance in accordance with 5 CFR 1320.5(b).

EXPIRATION DATE: 03/31/2020 DISCONTINUE DATE:

BURDEN:	RESPONSES	HOURS	COSTS
Previous	1,529	510	0
New	1,441	721	0
Difference			
Change due to New Statute	0	0	0
Change due to Agency Discretion	0	0	0
Change due to Agency Adjustment	-88	211	0
Change due to PRA Violation	0	0	0

TERMS OF CLEARANCE:

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

List of ICs			
IC Title	Form No.	Form Name	CFR Citation
Mandatory Shrimp Vessel and Gear Characterization Survey	NA	Shrimp Vessel and Gear Characterization 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/SER

2. OMB control number b. [ ] None
a. 0648 - 0542

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 Mandatory Shrimp Vessel and Gear Characterization Survey

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

9. Keywords Fishery, Fishing Vessels,

10. Abstract

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) currently collects census-level information on fishing vessel and gear characteristics in the commercial shrimp fishery that operates in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. NMFS uses this information to conduct analyses that improve fishery management decision-making and to ensure compliance with national goals, objectives, and requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and other applicable laws and statues.

11. Affected public (*Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x"*)
a. x Individuals or households d. ___ Farms
b. P 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 1,441
b. Total annual responses 1,441
1. Percentage of these responses collected electronically 0 %
c. Total annual hours requested 721
d. Current OMB inventory 510
e. Difference 211
f. Explanation of difference
1. Program change
2. Adjustment 211

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. x Program planning or management
b. ___ Program evaluation f. x Research
c. ___ General purpose statistics g. P 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: Adam Bailey
Phone: (727) 824-5305

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 Emily Menashes, Deputy Director for Alan Risenhoover, Director of Sustainable Fisheries	Date 1/27/2017
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: 2017.04.24 15:39:06 -04'00'	Date

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
MANDATORY SHRIMP VESSEL AND GEAR CHARACTERIZATION SURVEY
OMB CONTROL NUMBER 0648-0542

Introduction

This request is for an extension of this current information collection.

A. Justification

1. Explain why you need to conduct the information collection.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is currently collecting census-level information on fishing vessel and gear characteristics in the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) commercial shrimp fishery (Gulf shrimp fishery), which operates in the Gulf exclusive economic zone. NMFS uses this information to conduct analyses that improve fishery management decision-making and ensure that national goals, objectives, and requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act, 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and Executive Order (E.O.) 12866 are met; and quantify achievement of the performance measures in the NMFS' Operating Plans. This information is vital in assessing the economic, social, and environmental effects of fishery management decisions and regulations on individual shrimp fishing enterprises, fishing communities, and the Nation as a whole. Recordkeeping requirements for this information collection under the Magnuson-Stevens Act are codified at 50 CFR 622.51(a)(3).

Collection of vessel and gear characterization and fishing effort information is necessary, supplemental information to the core economic, social, and biological information regarding the Gulf shrimp fishery that is vital to the optimum yield management of marine fishery resources as mandated under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The term "optimum" is defined under section 104-297 of the Act, as: (A) will provide the greatest overall benefit to the Nation, particularly with respect to food production and recreational opportunities, and taking into account the protection of marine ecosystems; (B) is prescribed as such on the basis of the maximum sustainable yield from the fishery, as reduced by any relevant economic, social, or ecological factors; and (C) in the case of an overfished fishery, provides for the rebuilding to a level consistent with producing the maximum sustainable yield in such a fishery.

In the Gulf shrimp fishery, controversy exists regarding estimates of fishing effort, bycatch (particularly with respect to red snapper and other finfish), sea turtle interactions, and overcapacity. This controversy has led to multiple lawsuits filed against NMFS and Congressional level inquiries into the adequacy of the science used to generate these estimates and the policy decisions that have resulted. The need for more accurate data and additional analyses continue, in order to increase the certainty and confidence in these estimates and thereby resolve these conflicts.

2. <u>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</u>.

The mandatory vessel and gear characterization survey is a census data collection effort of all shrimp vessel owners or operators who possess a valid federal Gulf commercial shrimp fishing permit. NMFS began collecting these survey data in 2006 under Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control No. 0648-0542 per the final rule implementing Amendment 13 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico (Amendment 13) (71 FR 56039, September 26, 2006).

The vessel and gear survey annually updates existing data and continues data collection efforts for this significant fishery. NMFS currently collects other information from Gulf commercial shrimp vessels pertaining to their fishing activities, trip dates, landings, and other information through port agents, electronic logbooks, and mandatory dealer reports. Prior to this annual survey, little data related to vessel and gear characteristics at the individual vessel level have been collected through other means.

Completion of the annual survey is required to renew a Gulf commercial shrimp permit. NMFS' Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) mails the annual survey to all Gulf shrimp permit holders beginning in January each year. Requiring completion of the survey shortly before permit renewal, with renewal contingent upon survey completion[1], ensures that all permitted fishermen will be included in the census and each fisherman will only be surveyed once per annum. NMFS anticipates that the survey effort will continue in future years.

One of the primary purposes of collecting vessel and gear characterization data at the census level is so that it can be used to develop statistically valid sampling designs for the other aforementioned data collection programs. It is believed that the creation of stratified, random sampling designs for these data collection programs is necessary to ensure that the data, and the estimates of the fishery performance measures based on that data, are accurate (e.g., representative of the fishery's actual performance). The various vessel and gear characteristics serve as strata in these sampling designs.

The information collected by the vessel and gear characterization survey is used by NMFS economists, social scientists, and biologists to help evaluate the performance of existing regulations (e.g., bycatch reduction devices (BRDs), turtle exclusion devices (TEDs), time or area closures, etc.), and the impacts that changes to those regulations may have on individual fishermen, the shrimp fishing industry as a whole, and fishing communities. In addition, the vessel and gear characterization data are further linked to various biological, social, and economic data collected by other means.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be available to the public through technical memoranda and similar publications, or used to support publicly disseminated information, such

[1] The Gulf shrimp fishery requires a limited-access federal permit, and there is a moratorium on new federal Gulf shrimp permits until October 26, 2026. If a person buys or transfers a permit on January 1, 2017, before this person's permit can be renewed in 2018, they would have to complete a survey form. This would also be noted as a condition of renewal in the mail-out that NMFS sends out in the renewal packet to the new owner of the permit.

as analyses contained within documents distributed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council). Data may be reported according to the various types of nets, TEDs, BRDs or electronic equipment that is generally used, which will allow comparisons and evaluations of alternative vessel and gear configurations by analysts and vessel owners.

Justifications for Questions

The questions contained on the vessel and gear survey form are needed to collect data as required by regulations implementing Amendment 13. All but Question 1 are focused on activity in the past year. Questions 1-4 ask for year of vessel purchase, by whom the vessel was operated in the past year, and in what areas and fisheries the vessel was operated. Questions 5-11 pertain to the most frequent type of gear used. Questions 12-13 pertain to the most frequently used BRD. Questions 14-26 pertain to the most frequently used TED. Question 27 asks for a list of all electronic equipment used on the vessel.

These annually collected data are required to assess the fishery, aiding in the informed management decision-making process. This information helps to estimate vessel profitability and aggregate economic impacts associated with the vessel and local shrimp fishing industry. Additionally, economic theory suggests that organizational structure can impact who makes decisions within the fishing business, how those decisions are made, and what the goals or objectives of the fishing business might be which in turn will affect the vessel's productivity and economic performance. These data will provide information about the average length of trips and how many days of fishing occurred during a calendar year. This information will help to determine which fishermen are full time participants, who are part-time, the level of dependency that each has on this fishery, and the potential impacts that federal regulations may have on them.

The questions contained in this form will also collect information which will help to assess the relative performance of different BRDs with respect to bycatch reduction and shrimp loss, and thus the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of potential changes in BRD regulations on individual fishing enterprises, fishing communities, and the environment. In addition, information about the types of TEDs actually in use will help to assess the socioeconomic impacts of federally mandated TED regulations on individual fishing enterprises and fishing communities, especially in light of recent changes to the TED regulations. Information on the relative performance of alternative TEDs and BRDs will be useful to both managers and fishermen.

NMFS will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NMFS' 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. 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 mails the annual surveys to all permit holders early in each respective year. NMFS also includes a pre-paid envelope for the respondents to return the survey. Responses are entered into a database, designed specifically for this purpose, and data will be periodically transmitted to SERO Fisheries Social Sciences Office. There will be no other means, electronic or otherwise, to submit data or information for the purposes of the survey form at this time. However, in the future, if an electronic permit renewal system is established, the survey form could potentially be included as part of that system.

4. <u>Describe efforts to identify duplication</u>.

The collection of the data requested in the vessel and gear survey form is unique in its detail and specificity to individual fishing entities and their general operation. There will be no duplication of the vessel and gear characterization information being gathered from the federal Gulf shrimp permit holders. The electronic logbook requirement does not include the information being collected on this form. These data will be linked to the socioeconomic survey data, shrimp dealer landings data collected by NMFS port agents, electronic logbook data, shrimp permit data, and data from the U.S. Coast Guard Vessel Documentation program. A draft of this form originally went through several internal and external reviews to ensure that there was no duplication.

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

Although some Gulf shrimp permits are thought to be held by businesses with the same or substantively the same individual owners, and thus would likely be considered affiliated, ownership data for Gulf shrimp permit holders is incomplete, and thus, it is not currently feasible to accurately determine whether businesses that have these permits are in fact affiliated and, therefore, conclude whether businesses are large or small. NMFS is currently making changes to its permit application forms so that such determinations can be accurately made in the Gulf shrimp fishery. As a result of the incomplete vessel ownership data, NMFS currently assumes each vessel is independently owned by a single business. Using gross annual revenue from businesses with a federal Gulf shrimp permit, all permit holders subject to this information collection are considered to be small businesses.

Only the minimum data to meet the current and future needs of NMFS management, stock assessments, and permitting programs are requested from all permit applicants. The results of this data collection effort are expected to improve the economic conditions of small fishing entities by affording fishery management agencies the information needed to better consider social and economic factors in management plans and regulations.

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

Without this information or if it is collected less frequently, various user groups will continue to express a lack of confidence in NMFS' estimates of fishing effort, bycatch (particularly with

respect to red snapper and other finfish), sea turtle interactions, and overcapacity in this fishery, and thus in the various analyses and assessments that make use of these estimates. This information is vital in assessing the economic, social, and environmental effects of alternative fishery management decisions and regulations on individual fishing enterprises, fishing communities, and the nation as a whole as per the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NEPA, RFA, ESA, and E.O. 12866. A continued lack of confidence in the data and analyses being used to support controversial policy decisions will only serve to continue and exacerbate existing conflicts between user groups.

Regulations regarding BRDs, TEDs, and time or area closures have changed fairly often in the past, and are likely to change in the future as economic, social, and environmental conditions change. The economic and social conditions in this fishery have been dynamic in recent years, even more so than historically. Thus, collecting this information on at least an annual basis, as opposed to every two or more years, is necessary to ensure that currently representative data are being used in the various analyses. Without this information, it will be very difficult to accurately evaluate the performance of existing regulations (e.g., BRDs, TEDs, time or area closures, etc.), and the impacts that changes to those regulations may have on individual fishermen, the fishing industry as a whole, and fishing communities. More specifically, it will be difficult to generate accurate analyses of the various policy alternatives that NMFS and the Council may consider with respect to determining the significance of economic impacts on small entities, as required by the RFA; how best to achieve the maximization of net benefits to society, as required by E.O. 12866; and the impacts on the environment, as required by NEPA. Without this information, it will be quite difficult to determine whether: 1) bycatch in the fishery is being minimized to the extent practicable as per the requirements of National Standard 9 to the Magnuson-Stevens Act; 2) the fishery is operating in a manner consistent with existing regulations that have been implemented under the ESA; 3) abundance is changing as a result of environmental or human related factors, and to what extent; and 4) the fleet's fishing capacity is at an economically sustainable level.

Without the data collected by the vessel and gear characterization form, confidence in the data and estimates of the fishery performance measures arising from these complementary programs will be low, as will be any policy decisions based thereon. Further, if the information is not collected at the census level, it cannot be used to develop random sampling designs for other data collection programs in this fishery.

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

The collection is consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

NMFS published a Federal Register notice on October 6, 2016 (81 FR 69515), and solicited public comments on the continuation of this collection of information. No comments were received.

In January 2017, NMFS contacted 11 permit holders in the Gulf shrimp fishery regarding the vessel and gear survey. These permit holders estimated that the survey form requires about 10 to 30 minutes to complete each year with all of the measurements and effort data readily available. To account for permit holders that are potentially unfamiliar with the survey form, NMFS uses the higher-end estimate of 30 minutes per response annually.

The contacted permit holders also had other suggestions to reduce the time burden to complete the form and to streamline the questionnaire itself. The first suggestion was to make the form available in both electronic and paper formats. However, NMFS does not currently have a technical mechanism for permit holders to enter the confidential and official data collected through a secure internet process. NMFS mails a hardcopy form once a year, and again upon request. However, all of the current and past data survey forms are available for download on the NOAA Fisheries Galveston Web site year round. Permit holders may return the forms to NMFS either through the pre-paid envelope provided with the initial paper copy, or if preferred, they may also return the completed form via fax or email.

The second suggestion was to move effort questions 3 and 4, asking for sea days and number of trips, respectively, to the Annual Landings form, under OMB Control No. 0648-0205. The permit holder reasoned that by moving those questions, the vessel and gear survey form would be strictly asking gear-related questions and the effort data would seem to be more appropriate on a form asking about catch information. At this time, these data are still required on the vessel and gear survey form. This is a “stand-alone” survey. The results from the vessel and fear survey form under this information collection may not be used in conjunction with the form under OMB Control No. 0648-0205.

The third suggestion was to make a check box available on the survey form to indicate that no data changes occurred from the previous year. This change is not possible currently, because, unless each permit holder retains a copy of the previous year’s paper form, which NMFS could not confirm, permit holders and NMFS are not be able to verify whether the data submitted in the previous year are those that permit holders are comparing to in the current year. In addition, NMFS has concerns about potential misuse, which would adversely affect data quality.

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

No monetary payments or other remuneration will be made.

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

As stated on the survey instrument, all data that permit holders submit are treated as confidential in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1881a, 402b, Confidentiality of Information) and NOAA Administrative Order 216-100.

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

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

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

The maximum number of respondents is 1,441, which, as of January 9, 2017, is the maximum number of valid and renewable permits in the Gulf shrimp fishery. The time per response is estimated to average 30 minutes, for a total annual burden of 721 hours. Information gathered on the survey form should be readily available to vessel owners or operators, based on their memory or written documentation, such as fishing logs.

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 financial cost to the public to participate in this study (excluding valuation of respondents' time). The survey is mailed to the permit holders and it is accompanied by a pre-paid envelope for the respondents to return the survey to the NMFS Galveston Laboratory.

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

The average annualized cost to the Federal government is estimated to be approximately $13, 229.

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

The reduction in number of respondents from 1,529 to 1,441 is due to a reduction in the fleet size of the shrimp fishery. The increase in the total burden hours from 510 to 721 results from increasing the estimated time per response from 20 to 30 minutes annually, based on feedback from permit holders.

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

These data will be published using an aggregated, non-confidential, and summarized format with generalized tables in an annual NMFS technical memorandum or similar report. Project reports will provide documentation about the survey methodologies, survey instrument, and an assessment of the validity of the collected data.

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
MANDATORY SHRIMP VESSEL AND GEAR CHARACTERIZATION SURVEY
OMB CONTROL NUMBER 0648-0542

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.

This is a mandatory census-level data collection effort. Thus, this data collection effort does not employ statistical methods for developing a random sampling design and the expected response rate is close to 100 percent. The survey is conducted annually. The respondent universe is all permit holders with a federal Gulf commercial shrimp permit.

As of January 9, 2017, the number of valid or renewable permits is 1,441.

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 form would be mailed to all federal Gulf shrimp permit holders early in each respective year. No statistical methodology will be employed, estimation will not be required, and no special sampling procedures will be used. The information is needed at the census level so that economists at NMFS' SEFSC can use this sampling universe to select permit holders for socio-economic surveys and other important data collection programs (e.g., observers, electronic logbooks, socioeconomic surveys, etc.).

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.

By requiring completion of this form in order to renew a permit, this requirement in itself will serve to maximize response rate. The expected response rate is close to 100 percent, and thus nonresponse is not an anticipated issue. In the past year, response rates were approximately 91 percent. Some survey nonresponses may be due to individual permit holders that sell, transfer, or otherwise choose not to renew their permits.

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 questions contained in a previous version of the vessel and gear survey under OMB Control No. 0648-0542 were part of a voluntary, in-person socioeconomic survey of offshore Gulf shrimp vessels. The questions were pre-tested and then actually fielded as part of that survey effort. Minor modifications were made to the original survey questions to reduce the burden on respondents and to reflect current regulations.

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.

Rick A. Hart, Ph.D.* National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Fisheries Science Center Galveston Laboratory (409) 766-3404 *Responsible for data collection and analysis	John Mitchell* National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Fisheries Science Center Pascagoula Laboratory (228) 762-4591, ext. 295 *Data and analysis
James M. Nance, Ph.D.* National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Fisheries Science Center Galveston Laboratory (409) 766-3507 *Data analysis	Dan Foster* National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Fisheries Science Center Pascagoula Laboratory (228) 762-4591, ext. 294 *Data and analysis

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Southeast Fisheries Science Center
4700 Avenue U
Galveston, TX 77551

OMB No. 0648-0542
Approval Expires: 2/28/2017

2016
GULF SHRIMP VESSEL & GEAR CHARACTERIZATION FORM

INSTRUCTIONS
(Incomplete or illegible forms will be returned.)

*Please Note: It is **REQUIRED** that the following form be returned in order to be eligible to renew your **FEDERAL PERMIT APPLICATION FOR VESSELS FISHING IN THE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ)** to the following address: NOAA Fisheries Galveston Laboratory, Attention: Rebecca Smith, 4700 Avenue U, Galveston, TX 77551. If you have a question regarding the form, please call (409) 766-3783 between 8 am - 4:30 pm CST.*

QUESTION 1 Enter the year that you purchased or leased the vessel, regardless of whether it was new or used at the time.

QUESTION 2 For part a, indicate whether the vessel was **most frequently** operated by the owner or someone other than the owner (a hired captain) in 2016. For part b, indicate the number of crewmembers **typically** on board during 2016, including the captain.

QUESTION 3 Answer 'yes' if the vessel was used to shrimp in Federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico even **one** time during 2016.

QUESTION 4 Indicate the **total** number of days at sea and the number of trips for this vessel in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery during 2016 (including from bays, bayous, State inshore and offshore waters, or Federal waters). For example, if the vessel took 10 trips and each trip lasted 10 days, then the **total** days at sea for 2016 would be 100.

QUESTIONS 5 – 11 Indicate the characteristics for the **one** primary gear type **most frequently** used on this vessel in 2016. Also provide the characteristics of the try net used with this gear type.

QUESTIONS 12 - 13 Indicate the **one** BRD type **most frequently** used on this vessel in 2016.

QUESTIONS 14 - 26 Indicate and provide additional details for the **one** TED type **most frequently** used on this vessel in 2016.

QUESTION 27 Indicate **all** types of **ELECTRONIC** equipment that were on-board this vessel in 2016.

Through this form, NMFS is collecting information from all federally permitted shrimp vessel owners/operators on fishing vessel and gear characteristics in the Gulf of Mexico Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) shrimp fishery. The data collected are currently being analyzed by NMFS economists, gear specialists, and fishery biologists to improve fishery management decision-making in this fishery. This information is vital in assessing the economic, social and environmental effects of fishery management decisions and regulations on individual shrimp fishing enterprises, fishing communities, and the nation as a whole.

KNOWINGLY SUPPLYING FALSE INFORMATION IS A VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW PUNISHABLE BY A FINE AND/OR IMPRISONMENT.

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 regarding this burden estimate or any other suggestions for reducing this burden to Rick Hart, NMFS, Fisheries Management Branch, 4700 Avenue U, Galveston, TX, 77551.

All data submitted will be handled as confidential material in accordance with **NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Protection of Confidential Fishery Statistics**. 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.

GULF SHRIMP VESSEL AND GEAR CHARACTERIZATION FORM

Permit #:
Permit Holder Name: **Vessel Name:**
State Registration #: **USCG Vessel ID:**

Please provide any missing or incorrect information in the above heading.

1. What year did you purchase or lease this vessel?

Purchase or Lease Year _____

2. **a.** In 2016, this vessel was **most frequently** operated by:
(Check the appropriate box.)

☐ owner ☐ hired-captain

☐ BOTH (owner and captain) ☐ none (not shrimping)

b. In 2016, what was the **typical** number of crew on the vessel, **including captain**?
If not shrimping, write N/A.

Total number of crew and captain _____

3. In 2016, did you shrimp in Federal waters (i.e. the EEZ[1]) of the Gulf of Mexico?
(Check the appropriate box.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. In 2016, what was the **total number of days at sea and the total number of trips** this vessel took in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery (**including State inshore and offshore & Federal offshore trips**)? *The total days at sea should not exceed 365 days.*

Total Days at sea during the entire year _____

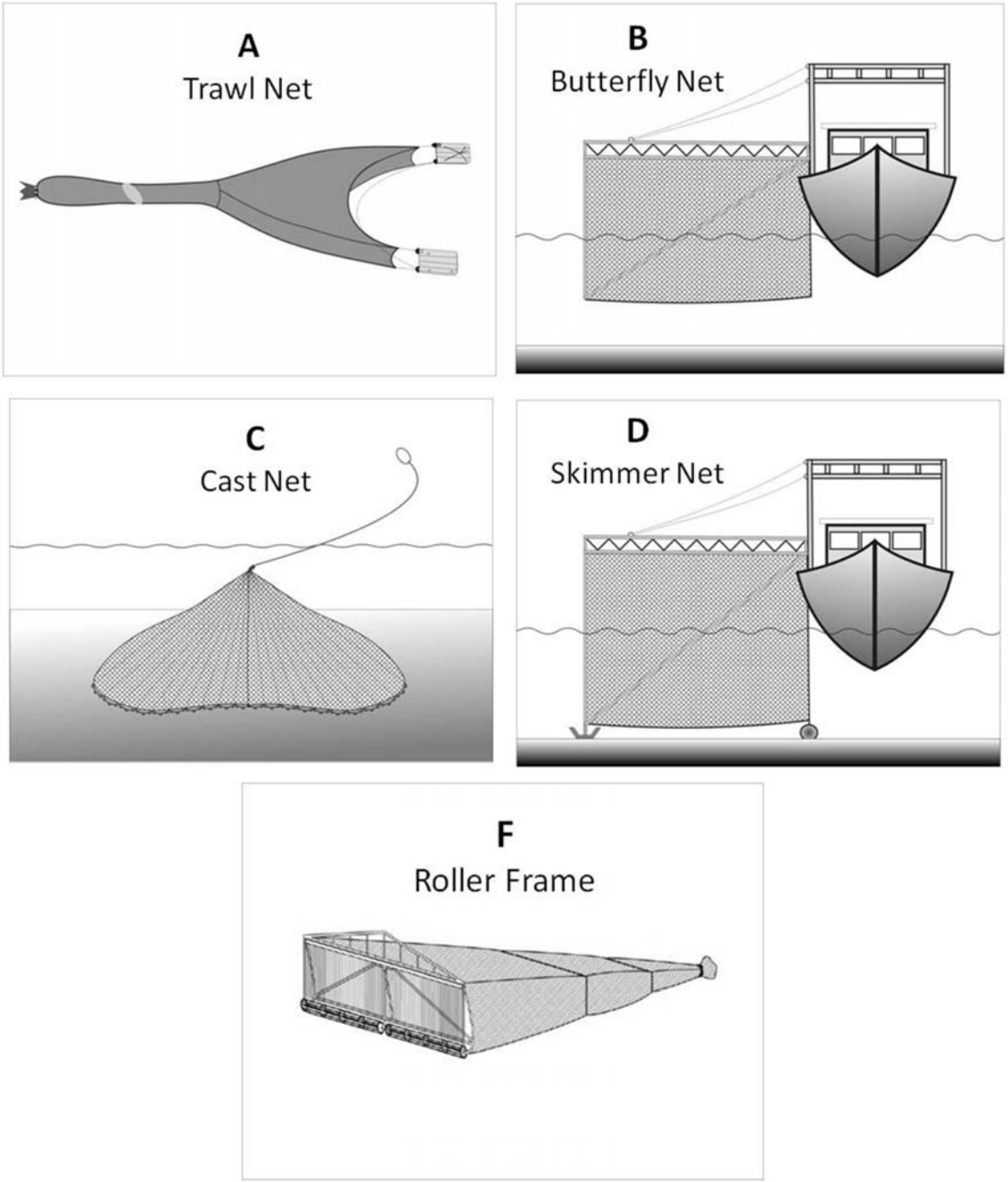
Number of Trips taken during the entire year _____

5. What was the **most frequently** used **Gear Type** in 2016?
Choose a code from the lists below. If other, please specify.
(See Figure 1 on Page 3 for common gear types.)

Code	Gear Type	Code	Gear Type
_ A	Trawl	_ D	Skimmer Net
_ B	Butterfly Net	_ F	Roller Frame
_ C	Cast Net	_ G	Other (specify) _____

[1]The EEZ portion of the fishery is from nine (9) miles outward off of the Texas and West Florida coasts, and from three (3) miles outward off the coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Figure 1. Common Gear Types. (Use for Question 5, use letters above picture.)



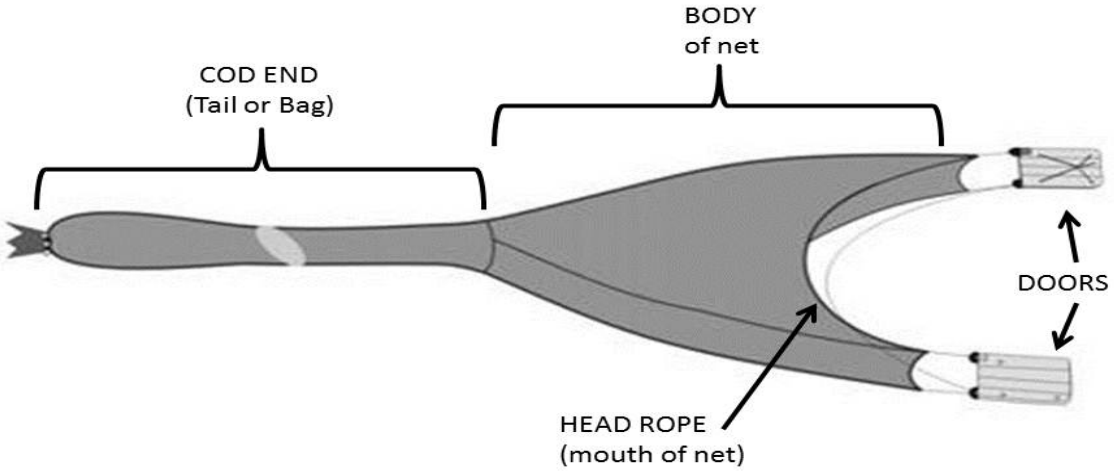
6. What was your **most frequently** used **Net Type** in 2016?
Choose a code from the lists below. If other, please specify.

Code	Net Type		Code	Net Type
___	H	2 Seam Balloon	___	M	Western Jib
___	J	4 Seam Balloon	___	N	Add-on Bib
___	K	Box	___	O	Built-in Bib (e.g. mongoose, cobra, etc.)
___	L	Flat	___	P	Other (specify)_____

7. What was the **number of nets** used at one time for your **most frequently** used gear type in 2016? **Do not include the try net in total number of nets used at one time.**

Number of Nets used at one time _____

Figure 2. Basic Trawl Diagram with parts identified. (Use for Questions 8 - 11).



8. What was the **Headrope Length or Frame Width** (in feet) for your **most frequently** used gear type in 2016? **(Note: Measurement is width of mouth of one net.)**

Headrope Length or Frame Width _____ feet

9. What was the **Headrope Length or Frame Width** (in feet) for your Try Net in 2016?
(If no Try Net was used, write "N/A" in the blank.)

Headrope Length or Frame Width of Try Net _____ feet

10. What was the **Mesh Type (net material)** for your **most frequently** used gear in 2016? **Choose a code from the lists below for each question.** If other, please specify.

Body of Net

Code		Mesh Type
___	S	Nylon
___	T	Spectra
___	U	Poly
___	V	Sapphire
___	W	Other (specify) _____

Codend (Tail or Bag)

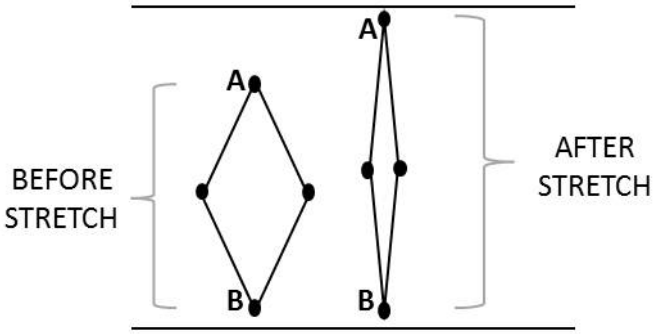
Code		Mesh Type
___	S	Nylon
___	T	Spectra
___	U	Poly
___	V	Sapphire
___	W	Other (specify) _____

11. What was the **Mesh Size (in inches**) for your **most frequently** used gear type? (See Figure 3 for measurement illustration.)

Body of Net _____ inches

Codend (Tail or Bag) _____ inches

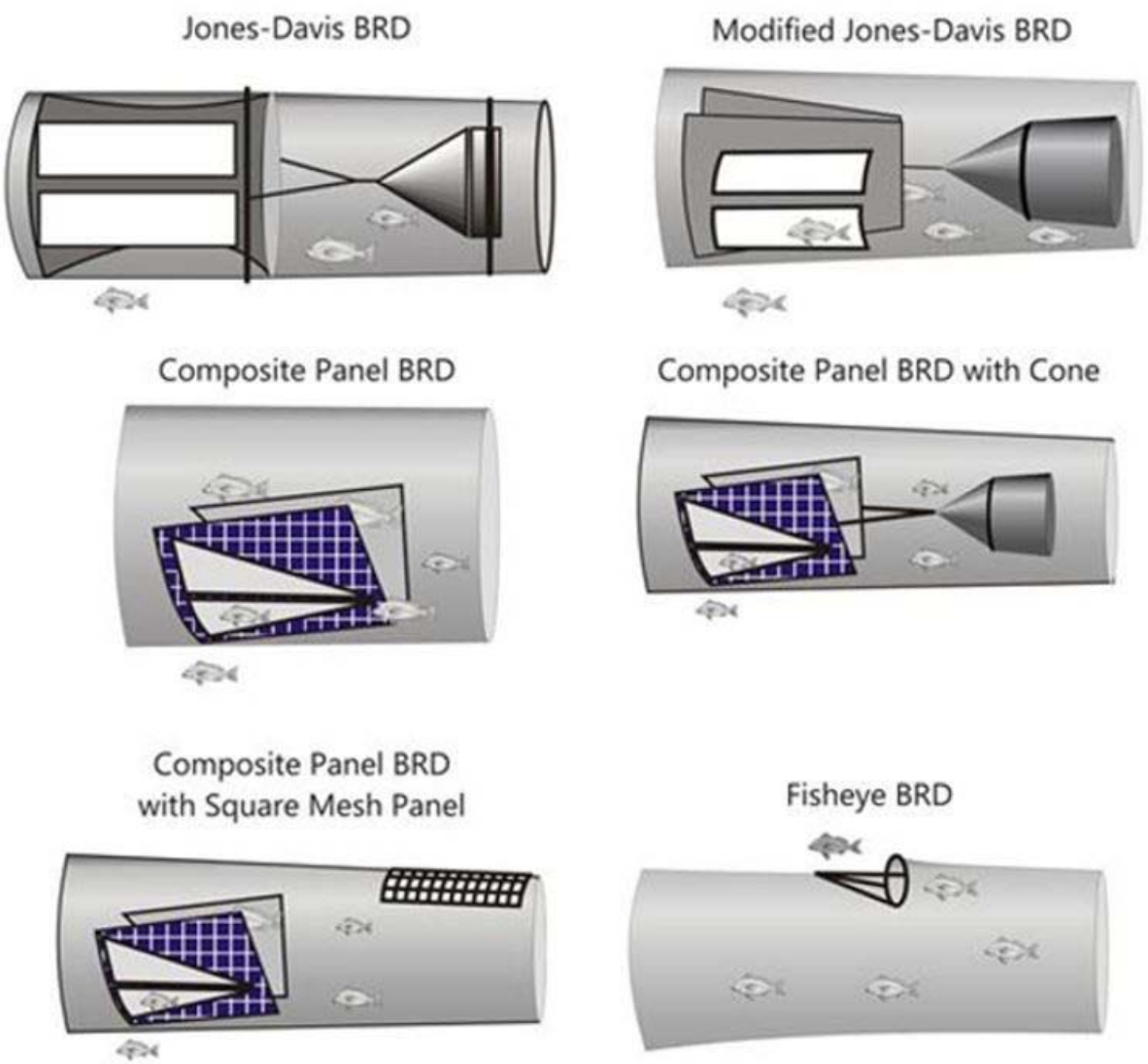
Figure 3. Illustration on how to measure Mesh Size. (Use for Question 11.)
Use the measurement of the distance between the centers of two opposite knots (points A & B) after the mesh has been stretched.



12. In 2016, what is the type of BRD (bycatch reduction device) you used **most frequently** ? Check the appropriate box below. (See Figure 4.)

- ☐ Jones-Davis
- ☐ Modified Jones-Davis
- ☐ Composite Panel
- ☐ Composite Panel with Square Mesh
- ☐ Composite Panel with Cone
- ☐ Fisheye
- ☐ None (N/A)

Figure 4. Common Bycatch Reduction Devices. (Use for Question 12.)

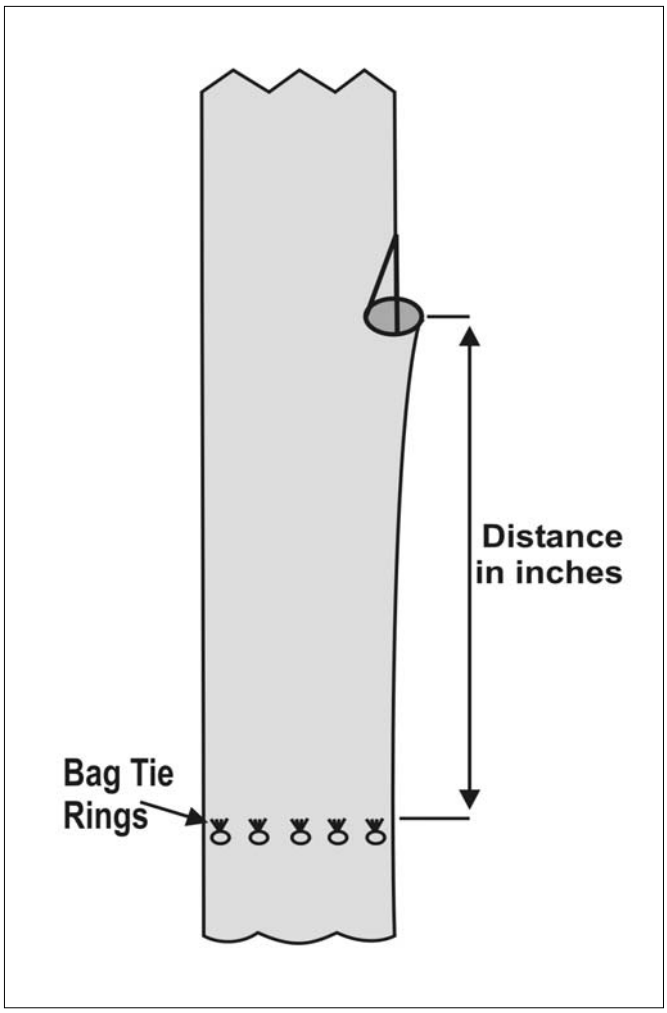


13. **If a Fisheye BRD was used**, what was the distance from the bag tie off rings to the BRD?

If you did not use a Fisheye BRD, write "N/A" in the blank.
(See Figure 5 for measurement illustration.)

Distance **in inches**: _____

Figure 5. Illustration on how to measure distance from BRD to tie off rings (Use for Question 13.)



14. In 2016, what Type of TED (turtle excluder device) did you use **most frequently**?
Please check only one code.

_____Single Grid Hard TED →→→ (***Questions 15 - 19 and question 27***)
_____Parker Soft TED →→→→→ (***Questions 20 - 21 and question 27***)
_____Hooped Hard TED →→→→ (***Questions 22 - 26 and question 27***)
_____None (N/A) →→→→→→→ (***Question 27***)

SINGLE GRID HARD TED

If you most frequently used a <u>Single Grid Hard TED</u> in 2016, answer questions 15 – 19.

15. What was the **<u>most frequently</u>** used **Grid Style**? **Check only one code.**

_____A = Bent Bar
_____B = Matagorda
_____C = Weedless
_____D = Georgia
_____E = Fixed Angle

16. What was the **Grid Size (width x height)** of your Single Grid Hard TED? The measurement is the measurement of the outside frame of the TED.

_____ inches x _____inches

17. What was the **Opening Size** of your Single Grid Hard TED?
Check the <u>most frequently</u> used Opening Size. If other, please specify size in inches.

_____A = Double Cover (inshore & offshore)
_____B = 71" (inshore & offshore)
_____C = 44" (inshore only)
_____D = Other size opening (please specify)_____ inches

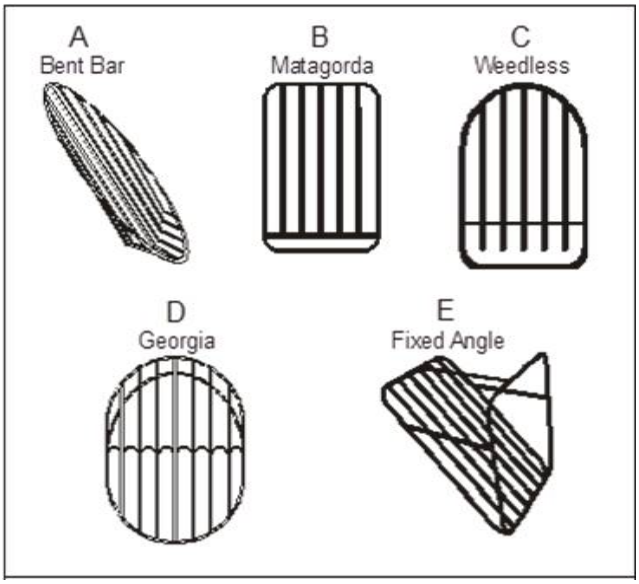
18. What was the **Opening Direction** of your Single Grid Hard TED?
Check the <u>most frequently</u> used direction.

_____A = Top Opening
_____B = Bottom Opening
_____C = Both Top and Bottom Opening

19. Did you use an **Accelerator Funnel** on your Single Grid Hard TED? Check Yes or No.

_____Yes
_____ No

Go to Question 27 (skip 20 - 26)



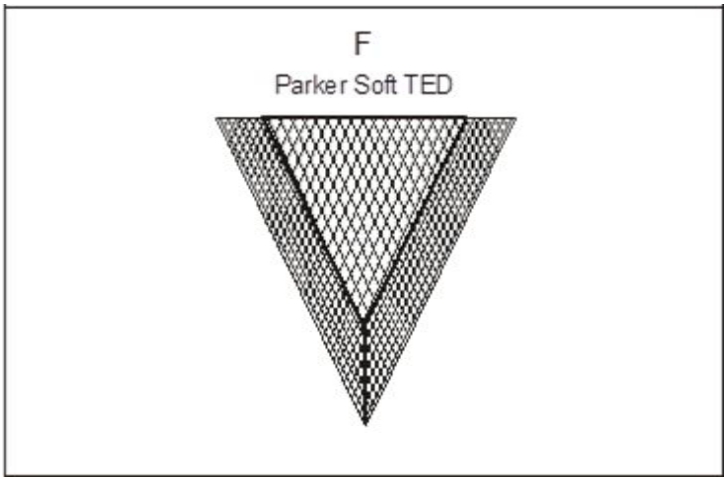
PARKER SOFT TED

If you most frequently used a <u>Parker Soft TED</u> in 2016, answer questions 20 and 21.

20. What was the **Opening Type/Size** of your Parker Soft TED? **Check the correct opening size.**
_____1 = 56" cut (inshore only)
_____2 = 96" cut (offshore / inshore)
_____0 = Other (Please specify) _____ inches

21. Did you use a **flap** on your Parker Soft TED (Offshore Only)? **Check Yes or No.**
_____Yes
_____No

Go to Question 27 (skip 22 - 26)



HOOPED HARD TED

If you most frequently used a <u>Hooped Hard TED</u> in 2016, answer questions 22 - 26.

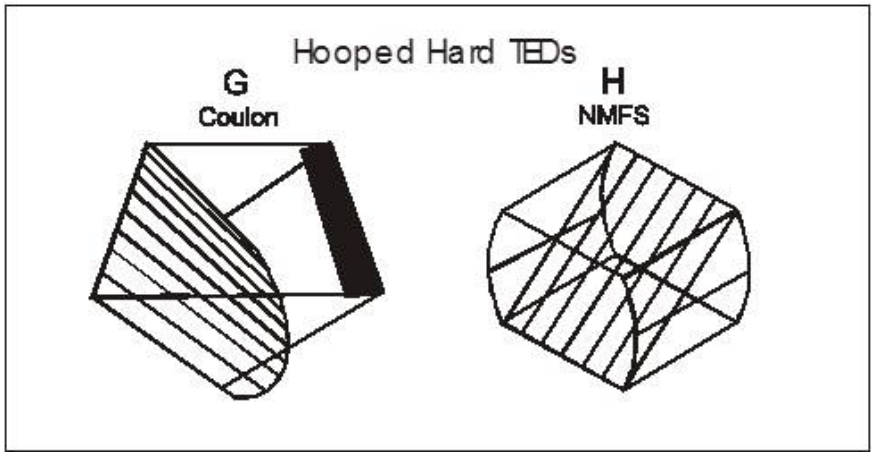
22. Check your **<u>most frequently</u>** used **Grid Style**. **Check only one style.**
_____G = Coulon
_____H = NMFS

23. What was the **<u>most frequently</u>** used **Frame Size** of your Hooped Hard TED? **Check the minimum size you used.** If other, please specify measurement in inches.
_____A = Inshore minimum
_____B = Offshore minimum
_____C = Other (**provide measurement**)_____ inches

24. What was the **<u>most frequently</u>** used **Opening Size** of your Hooped Hard TED? **Check only one size.** If other, please specify opening size in inches.
_____A = Double Cover (inshore & offshore)
_____B = 71" (inshore & offshore)
_____C = 44" (inshore only)
_____D = Other size opening (please specify) _____ inches

25. What was the **Opening Direction** of your Hooped Hard TED? **Check only one direction.**
_____A = Top Opening
_____B = Bottom Opening
_____C = Both Top and Bottom Opening

26. Did you use an **Accelerator Funnel** on your Hooped Hard TED? **Check Yes or No.**
_____Yes
_____No



27. In the list below, please check off the types of **ELECTRONIC** equipment (either in the wheelhouse or mounted on the gear) that were on-board your vessel in 2016. Note that this list contains types of equipment that may not be presently used in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery, but are used in other fisheries for which this type of information is being collected.

Please Check	Item
☐	Cell phone
☐	VHF radio
☐	CB Radio
☐	Single sideband radio
☐	Satellite phone
☐	Fax
☐	Plotter
☐	Computer (including software)
☐	Printer
☐	Hailer (Boat intercom)
☐	Loran
☐	Vessel Tracking System
☐	Radar
☐	Global Positioning System (GPS)
☐	Auto Pilot
☐	EPIRB
Paper ☐ Video ☐ Digital ☐	Echo Sounder/Depth Recorder (please check all which you have):
☐	Electronic Compass
☐	Satellite Navigation System (SatNav)
☐	Radio Direction Finder
☐	Weather Satellite Receiver
☐	Wind Meter
☐	Net Pingers
☐	Temperature Profiling System
☐	Water Temperature Sensor
☐	Single direction sonar
☐	Multiple direction sonar
☐	Water salinity Sensor
☐	NOAA/NMFS cELB (Cellular Electronic Logbook)
☐	US Coast Guard AIS (Automatic Identification System)
☐	Other (please specify) _____
☐	Other (please specify) _____

Authorized Signature: _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Fisheries Science Center
Galveston Laboratory
4700 Avenue U
Galveston, TX 77551

January 20, 2017

F/SEC4:RS:JN:rs

Dear Permit Holder:

Pursuant to the requirements of 50 CFR 622.5(a)(1)(iii)(C) and (D), owners of a vessel for which a federal commercial vessel permit for Gulf of Mexico shrimp has been issued, must annually report the permitted vessel's gear characterization and total annual landings and value of shrimp, by species.

Through this form, NMFS is collecting information from all federally permitted shrimp vessel owners/operators on fishing vessel and gear characteristics in the Gulf of Mexico Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) shrimp fishery. The data collected are currently being analyzed by NMFS economists, gear specialists, and fishery biologists to improve fishery management decision-making in this fishery. This information is vital in assessing the economic, social, and environmental effects of fishery management decisions and regulations on individual shrimp fishing enterprises, fishing communities, and the nation as a whole.

Enclosed are a postage paid business reply return envelope for your convenience and two form packets: the "Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Federal Permit Reporting Form" for total landings for fishing year 2016; and the "Gulf Shrimp Vessel & Gear Characterization Form" for gear information for fishing year 2016. It is required that both forms be returned to the Galveston Laboratory in order to be eligible to renew your Federal Permit for vessels fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Incomplete or illegible forms will be returned.

Please use the enclosed postage paid envelope and DO NOT affix any additional postage, signature or delivery confirmation, upon this envelope as the US Postal Service will deem the envelope undeliverable and your forms will not be received. If you wish to use any additional US Postal Service delivery confirmation options, please use your own envelope and postage.

If you have questions about filling out or mailing any of these forms, please contact the National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Galveston Laboratory, Attn: Rebecca Smith at (409) 766-3783 or rebecca.smith@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

James Nance, Ph.D.
Director

Enclosures

submitted via VMS; 2 hours for electronic monitoring data retrieval.

Burden Hours: 6,420.

Needs and Uses: This request is for revision and extension of a currently approved information collection.

VMS and electronic monitoring systems collect important information on fishing effort, catch, and the geographic location of fishing effort and catch for certain sectors of the Atlantic HMS fleet. Data collected through these programs are used in both domestic and international fisheries management, including for law enforcement, stock assessments, and quota management purposes. Atlantic HMS vessels required to use VMS are pelagic longline, purse seine, bottom longline (directed shark permit holders in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia), and gillnet (directed shark permit holders consistent with the requirements of the Atlantic large whale take reduction plan requirements at 50 CFR 229.39.(h)) vessels. In addition to VMS, pelagic longline vessels are also required to have electronic monitoring systems to monitor catch and account for bluefin tuna harvest and discards. Revision: NMFS will now pay EM electronic data retrieval and review costs.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) monitors fleet adherence to gear- and time-area restrictions with VMS position location data. Gear restricted areas and time-area closures are important tools for Atlantic HMS management that have been implemented to reduce bycatch of juvenile swordfish, sea turtles, and bluefin tuna, among other species. Electronic monitoring data from the pelagic longline fleet includes bluefin tuna discard and harvest information. These data are used by NMFS to accurately monitor bluefin tuna catch by the pelagic longline fleet, to ensure compliance with Individual Bluefin Quota (IBQ) limits and requirements, and to ensure that the Longline category bluefin tuna quota is not over-harvested. VMS reporting of bluefin tuna catch is used to monitor the status of IBQ allocations in real-time. Atlantic HMS fisheries are managed under the dual authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and the Atlantic Tunas Conservation Act (ATCA). Under the MSA, management measures must be consistent with ten National Standards, and fisheries must be managed to maintain optimum yield, rebuild overfished fisheries, and prevent overfishing. Under ATCA, the Secretary of Commerce shall promulgate regulations, as necessary and appropriate, to implement measures adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

Affected Public: Business and other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: Daily and on occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

This information collection request may be viewed at *reginfo.gov.* Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to *OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov* or fax to (202) 395–5806.

Dated: October 3, 2016.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016–24207 Filed 10–5–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Southeast Region Gulf of Mexico Mandatory Shrimp Vessel and Gear Characterization Survey

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), 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 by December 5, 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 Adam Bailey, National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 263 13th Ave S, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, (727) 824–8305, or *adam.bailey@noaa.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for extension of a current information collection.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) authorizes the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) to prepare and amend fishery management plans (FMPs) for any fishery in Federal waters under its jurisdiction. NMFS and the Council manage the shrimp fishery in the Federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) under the FMP for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf. The regulations for the Gulf Shrimp Vessel and Gear Characterization Form may be found at 50 CFR 622.51(a)(3).

Owners or operators of vessels applying for or renewing a commercial vessel permit for Gulf shrimp must complete an annual Gulf Shrimp Vessel and Gear Characterization Form. NMFS provides the form at the time of permit application and renewal. Compliance with this reporting requirement is required for permit issuance and renewal.

Through this form, NMFS collects census-level information on fishing vessel and gear characteristics in the Gulf shrimp fishery to conduct analyses that will improve management decision-making in this fishery. In addition, these analyses ensure that national goals, objectives, and requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Regulatory Flexibility Act, Endangered Species Act, and Executive Order 12866 are met; and quantify achievement of the performance measures in the NMFS' Operating Plans. This information is vital in assessing the economic, social, and environmental effects of fishery management decisions and regulations on individual shrimp fishing enterprises, fishing communities, and the nation as a whole.

There have been minor adjustments to responses and burden. As of August 26, 2016, there are approximately 1,445 vessels with valid or renewable permits in the Gulf shrimp fishery. The slightly fewer number of vessels has resulted in adjusted estimates of total burden hours and costs as noted below in Section III.

II. Method of Collection

Respondents are mailed hard copies of the form. Permit applicants must complete and mail the form back to

NMFS before permits expire and before NMFS will issue permits.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0542.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular submission—renewal of a current information collection.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,445.

Estimated Time per Response: 20 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 482.

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

IV. Request for Comments

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

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

Dated: October 3, 2016.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016–24194 Filed 10–5–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XE933

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Herring Committee on Thursday, October 20, 2016 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Thursday, October 20, 2016 at 10 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 363 Maine Mall Road, South Portland, ME 04106; phone: (207) 775–6161; fax: (207) 756–6622.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465–0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The Herring Committee will discuss next steps for Management Strategy Evaluation of Atlantic Herring Acceptable Biological Catch control rules being considered in Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan (FMP), including review of draft goals and agenda for a public workshop. Review additional Plan Development Team analysis and continue development of measures related to localized depletion to be considered in Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring FMP. The committee will also review progress and provide input on Framework Adjustment 5 to the Atlantic Herring FMP, an action considering modification of accountability measures (AMs) that trigger if the sub-ACL of Georges Bank haddock is exceeded by the midwater trawl herring fishery. Other business will be discussed as necessary. The Committee will also have a closed session to review 2018–20 Herring Advisory Panel applications and make recommendations for approval to the Council's Executive Committee.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465–0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: October 3, 2016.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016–24172 Filed 10–5–16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XE934

North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) Charter Implementation Committee will meet telephonically on October 24, 2016.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday, October 24, 2016, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501–2252. Teleconference line is (907) 271–2896.

Council address: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 605 W. 4th Ave., Suite 306, Anchorage, AK 99501–2252; telephone: (907) 271–2809.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steve MacLean, Council staff; telephone: (907) 271–2809.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

Monday, October 24, 2016

The agenda is to identify a range of potential management measures for the Area 2C and Area 3A charter halibut fisheries in 2017, using the management measures in place for 2016 as a baseline. For Area 2C, the baseline management measure is a daily limit of one fish less than or equal to 43 inches or greater than or equal to 80 inches in length. For Area 3A, the baseline management measure is an annual limit of four fish, a daily limit of two fish, one fish of any size, and a second fish which must be 28 inches or less in length and a Wednesday closure. Committee recommendations will be incorporated into an analysis for Council review in December 2016. The Council will recommend preferred management measures for consideration by the International Pacific Halibut