DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Title: Socioeconomics of Guided Whale-Watching Operations in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.
OMB Control Number: 0648–xxxx.
Form Number(s): None.
Type of Request: Regular (request for a new information collection).
Number of Respondents: 30.
Average Hours per Response: One hour and 45 minutes.
Burden Hours: 53.

Needs and Uses: This request is for a new information collection to benefit natural resource managers in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary (SBNMS). The National Ocean Service (NOS) proposes to collect information from wildlife watching operations to ascertain the market value of marine wildlife via the ocean recreational industry in the Stellwagen Bank/Gulf of Maine region.

Up-to-date socioeconomic information is needed to support the conservation and management goals of SBMNS to strengthen and improve conservation of marine wildlife, including whales, pinnipeds, seals, and seabirds within the jurisdiction of the sanctuary and to satisfy legal mandates.

SBMNS is currently in the process of updating the 2010 Management Plan, and has identified a lack of baseline socioeconomic information on ocean recreation businesses. The type of data targeted for this collection has not been updated since 2008 and there are no source so information that detail operators’ perceptions and attitudes towards the industry and sanctuary. Thus, current information on the importance of marine wildlife to the local tourism industry and operators is required. The primary focus for the survey will be to gather data on the non-consumptive, person-days of marine wildlife viewing and operators’ perceptions and attitudes. Specifically, researchers will collect data to help determine the contribution of marine wildlife watching operations to the economy in the Stellwagen Bank region. The number of person-days of wildlife viewing is necessary to estimate the economic value that the industry makes to the region.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.
Frequency: Once.
Respondent’s Obligation: Voluntary.

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.

Sarah Brabson,
NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648–XF967

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Shark Management Measures; 2018 Research Fishery

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: On November 3, 2017, NMFS published a notice inviting qualified commercial shark permit holders to submit applications to participate in the 2018 shark research fishery. The shark research fishery allows for the collection of fishery-dependent data for future stock assessments and cooperative research with commercial fishermen to meet the shark research objectives of the Agency. Every year, the permit terms and permitted activities (e.g., number of hooks and retention limits) specifically authorized for selected participants in the shark research fishery are designated depending on the scientific and research needs of the Agency, as well as the number of NMFS-approved observers available. In order to inform selected participants of this year’s specific permit requirements and ensure all terms and conditions of the permit are met, NMFS is holding a mandatory permit holder meeting (via conference call) for selected participants. The date and time of that meeting is announced in this notice.

DATES: A conference call will be held on February 16, 2018.

ADDRESSES: A conference call will be conducted. See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for information on how to access the conference call.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Karyl Brewster-Geisz or Guy DuBeck at (301) 427–8503 or Delisse Ortiz at (240) 681–9037.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Atlantic shark fisheries are managed under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). The 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) is implemented by regulations at 50 CFR part 635.

The final rule for Amendment 2 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (73 FR 35778, June 24, 2008, corrected at 73 FR 40658, July 15, 2008) established, among other things, a shark research fishery to maintain time-series data for stock assessments and to meet NMFS’ research objectives. The shark research fishery gathers important scientific data and allows selected commercial fishermen the opportunity to earn more revenue from selling the sharks caught, including sandbar sharks. Only the commercial shark fishermen selected to participate in the shark research fishery are authorized to land/harvest sandbar sharks subject to the sandbar quota available each year. The 2018 sandbar shark quota is 90.7 mt dw per year. The selected shark research fishery participants also have access to the research large coastal shark, small coastal shark, and pelagic shark quotas subject to retention limits and quotas per §§ 635.24 and 635.27, respectively.

On November 3, 2017 (82 FR 51218), NMFS published a notice inviting qualified commercial shark directed and
incidental permit holders to submit an application to participate in the 2018 shark research fishery. NMFS received six applications, of which all six applicants were determined to meet all the qualifications. NMFS selected all six qualified participants after considering how to meet research objectives in particular regions. NMFS expects to invite qualified commercial shark permit holders to submit an application for the 2019 shark research fishery later in 2018.

As with past years, the 2018 permit terms and permitted activities (e.g., number of hooks and retention limits) specifically authorized for selected participants in the shark research fishery were designated depending on the scientific and research needs of the Agency, as well as the number of NMFS-approved observers available. In order to inform selected participants of this year’s specific permit requirements and ensure all terms and conditions of the permit are met, per the requirements of §635.32 (f)(4), NMFS is holding a mandatory permit holder meeting via conference call.

Conference Call Date, Time, and Dial-in Number

The conference call will be held on February 16, 2018, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. (EST). Participants and interested parties should call 1–888–942–9261 and use the passcode 8567825. Selected participants who do not attend will not be allowed to participate in the shark research fishery. While the conference call is mandatory for selected participants, other interested parties may call in and listen to the discussion.

Selected participants are encouraged to invite their captain, crew, or anyone else who may assist them in meeting the terms and conditions of the shark research fishery permit.

Emily H. Menashes,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).


Title: West Coast Groundfish Trawl Economic Data Collection.

OMB Control Number: 0648–0618.
Form Number(s): None.
Type of Request: Regular (extension of a currently approved information collection).

Number of Respondents: 206.
Average Hours per Response: Catcher vessels, catcher-processors and motherships, 8 hours each; shore-based processor, 20 hours.
Burden Hours: 2,224.

Needs and Uses: This information collection is needed in order to meet the monitoring requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA). In particular, the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) needs economic data on all harvesters, first receivers, shore-based processors, catcher processors, and motherships participating in the West Coast groundfish trawl fishery.

The currently approved collection covers collection of data for the 2014–2016 operating years. The renewed approval will cover years 2017–2019. Data will be collected from all catcher vessels registered to a limited entry trawl endorsed permit, catcher processors registered to catcher processor permits, and motherships registered to mothership permits, first receivers, and shore-based processors that received round or head-and-gutted IFQ groundfish or whiting from a first receiver to provide the necessary information for analyzing the effects of the West Coast Groundfish Trawl Catch Share Program.

As stated in 50 CFR 660.114, the EDC forms due on September 1, 2018 will provide data for the 2017 operating year.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: Annually.
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.

Sarah Brabson,
NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Science Advisory Board

AGENCY: Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

ACTION: Notice of renewal of charter.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), and after consultation with the General Services Administration, the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration have determined that renewal of the NOAA Science Advisory Board is in the public interest. The committee has been a successful undertaking and has provided advice to the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere on strategies for research, education, and application of science to operations and information services. The committee will continue to provide such advice and recommendations in the future.

The structure and responsibilities of the Committee are unchanged from when it was originally established in September 1997. The Committee will continue to operate in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Cynthia Decker, Executive Director, SSMC3, Room 11230, 1315 East-West Hwy., Silver Spring, MD 20910; Phone Number: 301–734–1156. Email: Cynthia.Decker@noaa.gov; or visit the NOAA SAB website at http://www.sab.noaa.gov.

Dated: June 29, 2017.
David Holst,
Chief Financial/Administrative Officer, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Editorial note: This document was received for publication by the Office of the Federal Register on January 30, 2018.

Billings Code 3510-KD-P