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978-281-9185.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The applicant submitted a complete application for an EFP to conduct commercial fishing activities that the

regulations would otherwise restrict. This EFP would exempt the participating vessels from the following Federal regulations:

TABLE 1—REQUESTED EXEMPTIONS

CFR Citation	Regulation	Need for exemption
50 CFR 697.21(c)	Gear specification requirements	To allow for closed escape vents and smaller trap mesh and entrance heads.
§ 697.19(a), (b), (c), and (d)	Trap limit requirements for Areas 1–4.	To allow for 3 additional traps per fishing vessel, for a total of up to 60 additional traps.
§ 697.19(j)	Trap tag requirements	To allow for the use of untagged traps (though each modified trap will have the participating fisherman’s identification attached).
§ 697.20(a), (d), (g), (h)(1), and (h)(2).	Possession restrictions	To allow for onboard biological sampling of undersized, v-notched, and egg-bearing lobsters and undersized and egg-bearing Jonah crabs.

TABLE 2—PROJECT SUMMARY

Project title	A Collaborative Fishing Vessel Approach to Addressing Data Needs for the American Lobster and Jonah Crab Fisheries.
Project start	07/01/2026.
Project end	05/31/2027.
Project objectives	To continue to provide distribution, abundance, and biological data on juvenile lobsters and Jonah crabs from times and areas with low coverage from traditional surveys.
Project location	Lobster Management Areas (LMA) 1, 2, 3, and 4.
Number of vessels	Up to 20.
Number of trips	Up to 52 per inshore vessel; up to 36 per offshore vessel (up to 832 total).
Trip duration (days)	Up to 4.
Total number of days	Up to 3,328.
Gear type(s)	Trap.
Number of tows or sets	Up to 2,496.
Duration of tows or sets	7 days inshore; 10 days offshore.

Project Narrative

This project would continue an ongoing effort to collect data on juvenile lobster and Jonah crab abundance and distribution in areas and times of the year with low or no coverage by traditional surveys. To date, this project has collected data from over 287,000 lobsters and 156,000 Jonah crabs, as well as coupled bottom water temperatures from the Gulf of Maine to the Mid-Atlantic.

The project would include up to 7 inshore vessels (LMA 2), and up to 13 offshore vessels (LMAs 1, 3, and 4). Each vessel would fish 3 modified ventless traps designed to capture juvenile lobsters, totaling up to 60 modified traps. Vessels may fish all three ventless traps on one trawl, or may spread them across two or three trawls. The modified traps would adhere to the standard coastwide survey gear for lobster and Jonah crab set by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and would be fished within standard Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan-compliant trawls.

This study would take place during regular fishing activity of the participating vessels, but catch from modified traps would remain separate

from that of standard gear. Operators would collect data on size, sex, presence of eggs, and shell hardness for lobsters and Jonah crabs, and v-notch and shell disease for lobsters. Operators would return all specimens from modified gear to the ocean once sampling was complete.

The study is designed to inform management by addressing questions about changing reproduction and recruitment dynamics of lobster and to develop a foundation of knowledge for the data-deficient Jonah crab fishery. CFRF would share data with the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program, the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, ASMFC, and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management every 6 months.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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

Dated: April 30, 2026.

Kelly Denit,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Green Sturgeon 4(d) Rule Take Exceptions and Exemptions

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

ACTION: Notice of information collection, request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the

impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. The purpose of this notice is to allow for 60 days of public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

DATES: To ensure consideration, comments regarding this proposed information collection must be received on or before July 6, 2026.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to Adrienne Thomas, NOAA PRA Officer, at NOAA.PRA@noaa.gov. Please reference OMB Control Number 0648–0613 in the subject line of your comments. All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted on <https://www.regulations.gov> without change. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or specific questions related to collection activities should be directed to Susan Wang, Fishery Biologist, NMFS West Coast Region, 501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802, (562) 980–4199, Susan.Wang@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This is a request for renewal of an approved information collection. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), West Coast Region, is the sponsor of this information collection which is authorized under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to evaluate activities involving threatened green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*).

On April 7, 2006, NMFS listed the Southern Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of North American green sturgeon as threatened under the ESA (71 FR 17757). On June 2, 2010, NMFS established protective regulations for the Southern DPS under section 4(d) of the ESA (ESA 4(d) rule) (75 FR 30714; 50 CFR 223.210). To comply with the ESA and the protective regulations, entities must obtain take authorization prior to engaging in activities involving take of Southern DPS fish unless the activity is covered by an exception or exemption. The ESA defines “take” as to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Certain activities described in the “exceptions” provision of 50 CFR 223.210(b) are not subject to the take prohibitions if they adhere to specific criteria and reporting requirements. Under the “exemption” provision of 50

CFR 223.210(c), the take prohibitions do not apply to scientific research, scientific monitoring, and fisheries activities conducted under an approved 4(d) program or plan. Similarly, take prohibitions do not apply to tribal resource management activities conducted under a Tribal Plan for which the requisite determinations described in 50 CFR 223.210(c)(3) have been made.

To ensure that activities qualify under exceptions to or exemptions from the take prohibitions, local, state, and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, academic researchers, and private organizations are asked to submit detailed information regarding their activity on a schedule to be determined by NMFS staff. This information is used by NMFS to (1) track the number of Southern DPS fish taken as a result of each action; (2) understand and evaluate the cumulative effects of each action on the Southern DPS; and (3) determine whether additional protections are needed for the species, or whether additional exceptions may be warranted. NMFS designed the criteria to ensure that actions meeting the criteria would adequately limit effects on threatened Southern DPS fish, such that additional protections in the form of a federal take prohibition would not be necessary and advisable.

II. Method of Collection

Respondents have a choice of either electronic or paper forms. Methods of submittal include email of electronic forms, and mail and facsimile transmission of paper forms.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648–0613.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular submission (extension of a currently approved collection).

Affected Public: Not-for-profit institutions; State, local, or Tribal government; Federal government; business or other for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 58.

Estimated Time per Response: Written notification describing research, monitoring, or habitat restoration activities, 40 hours; Development of Fisheries Management and Evaluation plans or state 4(d) research programs, 40 hours; Reports, 5 hours; Development of a Tribal Fishery Management Plan, 20 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,760 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$200.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain or Retain Benefits.

Legal Authority: Endangered Species Act.

IV. Request for Comments

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department/Bureau to: (a) Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) Evaluate ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this information collection request. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Sheleen Dumas,

Departmental PRA Compliance Officer, Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, Commerce Department.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XF714]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is