

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).

*Agency:* National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

*Title:* Report of Whaling Operations.

*Agency Form Number:* None.

*OMB Approval Number:* 0648-0311.

*Type of Request:* Extension of an existing collection.

*Burden:* 49 hours.

*Number of Respondents:* 52.

*Avg. Hours Per Response:* Between 5 and 30 minutes depending on the requirement.

*Needs and Uses:* Native Americans are allowed to conduct certain aboriginal subsistence whaling in accordance with the provisions of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). In order to respond to obligations under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, captains participating in these operations must submit certain information to the relevant Native American whaling organization about strikes on and catch of whales. Anyone retrieving a dead whale is also required to report. The information is used by NMFS to monitor the hunt and to ensure that quotas are not exceeded. The information is also provided to the International Whaling Commission, which uses it to monitor compliance with its requirements.

*Affected Public:* Individuals, state, local or tribal government.

*Frequency:* On occasion.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Mandatory.

*OMB Desk Officer:* David Rostker, (202) 395-3897.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Linda Engelmeier, DOC Forms Clearance Officer (202) 482-3272, Department of Commerce, Room 5033, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at LEngelme@doc.gov).

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication to David Rostker, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10202, New Executive Office Building, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503.

Dated: September 20, 1999.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-25238 Filed 9-28-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 092499B]

**New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a number of public meetings of its oversight committees and advisory panels in October, 1999 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from these groups will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

**DATES:** The meetings will be held between October 4 and October 28, 1999. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

**ADDRESSES:** The meetings will be held in Danvers, Saugus and Mansfield, MA. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council (781) 231-0422.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Meeting Dates and Agendas**

*Monday, October 4, 1999, 10 a.m.—* Social Sciences Advisory Committee Meeting

Location: New England Fishery Management Council Office, 5 Broadway (Route 1), Saugus, MA 01776; telephone: (781)-231-0422.

Review of Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report for the Atlantic Sea Scallop fishery; development of recommendations concerning social and economic impact analyses in fishery management plans; development of recommendations for peer review of social and economic impact analyses.

*Tuesday, October 12, 1999, 9:30 a.m.—* Experimental Fisheries and Research Steering Committee Meeting

Location: New England Fishery Management Council Office, 5 Broadway (Route 1), Saugus, MA 01776; telephone: (781)-231-0422.

Discussion of committee organization, purpose, tasks, process and information needs, followed by a report on the status of sea scallop total allowable catch

research set-aside associated with the Closed Area II Georges Bank Exemption Program; committee discussion and development of recommendations on proposals submitted for funding through the scallop research set-aside and review of collaborative research opportunities available through the Disaster Assistance Program and other funding sources; briefing on the Massachusetts Recovery Commission's activities to develop research initiatives.

*Thursday, October 21, 1999, 9:30 a.m.—*Whiting Advisory Panel Meeting  
Location: Holiday Inn, 31 Hampshire Street, Mansfield, MA 02048; telephone: (508) 339-2200.

Review of alternatives proposed for Framework Adjustment 32 (whiting management measures) to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and development of comments and recommendations for consideration by the Whiting Committee. Measures in Framework 32 include options for a mesh size/possession limit call-in enrollment system and options for the use of an outside net strengthener with 2.5-inch mesh. The Advisory Panel also will discuss possible alternatives for a limited access program to manage small mesh species. The program would be included in an amendment to the Multispecies FMP which would: (a) remove whiting, red hake, offshore hake, and ocean pout from the Multispecies FMP and (b) establish a separate Small Mesh Species FMP.

*Thursday, October 28, 1999, 9:30 a.m.—*Whiting Committee Meeting  
Location: Sheraton Ferncroft Hotel, 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers MA 01923; telephone: (978) 777-2500.

The committee will review analyses forwarded by the Whiting Plan Development Team and recommendations from the Whiting Advisory Panel on the alternatives proposed for Framework Adjustment 32 (whiting management measures) to the Northeast Multispecies FMP. Measures in Framework 32 include options for a mesh size/possession limit call-in enrollment system and options for the use of an outside net strengthener with 2.5-inch mesh. The committee will develop preferred alternatives for recommendation to the Council. The committee also will continue development of limited access program alternatives to be included in the "scoping" process for an upcoming Multispecies FMP amendment. That action would remove whiting, red hake, offshore hake and ocean action would remove whiting, red hake, offshore hake and ocean pout from the Multispecies FMP and establish place them in a separate Small Mesh Species FMP.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this notice may come before this Council for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during the meetings. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

### Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see ADDRESSES) at least 5 days prior to the meeting dates.

Dated: September 23, 1999.

**Richard W. Surdi,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. 99-25241 Filed 9-28-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 990921259-9259-01]

### Subject: National Weather Service (NWS) Modernization and Associated Restructuring

**AGENCY:** NWS, NOAA, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice and opportunity for public comment.

**SUMMARY:** The NWS publishes notice of proposed certifications for the consolidation, automation, and closure of the:

(1) Erie, Pennsylvania, Weather Service Office (WSO) which will be automated at Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Weather Observation Service Level C and have its services consolidated into the Cleveland, Ohio, and the Pittsburgh and Central Pennsylvania Forecast Offices; and (2) Fairbanks, Alaska, WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level A and have its services consolidated into the Fairbanks forecast office.

**DATES:** comments are requested to be mailed by November 29, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Send all comments and requests for copies of proposed

certification packages to Tom Beaver, Room 11426, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3283.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Tom Beaver at 301-713-0300 extension 136.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to section 706 of Pub. L. 102-567, the Secretary of Commerce must certify that consolidation, automation, and closure of an NWS field office will not result in a degradation of service to the affected area of responsibility and must propose such certifications in the FR for 60-days public comment. Having studied and evaluated the winter weather forecast capabilities and requirements to ensure no degradation of service to the Erie, Pennsylvania, service area, the NWS determined removal of the WSR-74C radar would cause a degradation of service for some lake-effect snow events. Accordingly, NWS will continue operating the WSR-74C radar at Erie during the winter season until a new FAA radar is installed at the Erie airport in 2001 and suitability of weather data from the FAA radar is validated by the NWS in consultation with users. The described actions to be undertaken by the NWS will prevent any degradation from occurring and, thus, notice is given of the proposed consolidation, automation, and closure of the Erie, Pennsylvania, WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level C and have its services consolidated into the Cleveland, Ohio, and the Pittsburgh and Central Pennsylvania Forecast Offices.

The Fairbanks forecast office is now collocated with the University of Alaska at Fairbanks. Having transitioned all services to the Fairbanks forecast office and having verified no degradation of service, notice is given of the proposed consolidation, automation, and closure of the Fairbanks, Alaska, WSO which will be automated at FAA Weather Observation Service Level A and have the remainder of its services consolidated into the Fairbanks forecast office.

Documentation supporting each of these proposed certifications includes the following:

(1) A draft memorandum by the meteorologist in charge recommending the certifications, the final of which will be concurred with by the Regional Director and the Assistant Administrator of the NWS, if appropriate, after consideration of public comments and completion of consultation with the Modernization Transition Committee (the Committee);

(2) A description of local weather characteristics and weather-related concerns which affect the weather

services provided within the service area;

(3) A comparison of services provided within the service area to services to be provided after such action;

(4) A description of recent or expected modernization of NWS operations which will enhance services in the service area;

(5) An identification of any area within the affected service area which would not receive coverage (at an elevation of 10,000 feet) by the Doppler weather surveillance radar network (WSR-88D);

(6) Evidence, based upon operational demonstration of modernized NWS operations, which was considered in reaching the preliminary conclusion that no degradation in service would result from such action, including the WSR-88D Radar Commissioning Report, User Confirmation of Services Report, and the Decommissioning Readiness Report, where appropriate;

(7) Evidence, based upon operational demonstration of modernized NWS operations, which was considered in reaching the preliminary conclusion that no degradation in service will result from such action, including the Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) commissioning report;

(8) Three letters between NWS and FAA confirming weather services will continue in full compliance with applicable flight aviation rules after ASOS commissioning;

(9) Surface Aviation Observation Transition Checklist documenting transfer of augmentation and back-up responsibility from NWS to FAA;

(10) Demonstration of the successful resolution of any ASOS user confirmation of services complaints;

(11) Documentation of an in-place supplementary data program at the responsible forecast office;

(12) Where appropriate, warning and forecast verification statistics for pre-modernized and modernized services utilized in determining services have not been degraded;

(13) An Air Safety Appraisal for offices on an airport; and

(14) A letter appointing a liaison officer for the action.

Section 706 of Pub. L. 102-567 establishes the Modernization Transition Committee to advise the Secretary of Commerce on proposed modernization actions. The Committee has the option to submit a report to the Secretary in accordance with sections 706(b)(6) and 707(c) of Pub. L. 102-567. For the proposed certifications covered by this notice, there is no report of the Committee. In December 1995, the Committee decided to forego the