

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 121803D]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements; Regulatory Amendment to Modify Seafood Dealer Reporting Requirements

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

ACTION: Notification of clearance of collection-of-information requirements.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the clearance by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) of collection-of-information requirements for a regulatory amendment to modify the reporting and recordkeeping regulations for federally permitted seafood dealers participating in the summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, Atlantic sea scallop, Northeast (NE) multispecies, monkfish, Atlantic mackerel, squid, butterfish, Atlantic surfclam, ocean quahog, Atlantic herring, Atlantic deep-sea red crab, tilefish, Atlantic bluefish, skates, and/or spiny dogfish fisheries in the NE Region, whereby permitted dealers must report all purchases of fish via electronic means. The purpose of this notification is to announce to the public that OMB has cleared the collection-of-information requirements for that action.

ADDRESSES: Any comments regarding burden-hour estimates for collection-of-information requirements contained in this final rule should be sent to Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator, Northeast Regional Office, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930, and by e-mail to David_Rostker@omb.eop.gov, or by fax to (202) 395-7285.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Pentony, Senior Fishery Policy Analyst, (978)281-9283, fax (978)281-9135, email Michael.Pentony@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On March 23, 2004 (69 FR 13482), NMFS published a final rule to implement measures contained in a regulatory amendment to modify the reporting and recordkeeping regulations for federally permitted seafood dealers. Section 648.7(a), (d), (e), and (f) of that final rule contains collection-of-information requirements that apply to any seafood dealer that is permitted under § 648.6. The March 23, 2004, final rule, which becomes effective on May 1, 2004,

requires daily electronic reporting of all fish purchased (including fish received) by federally permitted dealers who are determined to be large dealers, while delaying the daily reporting requirement for all small dealers who initially will be required to report electronically on a weekly basis. Also, it eliminates dealer reporting via the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system; implements a trip identifier requirement for dealers; requires dealers to report the disposition of purchased fish; and modifies the dealer reporting requirements for the surfclam and ocean quahog fisheries to make them consistent with the requirements of other fisheries. Details concerning the justification for and development of the regulatory amendment and the implementing regulations were provided in the preambles to the proposed rule (69 FR 2870, January 21, 2004) and the final rule (69 FR 13482, March 23, 2004) and are not repeated here.

In the March 23, 2004, final rule, NMFS indicated that it would inform the affected public through a follow-up notification announcing OMB's clearance of the collection-of-information requirements related to § 648.7(a), (d), (e), and (f) of that rule. On April 14, 2004, OMB cleared the collection-of-information requirements under OMB control numbers 0648-0018 and 0648-0229. The intent of the notification is to inform the public of the OMB clearance of these requirements that become effective on May 1, 2004.

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

Dated: April 14, 2004.

Alan D. Risenhoover,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 122203A]

RIN 0648-AN17

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast (NE) Multispecies Fishery; Amendment 13

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

ACTION: Notice of partial approval of a fishery management plan amendment.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that Amendment 13 to the NE Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (Amendment 13) has been partially approved by NMFS, acting on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce. Amendment 13 was developed by the New England Fishery Management Council (Council) to end overfishing and rebuild NE multispecies (groundfish) stocks managed under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and to make other changes in the management of the groundfish fishery. The intent of this announcement is to inform the public of the partial approval of Amendment 13 and of the availability of the Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendment 13 in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

DATES: Amendment 13 was partially approved on March 18, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Warren, Fishery Policy Analyst, 978-281-9347, fax: 978-281-9135; email: thomas.warren@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS intends to comply with a Court-ordered implementation of Amendment 13 through publication of a final rule in the **Federal Register** by May 1, 2004.

A proposed rule to implement Amendment 13 published in the **Federal Register** on January 29, 2004 (69 FR 4362), with public comment ending on February 27, 2004. A total of 4,941 comments were received on Amendment 13. A summary of the comments received and NMFS's responses will be published in the final rule.

On March 18, 2004, NMFS approved all measures in Amendment 13 with the exception of the following proposed measures, which have been disapproved: 1) The Closed Area (CA) II Haddock Special Access Program (SAP) and the CA I Hook Gear Haddock SAP; 2) the prohibition on surfclam and ocean quahog dredge gear in NE multispecies closed areas (the result of this disapproval is that such gear will be allowed in the groundfish closure portion of the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area, the Western Gulf of Maine (WGOM) Closure Area, and the Cashes Ledge Closure Area); 3) the exemption for shrimp trawl gear in the WGOM Closure Area; 4) the abbreviated process to implement SAPs; 5) the Georges Bank Cod Trip Limit Program; and 6) the removal of the Flexible Area Action System. A full explanation of the reasons for disapproval will be included