

Make a 4(d) determination on an RMP that utilizes a mixture of management-unit-specific escapement thresholds and exploitation rate ceilings.

**Fixed Management Unit Escapement Goal Alternative:** Make a 4(d) determination on an RMP that sets fixed escapement goals for Puget Sound Chinook management units.

**No-action Alternative (No-fishing Alternative):** Under this alternative, NMFS would not make a determination on the RMP; therefore, there would be no authorized take of Puget Sound Chinook salmon in Puget Sound salmon fisheries through the 4(d) rule. Although this alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the proposed action, a No-action Alternative is required in our NEPA analysis.

#### Request for Comments

NMFS requests data, comments, pertinent information, or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, tribes, the business community, or any other interested party regarding the proposed action discussed in this notice. We will consider all comments we receive that are relevant to the proposed action and relevant to complying with the requirements of NEPA. We particularly seek specific comments concerning:

(1) The direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that implementation of any reasonable alternative could have on endangered and threatened species, and other non-ESA-listed species and their habitats;

(2) Other reasonable alternatives (in addition to the initial alternatives presented in this notice), and their associated effects. NMFS is particularly interested in alternatives that include ecosystem considerations, including the conservation and harvest of Puget Sound Chinook salmon, recovery of the ESA-listed Southern Resident killer whales, and needs of other wildlife;

(3) Measures that would minimize and mitigate potentially adverse effects of the proposed action; and

(4) Other plans or projects that might be relevant to this project.

The EIS will analyze the effects that the various alternatives would have on salmon and fish species in Puget Sound, as well as the other aspects of the human environment. These aspects may include other fish, habitat, marine nutrient transport, seabirds, marine mammals, marine invertebrates, ESA-listed species, vegetation, socioeconomic, environmental justice, cultural resources, and the cumulative impacts of the alternatives.

**Authority:** 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*; 40 CFR 1500–1508; and Companion Manual for NOAA Administrative Order 216–6A, 82 FR 4306.

Dated: April 26, 2018.

**Angela Somma,**

*Chief, Endangered Species Division, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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## 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).

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

**Title:** West Coast Region Gear Identification Requirements.

**OMB Control Number:** 0648–0352.

**Form Number(s):** None.

**Type of Request:** Regular (extension of a currently approved information collection).

**Number of Respondents:** 811.

**Average Hours Per Response:** 15 minutes.

**Burden Hours:** 648.

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

The success of fisheries management programs depends significantly on regulatory compliance. The requirements that fishing gear be marked are essential to facilitate enforcement. The ability to link fishing gear to the vessel owner or operator is crucial to enforcement of regulations issued under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The marking of fishing gear is also valuable in actions concerning damage, loss, and civil proceedings. The regulations specify that fishing gear must be marked with the vessel's official number, Federal permit or tag number, or some other specified form of identification. The regulations further specify how the gear is to be marked (e.g., location and color). Law enforcement personnel rely on gear marking information to assure compliance with fisheries management regulations. Gear that is not properly identified is confiscated. Gear violations are more readily prosecuted when the

gear is marked, and this allows for more cost-effective enforcement. Gear marking helps ensure that a vessel harvests fish only from its own traps/pots/other gear are not illegally placed. Cooperating fishermen also use the gear marking numbers to report suspicious or non-compliant activities that they observe, and to report placement or occurrence of gear in unauthorized areas. The identifying number on fishing gear is used by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the United States Coast Guard (USCG), and other marine agencies in issuing regulations, prosecutions, and other enforcement actions necessary to support sustainable fisheries behaviors as intended in regulations. Regulation-compliant fishermen ultimately benefit from these requirements, as unauthorized and illegal fishing is deterred and more burdensome regulations are avoided.

**Affected Public:** Business or other for-profit organizations.

**Frequency:** Every five years.

**Respondent's Obligation:** Mandatory.

This information collection request may be viewed at [reginfo.gov](http://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](mailto:OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov) or fax to (202) 395–5806.

Dated: April 30, 2018.

**Sarah Brabson,**

*NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648–XG209**

#### 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 Skate Advisory Panel to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will