

2020, and make recommendations for preferred alternatives. The panel will also hold a discussion of possible priorities for 2019 and develop recommendations. Other business will be discussed as necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these 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. This meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: October 22, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2018-23361 Filed 10-24-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG556

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 Groundfish Committee to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from this group will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: This meeting will be held on Thursday, November 8, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: The meeting will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923; phone: (978) 777-2500.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The committee will discuss Framework Adjustment 58: Specifications/Management Measures—specifically discuss draft alternatives and Plan Development Team (PDT) analysis including: (1) Rebuilding plan options for several groundfish stocks, (2) 2019 total allowable catches for U.S./Canada stocks of Eastern Georges Bank (GB) cod, Eastern GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder, (3) minimum size exemptions for vessels fishing in Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization waters, and (4) temporary change to scallop fishery accountability measure policy for GB yellowtail flounder for fishing years 2019 and 2020, and make recommendations for preferred alternatives. The committee will also hold a discussion of possible priorities for 2019 and develop recommendations. The committee will review Groundfish PDT, Groundfish Advisory Panel, and Recreational Advisory Panel recommendations and make recommendations to the Council. Other business will be discussed as necessary.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these 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. This meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 U.S.C. 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.

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

Dated: October 22, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

[FR Doc. 2018-23360 Filed 10-24-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Broadband Availability Data

AGENCY: National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the proposed information collection, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before December 24, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, (202) 482-0336, Department of Commerce, Room 6612, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via email at docpra@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instruments and instructions should be sent to Andrew Spurgeon, Chief of Operations, Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Room 4887, Washington, DC 20230 (or via email at aspurgeon@ntia.doc.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 directed NTIA to update the national broadband availability map in coordination with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

and the states.¹ Specifically, Congress directed NTIA to acquire and display available third-party data sets to the extent it is able to negotiate its inclusion to augment data from the FCC, other federal government agencies, state government, and the private sector.² The objective of these updates is to identify regions of the country with insufficient broadband capacity, particularly in rural areas.

Presently, the only source of nationwide broadband availability data is that collected from broadband service provider responses to the FCC Form 477 Fixed Broadband Deployment data process. Form 477 data are submitted by voice and broadband telecommunications service providers semi-annually and include information on the services each provider offers, at the Census block level.³ While the Census block system provides a very high level of geographic granularity overall—the United States is divided into over 11 million blocks, 95 percent of which do not exceed 1 square mile in land area—it is possible that broadband availability may vary within a single block, (which is most common in rural areas). Additionally, broadband service providers who wish to share more granular data on broadband availability—including regulated and non-regulated entities—have no mechanism to do so. Further, a broadband service provider offering service to any homes or businesses in a Census block is instructed to report that block as served in its Form 477 filing, even though it may not offer broadband services in most of the block. This can lead to overstatements in the level of broadband availability, especially in rural areas where Census blocks are large or when services are only available near the boundaries of a Census block.

As a result of these constraints, NTIA intends to collect broadband availability data at a more granular level than that available via the FCC Form 477 process. This data will be used to better assess broadband availability across the country and particularly in rural areas. This information collection covers the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Island Areas of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana

Islands, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands.

NTIA intends to collect this information from two types of respondents that collect broadband data with more geographic granularity than the Census block level: (1) Owners and operators of broadband networks; and (2) industry associations, data aggregators, and researchers that study or analyze broadband availability. Respondents may include private companies, non-profits, cooperatives, educational institutions, tribal governments, and local, regional, or state governments. This information collection includes the use of both wireline and wireless technologies to deliver broadband services.

The data to be collected includes geographic information on service availability—such as address, address range, road centerline, land-parcel identification, or latitude/longitude—and corresponding broadband availability data (such as technology service type, upload and download speed, etc.). Data in a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) format that describe (a) wireless coverage areas based on a propagation model and (b) network infrastructure (such as fiber optic routes) is also responsive.

NTIA will not require that respondents modify appropriate data sets, with the exception that Personally Identifiable Information (PII) should be removed prior to transmission to NTIA. Data collection operations will result in respondent burden during: (1) Efforts to assemble their data for transmission to NTIA; (2) removal of PII; and (3) NTIA communications with respondent contacts to ensure NTIA correctly understands the data.

II. Method of Collection

The information collection will be administered through an online file transfer tool.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: None.
Form Number(s): None.
Type of Review: Regular submission.
Affected Public: Owners and operators of broadband networks, industry associations, data aggregators, and researchers.

Frequency: Annual.
Number of Respondents: 600.
Average Time per Response: 8 hours.
Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 4,800 hours.
Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$200,832.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information

is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they will also become a matter of public record.

Sheleen Dumas,

Departmental Lead PRA Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2018-23296 Filed 10-24-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No.: PTO-P-2018-0051]

Access to Relevant Prior Art Initiative

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is implementing the first phase of the Access to Relevant Prior Art Initiative (“RPA Initiative”) to import citations (e.g., bibliographic data on forms PTO/SB/08 and PTO-892) from the immediate parent application into the continuing application. The citations corresponding to the documents considered by the examiner in the continuing application will be printed on the face of the patent issuing from the continuing application without the applicant having to resubmit the information on an Information Disclosure Statement. Additionally, an applicant's duty to disclose information in the continuing application will continue to be satisfied for information considered in the parent application and will be satisfied for any additional information made of record by the Office in the continuing application. The RPA Initiative is being developed in response to public input following an August 29, 2016, notice and September 28, 2016, roundtable event on leveraging electronic resources to retrieve

¹ Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, Public Law 115-141, Division B, Title I, 132 Stat. 348.

² Joint Explanatory Statement, 164 Cong. Rec. No. 50—Book II, at H2084-85 (Mar. 22, 2018).

³ “All facilities-based broadband providers are required to file data with the FCC twice a year (Form 477) on where they offer internet access service at speeds exceeding 200 kbps in at least one direction.” See <https://www.fcc.gov/general/broadband-deployment-data-fcc-form-477>.