



## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

#### **Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Billfish Certificate of Eligibility**

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The 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 proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at [pracomments@doc.gov](mailto:pracomments@doc.gov)).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Margo Schulze-Haugen, (301) 427-8503 or [margo.schulze-haugen@noaa.gov](mailto:margo.schulze-haugen@noaa.gov).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **I. Abstract**

This request is for an extension of a currently approved information collection.

Under the provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et. seq.), NOAA is responsible for management of the Nation's marine fisheries. In addition, NOAA must comply with the United States' (U.S.) obligations under the Atlantic

Tunas Convention Act of 1975 (16 U.S.C. 971 et. seq.). A Certificate of Eligibility (COE) for Billfishes is required under 50 CFR part 635 to accompany all billfish, except for a billfish landed in a Pacific state and remaining in the state of landing. This documentation certifies that the accompanying billfish was not harvested from the applicable Atlantic Ocean management unit (described on the NOAA sample certificate), and identifies the vessel landing the billfish, the vessel's homeport, the port of offloading, and the date of offloading. The certificate must accompany the billfish to any dealer or processor who subsequently receives or possesses the billfish. A standard certificate format is not currently required to document the necessary information, provided it contains all of the information required. The extension of this collection is necessary to implement the Consolidated Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan, which contains conservation and management measures that limit the Atlantic billfish fishery to a recreational fishery.

On October 5, 2012, the President signed Pub. L. 112-183 entitled the "Billfish Conservation Act of 2012," which prohibits the sale of billfish (or products containing billfish), or the custody, control, or possession of billfish (or products containing billfish) for purposes of sale. The only exemptions to this prohibition include billfish landed by U.S. fishing vessels in Hawaii and Pacific Insular Areas, and billfish landed by foreign fishing vessels in the Pacific Insular Areas when the foreign-caught billfish are exported to non-U.S. markets or retained within Hawaii and the Pacific Insular Areas for local consumption. NOAA is considering the development of implementing regulations for the Billfish Conservation Act. If necessary, upon publication of a proposed rule, the information collection associated with the Billfish Certificate of Eligibility (0648-0216) may need to be revised accordingly.

## **II. Method of Collection**

A paper document is required to be completed by respondents. The document must be signed and dated by each dealer or processor who subsequently receives or possesses the billfish.

### **III. Data**

*OMB Control Number:* 0648-0216.

*Form Number:* None.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission (extension of a current information collection).

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

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 200.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* 20 minutes for initial completion of certificate and 2 minutes for subsequent billfish purchase record keeping.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 43.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$0 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

### **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 also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: August 15, 2017.

**Sarah Brabson,**

*NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.*

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