



## **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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