



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Alaska American Fisheries Act (AFA) Permits

The Department of Commerce will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, on or after the date of publication of this notice. We invite the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. Public comments were previously requested via the Federal Register on June 27, 2023, during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

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

Title: Alaska American Fisheries Act (AFA) Permits

OMB Control Number: 0648-0393.

Form Number(s): None.

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

Number of Respondents: 27.

Average Hours Per Response: AFA Permit: Rebuilt, Replacement, or Removed Vessel Application, 1 hour; Application for Transfer of Bering Sea Chinook Salmon PSC Allocations, 1 hour; Application for AFA Inshore Catcher Vessel Cooperative Permit, 2 hours; AFA Inshore Vessel Contract Fishing Notification, 4 hours; Application for Approval as an Entity to Receive Transferable Chinook Salmon PSC Allocation, 8 hours.

Total Annual Burden Hours: 246 hours.

Needs and Uses: The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Alaska Regional Office, is requesting extension of a currently approved information collection that contains applications for permits and transfers necessary for NMFS to manage the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) pollock fishery under the American Fisheries Act (AFA).

NMFS manages the BSAI pollock fishery under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) and the AFA (16 U.S.C. 1851). The regulations implementing the AFA Program are at 50 CFR part 679, subpart F. The reporting requirements at 50 CFR part 679 form the basis for this collection of information.

The AFA was signed into law in October 1998. The purpose of the AFA was to tighten U.S. ownership standards that had been exploited under the Anti-reflagging Act, and to provide the BSAI pollock fleet the opportunity to conduct their fishery in a more rational manner while protecting non-AFA participants in the other fisheries. The AFA established sector allocations in the BSAI pollock fishery, determined eligible vessels and processors, allowed the formation of cooperatives, set limits on the participation of AFA vessels in other fisheries, and imposed special catch weighing and monitoring requirements on AFA vessels.

Any vessel used to engage in directed fishing for a non-western Alaska community development quota (non-CDQ) allocation of pollock in the Bering Sea and any shoreside processor, stationary floating processor, or mothership that receives pollock harvested in a non-CDQ directed pollock fishery in the Bering Sea must have a valid AFA permit on board the vessel or at the facility location at all times while non-CDQ pollock is being harvested or processed.

Permanent AFA permits (AFA catcher vessel, AFA catcher/processor, AFA mothership, and AFA inshore processor) for the BSAI pollock fishery had a one-time application deadline of December 1, 2000, and were issued with an indefinite expiration date. Therefore, except for participants that require annual or replacement permits, all AFA entities required to have a permit are already permitted.

The type of information collected in this collection includes information on the applicants, transferors, transferees, permits, vessels, and Chinook salmon PSC transfer data. This information collection contains the following AFA permitting and transfer requirements:

- The AFA Permit: Rebuilt, Replacement, or Removed Vessel Application is used by an owner of an AFA vessel to notify NMFS the vessel has been rebuilt; to request an AFA permit for a replacement catcher vessel, catcher/processor, or mothership; or to request removal of an AFA catcher vessel that is a member of an inshore cooperative and assign its catch history to another vessel or vessels in the same cooperative.
- The Application for AFA Inshore Catcher Vessel Cooperative Permit is used annually by each AFA inshore catcher vessel cooperative to obtain an AFA Inshore Catcher Vessel Cooperative Permit and identify the vessels and processors that will be participating in the BSAI pollock fishery prior to the start of each fishing year.
- The AFA Inshore Vessel Contract Fishing Notification is used by an AFA inshore cooperative that intends to contract with a non-member vessel to harvest a portion of the cooperative's annual pollock allocation to notify NMFS of vessels that might be reporting with an alternative cooperative ID.
- The Application for Approval as an Entity to Receive Transferable Chinook Salmon Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) Allocation is used by an entity representing the catcher/processor sector or the mothership sector to request approval to receive transferable Chinook salmon PSC allocations on behalf of members of the sector. Once approved, an entity is not required to reapply for or renew its status. Entities also use this form to update their contact and other information related to the entity and its members.
- The Application for Transfer of Bering Sea Chinook Salmon PSC Allocations is used by an authorized representative of the catcher/processor sector, the mothership sector, an inshore cooperative, or a CDQ group to transfer Chinook salmon PSC allocations to another entity's account.

Affected Public: Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit organizations; Not-for-profit institutions.

Frequency: Annually; As needed.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to Obtain or Retain Benefits; Mandatory.

Legal Authority: Magnuson-Stevens Fishery and Conservation Act; American Fisheries.

This information collection request may be viewed at www.reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review - Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function and entering either the title of the collection or the OMB Control Number 0648-0393.

Sheleen Dumas,

*Department PRA Clearance Officer,
Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs,
Commerce Department.*

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