

**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 August 6, 2007.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6625, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at [dHynek@doc.gov](mailto:dHynek@doc.gov)).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Trisha Culver, 562-980-4239 or [trisha.culver@noaa.gov](mailto:trisha.culver@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****I. Abstract**

United States participation in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) results in certain recordkeeping requirements for U.S. fishermen who fish in the IATTC's area of management responsibility. These fishermen must maintain a log of all operations conducted from the fishing vessel, including the date, noon position, and the tonnage of fish aboard the vessel, by species. The logbook form provided by the IATTC is universally used by U.S. fishermen to meet this recordkeeping requirement, as permitted by the regulations. The information in the logbooks includes areas and times of operation, and catch and effort by area. Logbook data are used in stock assessments and other research concerning the fishery. If the data were not collected or if erroneous data were provided, the IATTC assessments would likely be incorrect and there would be an increased risk of overfishing or inadequate management of the fishery.

**II. Method of Collection**

Vessel operators maintain bridge logs on a daily basis, and the forms are either mailed to the IATTC or to the National Marine Fisheries Service at the completion of each trip. The data are processed and maintained as confidential by the IATTC.

**III. Data**

*OMB Number:* 0648-0148.  
*Form Number:* None.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission.  
*Affected Public:* Individuals or households, business or other for-profit organizations.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 20.

*Estimated Time per Response:* 5 minutes.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 129.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$0.

**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: May 31, 2007.

**Gwellnar Banks,**

*Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

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**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**RIN 0648-XA62**

**Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act Provisions; Application for Exempted Fishing Permit**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notification of a request to conduct experimental fishing; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** This exempted fishing permit (EFP) application is a continuation of a collaborative project involving the University of New Hampshire (UNH), Durham, NH; the Lobster Conservancy,

Friendship, Maine; the New England Aquarium, Boston, MA; and the Atlantic Offshore Lobstermen's Association, Candia, NH. The EFP proposes to continue monitoring legal sized egg bearing female lobsters (berried lobsters) carrying early-stage eggs. The continuation of this project will allow participating Federal lobster permit holders, fishing in designated study areas, to preserve a maximum of ten eggs from each berried lobster captured in commercial lobster gear, to allow researchers to determine what percentage of eggs are fertilized, and estimate the egg developmental stage and time to maturity. The berried lobsters will then be released unharmed. This project would not involve the authorization of any additional trap gear, and all trap gear would conform to existing Federal lobster regulations. There would be no anticipated adverse effects on protected resources or habitat as a result of this research. The EFP would waive the prohibition on removal of eggs for a maximum of 13 participating vessels. The Director, State, Federal and Constituent Programs Office, Northeast Region, NMFS (Office Director) has made a preliminary determination that the subject EFP application contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. The Office Director has also made a preliminary determination that the activities authorized under the EFPs would be consistent with the goals and objectives of Federal management of the American lobster resource. However, further review and consultation may be necessary before a final determination is made to issue EFPs. NMFS announces that the Office Director proposes to issue EFPs and, therefore, invites comments on the issuance of EFPs for this research.

**DATES:** Comments on this lobster EFP notification for berried lobster monitoring and data collection must be received on or before June 21, 2007.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be sent to Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, 1 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments - Lobster EFP Proposal". Comments also may be sent via facsimile (fax) to 978-281-9117, or by e-mail to [LobsterMay2007@noaa.gov](mailto:LobsterMay2007@noaa.gov). Include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the following document identifier: "Comments - Lobster EFP Proposal".

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Bob Ross, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9234, fax (978)-281-9117.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

## Background

The regulations that govern exempted fishing, at 50 CFR 600.745(b) and 697.22 allow the Regional Administrator to authorize for limited testing, public display, data collection, exploration, health and safety, environmental clean-up, and/or hazardous removal purposes, and the targeting or incidental harvest of managed species that would otherwise be prohibited. An EFP to authorize such activity may be issued, provided there is adequate opportunity for the public to comment on the EFP application, the conservation goals and objectives of Federal management of the American lobster resource are not compromised, and issuance of the EFP is beneficial to the management of the species.

The American lobster fishery is one of the most valuable fisheries in the northeastern United States. In 2005, approximately 87 million pounds (39,712 metric tons) of American lobster were landed with an ex-vessel value of approximately 414 million dollars. Operating under the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's interstate management process, American lobster are managed in state waters under Amendment 3 to the American Lobster Interstate Fishery Management Plan (Amendment 3). In Federal waters of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), lobster is managed under Federal regulations at 50 CFR part 697. Amendment 3, and compatible Federal regulations, established a framework for area management, which includes industry participation in the development of a management program which suits the needs of each lobster management area while meeting targets established in the Interstate Fisheries Management Program. The industry, through area management teams, with the support of state agencies, have played a vital role in advancing the area management program.

American lobster experience very high fishing mortality rates throughout their range, from Canada to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. Although harvest and population abundance are near record levels due to high recent recruitment and favorable environmental conditions, there is significant risk of a sharp drop in abundance, and such a decline would have serious implications. To facilitate the development of effective management tools, extensive monitoring and detailed data on the biology and composition of lobsters throughout the range of the resource are necessary. To facilitate effective management, this proposed EFP would monitor egg

growth and development of berried lobsters in three study areas using traditional lobster trap gear.

## Proposed EFP

The EFP proposes to continue the collection of statistical and scientific information as part of a project, originally announced in the **Federal Register** on October 21, 2004 (69 FR 19165), that is designed to monitor berried lobsters to collect data that will assist in the assessment of the lobster resource and in the development of management practices appropriate to the fishery. Previous data collected in 2005 and 2006 from tagged berried lobsters that were monitored for egg-development stages, indicated a percentage of berried females are carrying eggs that are not fertilized. This continuation of the research will focus on quantifying fertilization success, and monitor egg growth and development.

Each of the maximum of 13 commercial fishing vessels in possession of Federal lobster permits involved in this monitoring and data collection program would collect a maximum of ten eggs from each berried lobster harvested, up to a maximum of 50 berried lobster per vessel, using traditional lobster trap gear. Removal of a maximum of ten eggs from each berried lobster should have no impact on the health or survival of the lobsters, since lobsters typically experience significantly greater rates of daily egg loss throughout their 13-month incubation period, with cumulative egg loss as high as 36 percent. Participating vessels would collect data from each of the three general study areas in the vicinity of Portsmouth, NH, the northern edge of Georges Bank, and in the vicinity of Veatch and Hydrographer Canyons along the southern edge of Georges Bank. The participating vessels may retain on deck egg bearing female lobsters, in addition to legal lobsters, for the purpose of collecting a maximum of ten eggs from each berried lobster to allow researchers to determine what percentage of eggs are fertilized, and to estimate the egg developmental stage, and time to maturity. All berried lobsters would be returned to the sea as quickly as possible after data collection. Pursuant to 50 CFR 600.745(b)(3)(v), the Regional Administrator may attach terms and conditions to the EFP consistent with the purpose of the exempted fishing.

This project would not involve the authorization of any additional lobster trap gear. All traps fished by the participating vessels would comply with all applicable lobster regulations specified at 50 CFR part 697. To allow

for the removal of a maximum of ten eggs from each berried lobster, the EFP would waive the American lobster prohibition on removal of eggs specified at 50 CFR 697.7(c)(1)(iv). All sample collections would be conducted by a maximum of 13 federally permitted commercial fishing vessels, during the course of regular commercial fishing operations. There would not be observers or researchers onboard every participating vessel.

This project, including the lobster handling protocols, was initially developed in consultation with UNH scientists. To the greatest extent practicable, these handling protocols are designed to avoid unnecessary adverse environmental impact on lobsters involved in this project, while achieving the data collection objectives of this project.

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

Dated: May 31, 2007.

**James P. Burgess**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### Meeting: Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) Product Development Committee (CPDC) for Synthesis and Assessment Product 3.3

**AGENCY:** Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

**ACTION:** Notice of open meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) Product Development Committee for Synthesis and Assessment Product 3.3 (CPDC-S&A 3.3) was established by a Decision Memorandum dated October 17, 2006. CPDC-S&A 3.3 is the Federal Advisory Committee charged with responsibility to develop a draft Synthesis and Assessment Product that addresses CCSP Topic 3.3: "Weather and Climate Extremes in a Changing Climate".

**Place:** The meeting will be held at the Aspen Global Change Institute, 100 East Francis St. Aspen, Colorado, 81611.

**Time and Dates:** The meeting will convene at 4 p.m. on Monday, June 25, 2007 and adjourn at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 28, 2007. Meeting information will be available online on the CPDC-S&A 3.3 Web site (<http://>