Diana Hynek 06/20/2005 Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer Office of the Chief Information Officer 14th and Constitution Ave. NW. Room 6625

Washington, DC 20230

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB has taken the following action on your request for the extension of approval of an information collection received on 03/22/2005.

TITLE: Northeast Multispecies Framework Adjustment 40A

Logbook Information Data Collection

AGENCY FORM NUMBER(S): None

ACTION : APPROVED WITHOUT CHANGE

OMB NO.: 0648-0502

EXPIRATION DATE: 06/30/2008

BURDEN:	RESPONSES	HOURS	COSTS(\$,000)
Previous	10,130	2,533	0
New	10,130	2,533	14
Difference	0	0	14
Program Chan	ge	0	14
Adjustment		0	0

TERMS OF CLEARANCE: None

OMB Authorizing Official Title

Donald R. Arbuckle Deputy Administrator, Office of

Information and Regulatory Affairs

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION

Please read the instructions before completing this form. For additional forms or assistance in completing this form, contact your agency's

Paperwork Clearance Officer. Send two copies of this form, the collection instrument to be reviewed, the supporting statement, and any additional documentation to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Docket Library, Room 10102, 725 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20503. 1. Agency/Subagency originating request 2. OMB control number b. [] None 3. Type of information collection (*check one*) Type of review requested (check one) Regular submission a. [b. [Emergency - Approval requested by ____ a. [] New Collection Delegated b. [] Revision of a currently approved collection c. [] Extension of a currently approved collection 5. Small entities Will this information collection have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities? [] Yes [] No d. [] Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired e. [] Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired 6. Requested expiration date f. [] Existing collection in use without an OMB control number a. [] Three years from approval date b. [] Other Specify: For b-f, note Item A2 of Supporting Statement instructions 7. Title 8. Agency form number(s) (if applicable) 9. Keywords 10. Abstract 11. Affected public (Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x") 12. Obligation to respond (check one) a. __Individuals or households d. ___Farms
b. __Business or other for-profite. ___Federal Government] Voluntary Business or other for-profite. Federal Government

Not-for-profit institutions f. State, Local or Tribal Government Required to obtain or retain benefits 1 Mandatory 13. Annual recordkeeping and reporting burden 14. Annual reporting and recordkeeping cost burden (in thousands of a. Number of respondents b. Total annual responses a. Total annualized capital/startup costs 1. Percentage of these responses b. Total annual costs (O&M) collected electronically c. Total annualized cost requested c. Total annual hours requested d. Current OMB inventory d. Current OMB inventory e. Difference e. Difference f. Explanation of difference f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change 1. Program change 2. Adjustment 2. Adjustment 16. Frequency of recordkeeping or reporting (check all that apply) 15. Purpose of information collection (Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "X") a. [] Recordkeeping b. [] Third party disclosure] Reporting a. ___ Application for benefits Program planning or management 1. [] On occasion 2. [] Weekly Program evaluation f. Research 3. [] Monthly General purpose statistics g. Regulatory or compliance 4. [] Quarterly 5. [] Semi-annually 6. [] Annually 7. [] Biennially 8. [] Other (describe) 18. Agency Contact (person who can best answer questions regarding 17. Statistical methods Does this information collection employ statistical methods the content of this submission) [] Yes [] No Phone:

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19. Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

On behalf of this Federal Agency, I certify that the collection of information encompassed by this request complies with 5 CFR 1320.9

NOTE: The text of 5 CFR 1320.9, and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3), appear at the end of the instructions. *The certification is to be made with reference to those regulatory provisions as set forth in the instructions.*

The following is a summary of the topics, regarding the proposed collection of information, that the certification covers:

- (a) It is necessary for the proper performance of agency functions;
- (b) It avoids unnecessary duplication;
- (c) It reduces burden on small entities;
- (d) It used plain, coherent, and unambiguous terminology that is understandable to respondents;
- (e) Its implementation will be consistent and compatible with current reporting and recordkeeping practices;
- (f) It indicates the retention period for recordkeeping requirements;
- (g) It informs respondents of the information called for under 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3):
 - (i) Why the information is being collected;
 - (ii) Use of information;
 - (iii) Burden estimate;
 - (iv) Nature of response (voluntary, required for a benefit, mandatory);
 - (v) Nature and extent of confidentiality; and
 - (vi) Need to display currently valid OMB control number;
- (h) It was developed by an office that has planned and allocated resources for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected (see note in Item 19 of instructions);
- (i) It uses effective and efficient statistical survey methodology; and
- (j) It makes appropriate use of information technology.

If you are unable to certify compliance with any of the provisions, identify the item below and explain the reason in Item 18 of the Supporting Statement.

Signature of Senior Official or designee Date

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Agency Certification (signature of Assistant Administrator, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Line Office Chief Information Officer, head of MB staff for L.O.s, or of the Director of a Program or StaffOffice)			
Signature	Date		
Signature of NOAA Clearance Officer			
Signature	Date		

SUPPORTING STATEMENT NORTHEAST MULTISPECIES FRAMEWORK ADJUSTMENT 40A LOGBOOK INFORMATION DATA COLLECTION

INTRODUCTION

This submission requests that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) renew the clearance of the information collection provisions for the vessel trip report requirements contained within Framework Adjustment 40-A (Framework 40-A) to the Northeast (NE) Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP). This information collection submission was approved by the OMB on September 22, 2004, under OMB Control No. 0648-0502 based upon measures proposed by the New England Fishery Management Council (Council). This information collection will expire on March 31, 2005.

The Council proposed management measures under Framework Adjustment 40-A that create additional opportunities for commercial fishing vessels to harvest healthy groundfish stocks. The proposed measures under Framework 40-A included the following provisions requiring either new or revised information collection requirements: (1) A Category B (regular) days-atsea (DAS) pilot program; (2) Closed Area I (CA I) Hookgear Haddock Special Access Program (SAP), (3) Eastern United States (U.S.)/Canada SAP Pilot Program, and (4) Modifications to the Western U.S./Canada Area regulations. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) published a proposed rule soliciting comments on these measures and the information collection based upon these measures on September 14, 2004 (69 FR 55388). No comments regarding the information collection were received. Through an interim final rule (November 19, 2004, 69 FR 67780), the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) partially approved Framework 40-A. Specifically, the Secretary disapproved allowing vessels not participating in the Georges Bank (GB) Cod Hook Sector from fishing in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP.

The Council has begun the development of a new framework action that would implement regulations allowing non-Sector vessels into the Closed Area I Hookgear Haddock SAP based upon recommendations for a revised SAP provided by the Secretary. Therefore, although the Secretary disapproved access to this SAP by non-Sector vessels, a forthcoming action by the Council would reinstate access to non-Sector vessels. Accordingly, this information collection renewal for OMB Control No. 0648-0502 does not remove the information collection burdens for the disapproved non-Sector vessel access to the Closed Area I Hookgear Haddock SAP at this time. Should this revised SAP be disapproved by the Secretary, a correction to this information collection removing these disapproved information collection burdens would be submitted.

The information collection approved under OMB Control No. 0648-0502 for Framework 40-A and the request to renew this information collection under this submission added new information collection burdens and modified some of the provisions included within the previously approved submission for the "Northeast Logbook Family of Forms," OMB Control No. 0648-0212. NOAA Fisheries intends to integrate the information collection approved for Framework 40-A as described in OMB Control No. 0648-0502 into OMB Control No. 0648-

0212 when circumstances allow. Renewing this information collection is necessary to continue to implement measures contained within Framework 40-A.

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), the Secretary has responsibility for the conservation and management of marine fishery resources off the coast of the United States. The majority of this responsibility has been delegated to the Regional Fishery Management Councils and the NOAA Fisheries. The Council develops management plans for fishery resources in New England. The NE Multispecies FMP manages twelve regulated groundfish species.

In order to monitor fishing vessel effort and the resulting landings, Section 303(a)(5) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act allows the Secretary to collect specific types of information that would identify the catch by species and other information regarding the time and location of fishing effort. This information is most often collected in the form of vessel trip reports (VTRs). VTRs identify the participants of a fishery and monitors their activity levels and landings. Recently, however, the information collected through VTRs is also being collected electronically through Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). The use of VMS in addition to VTRs allows for real-time monitoring and enforcement of management provisions by collecting information on the time and location of fishing operations and the catch and discard of particular species on a daily basis. In general, information requirements for an effective monitoring and enforcement system include:

- Identification of the participating vessels, operators, and dealers;
- Location of the fishing activity;
- Activity levels; and
- Catch and landings information.

This information is necessary to enforce the management measures and prevent overfishing.

The current regulations outlining the reporting requirements, including VTRs, for vessel owners and operators are specified at 50 CFR 648.7(b). Framework 40A includes new provisions that would create new reporting requirements for those vessels electing to fish in the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program, CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP, the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program, or vessels fishing combined trips to the Western U.S./Canada Area. This would be in addition to the VTRs specified above. Collecting this information would be necessary to monitor the activities of vessels participating in the SAPs, the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program, and fishing inside and outside of the Western U.S./Canada Area; assess the amount of fish harvested under the agreement, including bycatch of cod; and to enforce compliance with other provisions outlined in Framework 40A. These data are crucial to the monitoring of fishing effort and discards to ensure compliance with the mortality objectives of Amendment 13 to the FMP.

In 1999, the Council began development of an amendment to the management plan that would end overfishing and adopt required rebuilding plans for overfished stocks. In the case of Conservation Law Foundation, et al. V. Evans (Case No. 00CV011234), the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia (Court) required the Council, along with the NOAA Fisheries, to implement management measures that would prevent overfishing and help rebuild groundfish stocks managed under the NE Multispecies FMP by a specific date. Ultimately, the Court required Amendment 13 to be implemented by May 1, 2004. On November 6, 2003, the Council approved measures outlined in Amendment 13 to meet the court-ordered deadline. Amendment 13 was implemented on May 1, 2004. The implementation of Amendment 13 brought the FMP into full compliance with the provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable law, and complied with the Court-ordered implementation deadline of May 1, 2004. Amendment 13 included programs to facilitate targeting of healthy groundfish stocks, but only two of these programs were approved by NOAA Fisheries. The two disapproved programs, the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP and the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program, did not contain sufficient analysis to determine the impacts of these programs. Framework 40A provides further justification for these two disapproved programs and revises some of the requirements for these SAPs that were previously proposed under Amendment 13. In addition, the Council developed Framework 40A to create further opportunities to target healthy stocks through a Category B (regular) DAS pilot program so that the Magnuson-Stevens Act requirement to attain optimum yield from the fishery can be met.

One of the ways the NE Multispecies FMP controls fishing mortality is by limiting the number of days that vessels can fish. Amendment 13 assigned each limited access permit holder a number of days-at-sea (DAS) that can be used. These DAS are categorized these as Category A DAS, Category B DAS, or Category C DAS. The management measures in Amendment 13 (including the allocation of Category A DAS) are designed so that the mortality objectives will be met for all stocks. The number of allocated Category A DAS was chosen so that the appropriate amount of effort would be available to achieve, but not exceed, the target total allowable catch (TAC) amounts established for all regulated groundfish species consistent with the mortality objectives of the FMP. Category A DAS could be used beginning May 1, 2004, to target any regulated groundfish stock. Amendment 13 further defined Category B DAS as either Category B (regular) or Category B (reserve) DAS and placed limits on how each can be used.

Any Category B DAS that are used increased the amount of effort. In order to prevent these additional DAS from threatening the mortality objectives of Amendment 13, Category B DAS can only be used to target healthy groundfish stocks. Only one program to use Category B DAS that was included in Amendment 13 was approved by NOAA Fisheries - a SAP designed to harvest yellowtail flounder in a closed area on Georges Bank (GB). Framework 40A proposes to implement three programs to utilize Category B DAS to target healthy groundfish stocks, including two SAPs that were included within Amendment 13, but disapproved by NOAA Fisheries. To ensure that the catch of stocks of concern taken while using a Category B (regular or reserve) DAS does not threaten the mortality objectives of Amendment 13, Framework 40A would implement hard incidental TAC's for these species. These incidental TACs would be implemented for individual stocks from specific statistical areas.

Category B (regular) DAS Pilot Program

Framework 40A includes a pilot program that would allow Category B (regular) DAS to be used outside of any SAPs. Vessels participating in this program must meet the following reporting requirements:

- They are required to purchase, install and use an approved Vessel Monitoring System.
- Vessel operators are required to notify NMFS 72 hours in advance of a Category B DAS trip so that NOAA Fisheries can plan observer coverage.
- Vessel operators are required to notify NOAA Fisheries that they are using a Category B (regular) DAS at the start of the trip. This notification would be made through the VMS.
- While using a Category B (regular) DAS, vessel operators are limited to very low landing limits for certain groundfish stocks that are in poor condition. If these landing limits are exceeded, vessel operators are required to change the DAS being used to a Category A DAS. This notification (called "flipping" a DAS) must be made through the VMS and must occur before the vessel returns to port.

These VMS requirements were addressed in a separate information collection submission that would revise the information collection estimate previously approved Amendment 13 for the "Northeast Permit Family of Forms" under OMB Control Number 0648-0489.

To ensure that vessel activities under the Category B (regular) DAS Pilot Program do not threaten the mortality objectives of species of concern as specified above, vessels participating in this program would be required to report the catch (kept and discarded) of stocks of concern for each statistical area fished on a daily basis through the VMS. Once it is projected that the incidental TAC for a particular stock will be harvested, vessels would no longer be able to use Category B (regular) DAS in the statistical areas in which that stock is found. This information would allow NOAA Fisheries to monitor and enforce the incidental TACs and landing limits for the stocks of concern to prevent these TACs from being exceeded and jeopardizing the mortality objectives of Amendment 13. This was a new information collection requirement for Framework 40A.

Framework 40A SAPs

Amendment 13 proposed a total of three SAPs, including the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program, the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP, and the CA I Hookgear SAP. Only the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP was approved by NOAA Fisheries and implemented under Amendment 13. The two disapproved programs, the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP and the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program, did not contain sufficient analysis to determine the impacts of these programs. Framework 40A provided further justification for these two disapproved programs and revises some of the requirements for these SAPs that were previously proposed under Amendment 13.

Framework 40A revised the previously proposed CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP and the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program to allow vessels to fish for haddock within specified areas and under certain conditions. Vessels participating in these SAPs can use either a Category A or a Category B DAS. Part of the management strategy for these SAPs under Framework 40A includes the use of TACs for each of the species of concern and the target species. These TACs

would be used to limit the amount of cod and haddock taken by vessels of fishing in these SAPs when fishing on a Category B DAS so that mortality targets established under Amendment 13 are not exceeded. In order to monitor the catches of cod and haddock within these SAPs, vessels are required to report catches (kept and discarded) on a daily basis through VMS.

A previous information collection submission for the provisions contained within Amendment 13 (OMB Control No. 0648-0212) did not include daily VMS catch reports for vessels operating in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP. However, this submission did include an estimate of the burden associated with daily VMS catch reports for the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP and the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program as specified in Amendment 13. Therefore, the original information collection submission for Framework 40-A was considered a new information collection burden for vessels intending to participate in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP.

Combined Trips to the Western U.S./Canada Area

Amendment 13 implemented provisions created as part of the U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding. Provisions regulating the U.S. portion of the agreement have been incorporated into Amendment 13 to the NE Multispecies FMP. This informal agreement was reached between the U.S. and Canada regarding the management of GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder resources found within the waters of both countries in an area known as the U.S./Canada Management Area. This area is further divided into an Eastern and Western U.S./Canada Area. The catches of GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder are restricted by TACs in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area, while in the Western U.S./Canada Area, only catches of yellowtail flounder are limited by the Understanding. Regulations implementing Amendment 13, therefore, restrict a vessel to fishing in one area of the U.S./Canada Management Area per trip – a vessel cannot fish both inside and outside the Western U.S./Canada Area on the same trip. Framework 40A altered those provisions by allowing vessels to fish both inside and outside the Western U.S./Canada Area on the same trip, what is considered a "combined trip" under this action. In order to accurately monitor the catches of yellowtail flounder taken in the Western U.S./Canada Area, vessels are required to report their catches of yellowtail flounder by statistical area daily while inside of the Western U.S./Canada Area and when moving in and out of the area. This report must submitted electronically using a VMS.

Vessels that would fish both inside and outside of the Western U.S./Canada Area on the same trip are likely the same vessels that currently fish within the Eastern and Western U.S./Canada Areas as approved under Amendment 13. Vessels operating in the Western U.S./Canada are currently required to submit daily catch reports of the total amount of GB yellowtail flounder caught and discarded when operating within this area. These reports were previously considered in an information collection submission for Amendment 13 under OMB Control No. 0648-0212. This action to renew the information collections for Framework 40A, including the requirement for vessels fishing inside and outside of the Western U.S./Canada Area on the same trip to report their catch and discard of yellowtail flounder when entering or exiting the Western U.S./Canada Area, would pose further information collection burden on these vessels as specified below and does not duplicate the information collected previously approved under Amendment 13.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

Landings reports specified under the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program, the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program, and the Western U.S./Canada Area provisions of Framework 40A require the owner or operator of a vessel fishing under a NE Multispecies dayat-sea (DAS) to report the total amount of specific species, including discards, on a daily basis when operating under these programs. For the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program, vessels are required to submit daily catch reports for stocks of concern. Vessels participating in the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program are required to submit daily catch reports for GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder. Finally, vessels fishing under a combined trip into the Western U.S./Canada Area are required to submit daily catch reports for GB yellowtail flounder and when entering or exiting the Western U.S./Canada Area. This information must be submitted via VMS. Vessels are still required to submit VTRs for all trips, including those within the U.S./Canada Management Area, in addition to the daily electronic catch and discard reporting via VMS.

Similar information has been collected from vessels fishing in the U.S./Canada Management Area, including those fishing in the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP. This information is currently being used by NOAA Fisheries to monitor the amount of GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder caught within the U.S./Canada Management Area and the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP approved under Amendment 13 as well as the Category B (regular) DAS Pilot Program, the Closed Area I Hookgear Haddock SAP and the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program approved and recently implemented under Framework 40-A.

The information collected under this submission would be used by several offices of NOAA Fisheries, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Council, and state fishery enforcement agencies under contract to NOAA Fisheries to develop, implement, and monitor fishery management strategies. The primary purpose is to monitor catches so that the incidental catch hard TACs associated with the U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Agreement and the incidental TAC of each species of concern, is not exceeded. These type of data serve as input for a variety of uses, including biological analyses and stock assessments, regulatory impact analyses, quota allocation selections and monitoring, economic profitability profiles, trade and import tariff decisions, allocation of grant funds among states, and analysis of ecological interactions among species. NOAA Fisheries would be unable to fulfill the majority of its scientific research and fishery management missions without these data. Specifically, without daily catch information for the incidental catch TACs for the species of concern, real-time monitoring of the relatively small TACs would not be possible. Timely information is necessary to ensure that these incidental TACs are not exceeded, thereby potentially threatening the mortality objectives of Amendment 13.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. NOAA Fisheries will retain control over the information and

safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response #10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a predissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

3. <u>Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.</u>

The new information collection provisions associated with Framework 40A involve the electronic reporting of catch and discards of fish by vessels electing to fish in the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program, the Closed Area I Hookgear Haddock SAP, the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program, and vessels fishing combined trips in the Western U.S./Canada Area. This information is required to be submitted via VMS. This incorporates the most advanced means of reporting this information to date. This information would supplement other catch and effort information submitted using VTRs for each trip. Future actions may implement provisions that would replace VTRs with electronic catch reporting for all trips taken by vessels within the Northeast Region.

The Northeast Regional Office (NERO) is also investigating the use of optical character recognition software to ease the burden of the reporting system on the government. Such a system would "read" the data directly from a form and enter it into a database, reducing the need for manual data entry. It would not reduce the burden on the public, however.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

NOAA Fisheries is aware of all related fishery management activities, and these requirements do not duplicate any in existence. Electronic daily reporting of catch and discards would only be required of groundfish DAS participants in the programs established by Framework 40A. In addition, these vessels would also be required to submit their current VTRs. The NERO is investigating the feasibility of incorporating electronic reporting into all fisheries currently requiring the submission of VTRs.

5. <u>If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe</u> the methods used to minimize burden.

Only the minimum data to meet the requirements of the above data needs are requested from all participants. Since all of the respondents are small businesses, separate requirements based on the size of the business have not been developed.

NOAA Fisheries recently certified a new VMS vendor that is less expensive than the other certified VMS vendor currently being used by the fishing industry. In addition, this new VMS vendor uses hardware and software that more closely mirrors those used in home computers and are, therefore, more familiar to industry participants than the other certified vendor. This reduces

the burden on the public by minimizing the need to learn to use unfamiliar hardware and software associated with VMS.

6. <u>Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.</u>

Daily catch and discard information allow NOAA Fisheries to accurately monitor fishing mortality and catch rates on these species as a result of fishing within these programs. For these programs, groundfish species are managed by TACs. Without daily catch information, these TACs may be exceeded as the data from VTRs may take up to several weeks to process, even if submitted in a timely manner. Exceeding the TACs for these species could result in closure of certain portions of the U.S./Canada Management Area for the remainder of that fishing year and a reduction of that species' overall TAC for the following fishing year, as well as violate the U.S./Canada Understanding. In addition, exceeding the incidental TACs for species of concern under the Category B (regular) DAS Pilot Program or the TACs associated with approved SAPs under Framework 40-A could result in fishing mortality rates rising above legal limits and reaching levels that may compromise the fishing mortality objectives specified in Amendment 13. This would require additional reductions in fishing effort in the future. Failure to collect catch information for vessels fishing both inside and outside of the Western U.S./Canada Area would prevent the accurate monitoring of yellowtail flounder catch from the Western U.S./Canada Area. This information is necessary to ensure that harvest of yellowtail flounder from the U.S./Canada Management Area does not exceed the amount allocated to U.S. vessels under the U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding. Therefore, daily catch and discard data would facilitate the effective management of the groundfish fishery. Failure to collect this information would prevent NOAA Fisheries from monitoring vessel effort and fishing mortality, thereby compromising the potential to end overfishing and rebuild groundfish stocks.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

The requirements specified in this submission are not consistent with OMB guidelines with regard to the reporting frequency. While OMB does not allow that respondents be required to report more often than quarterly, the provision requiring daily electronic catch and discard reporting requested with this submission would necessitate more frequent reports.

This information collection would be required to be submitted on a daily basis for vessels fishing in the proposed programs. Daily catch reporting is required in order to accurately monitor the catch and discard of groundfish species in these programs. This information would be used to determine if and when the TAC for each species has been caught. Without daily monitoring, accurate assessments of fishing mortality may not be possible.

8. Provide a copy of the PRA Federal Register notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and

recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

The Council held many Council and Groundfish Oversight Committee meetings during the development of Framework 40-A during the period January 2004 through May 2004 during which there were opportunities for public discussion of proposed management strategies. The Council approved the measures contained in Framework 40-A, including those specified above, on May 12, 2004. The information collections approved in OMB Control No. 0648-0502 were included in a proposed rule to implement management measures outlined in Framework Adjustment 40-A to the NE Multispecies FMP (September 14, 2004, 69 FR 55388). This rule announced the provisions specified above and solicited public comment on these programs and the information collection requirements necessary to implement these programs. No comments regarding the information collection for Framework 40-A were received by the end of the public comment period.

On October 18, 2004, NOAA Fisheries published notice in the <u>Federal Register</u> soliciting comments on the continuation of the information collection approved under OMB Control No. 0648-0502 for Framework 40-A (69 FR 61346). The public comment period ended on December 17, 2004. No comments were received during this comment period.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

Neither payments nor gifts are given to the respondents.

10. <u>Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.</u>

All data will be handled in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Confidentiality of Fisheries Statistics, and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form (and without identifying the source of data, i.e., vessel name, owner, etc.). In addition, any information submitted according to the provisions outlined in Amendment 13 would be considered confidential and would not be disclosed except as provided in Section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

There are no questions of sensitive nature.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

It is difficult to accurately estimate the burden associated under this action since the frequency of participation in the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program, the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP, the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program, and fishing on a combined trip into the

Western U.S./Canada Area will be determined entirely by the vessel owner. Table 1 summarizes the burden hours, number of respondents, and the total burden of the reporting requirements for the vessel reporting provisions contained within Framework 40A to the NE Multispecies FMP.

This submission is an estimate of the new data collection burdens associated with daily electronic catch reporting for the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program, the Closed Area I Hookgear Haddock SAP, the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program, and fishing combined trips to the Western U.S./Canada Area. Vessels participating in these programs and required to submit daily catch and discard information would still be required to submit VTRs according to the regulations at § 648.7(b). As a result, this submission only includes the additional burden associated with the daily electronic reporting of regulated groundfish catch and discard information via VMS. These burdens would be in addition to those previously considered under Amendment 13 and approved under OMB Control No. 0648-0212. Previously approved burden estimates, including those associated with vessel reporting via VTRs are not affected by this submission. The new burden estimate documented by this submission is based upon the number of participants that are likely to participate in the various programs or the number of days that may be fished.

The Category B (regular) DAS program is limited to 1,000 DAS per quarter of the fishing year, or 4,000 DAS fished on an annualized basis. One catch report detailing the amount of stocks of concern for each statistical area fished must be submitted for each DAS fished under this program. Daily electronic reporting through VMS of catch and discards for stocks of concern for each statistical area fished is expected to take approximately 15 minutes (0.25 hours) per response. This estimate includes the time to read through all of the menus and options presented. It is likely this response time will decrease as operators become familiar with VMS operations. This results in a total annualized burden estimate of 1,000 hours (0.25 hours/report x 4,000 reports).

Between 2001 and 2003, approximately 187 vessels with limited access NE multispecies permits specified that longline gear was their primary gear on their permit applications. Given that Framework 40A requires that all vessels exclusively use longline gear (i.e. longlines or tub trawls) to participate in the Closed Area I Hookgear Haddock SAP, the 187 vessels specified above provides an estimate of the potential number of vessels that may participate in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP under Framework 40A. This number likely includes the 58 vessels that have elected to participate in the GB Cod Hook Sector originally approved under Amendment 13. It is speculated that several vessels that did not specify longline gear as their primary gear on their permit application may switch to use longline gear to participate in this SAP. Therefore, for this information collection, an estimate of 200 vessels was used to assess the information collection burden for all vessels likely to participate in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP.

A daily catch report detailing the amount of haddock and other stocks of concern for each statistical area fished must be submitted by those vessels who are not currently participating in the GB Cod Hook Sector. When participating in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP under a Category A DAS would be allowed to fish both inside and outside of the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP area on the same trip. These vessels would only be allowed to enter and exit the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP once per trip and would be required to submit a catch report when

entering or exiting the area. Daily electronic reporting of catch and discards for haddock and other stocks of concern for each statistical area when fishing on a Category B (regular) DAS is expected to take approximately 15 minutes (0.25 hours) per response. This estimate includes the time to read through all of the menus and options presented. It is likely this response time will decrease as operators become familiar with VMS operations.

Based on an experimental fishery conducted in 2003, the haddock catch allocated to this SAP would be taken in 500 days fished per quarter or less, or a total of 2,000 days fished on an annualized basis. As proposed in Framework 40A, this SAP would only take place in one quarter, but future actions may extend the season. It is estimated that the 142 vessels not participating in the GB Cod Hook Sector, a conservative estimate, would take approximately 10 trips into the SAP per year for a total of 1,420 day-long trips. Since catch reports would be required for every day fished, this results in a total of 1,420 daily catch reports through VMS. Assuming that half of these trips would use a Category A DAS, a very conservative estimate, an additional 710 catch reports would result from entering and exiting the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP. This results in a total of 2,130 daily catch reports for this program. Therefore, the annualized burden estimate for the catch reports via VMS for this program would be 533 hours (0.25 hours/report x 2,130 reports).

Vessels participating in the GB Cod Hook Sector, a total of 58 vessels, would be required to report catch of GB cod and GB haddock in the form of VTRs to the Sector Manager. The Sector Manager would then, in turn, submit this information to NOAA Fisheries to monitor catch from Sector vessels. Since previous estimates already considered the burden associated with the submission of VTRs, the burden associated with submitting VTRs to the Sector Manager for vessels participating in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP as a member of the GB Cod Hook Sector are not included with this submission.

The Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program takes place within the U.S./Canada Management Area and requires vessels to submit daily catch reports consistent with those for the U.S./Canada Management Area. Amendment 13 requires vessels fishing in this area to submit daily catch reports specifying the amount of GB cod, GB haddock and GB yellowtail flounder kept and discarded. This reporting burden for the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program was estimated in a previous submission under OMB Control No. 0648-0212 prepared for Amendment 13. The reporting requirements for the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Pilot Program mirror this requirement, and do not increase the number of reports or the time expected to complete those reports. Therefore, there is no additional reporting burden as a result of this action.

The requirement for daily reports while fishing in the Western U.S./Canada Area was implemented through Amendment 13 and the reporting burden was included in an earlier submission for OMB Control No. 0648-0212. Framework 40A adds a requirement to submit a catch report when crossing the boundary into or out of the Western U.S./Canada area on a combined trip to fish in other areas. It is difficult to estimate the reporting burden since the decision to fish across the boundary is an individual one made by each vessel operator. Available trip report data was used to obtain an estimate of the number of multispecies vessels (those using gear types associated with targeting groundfish, i.e., otter trawl, gillnet, longline)

operating within this area. This resulted in an estimate of 400 vessels that would likely participate in the U.S./Canada Management Area fisheries. These vessels made approximately 2,000 trips into this area during the period analyzed. If every trip is assumed to fish both inside and outside the area, and to cross the boundary twice, there will be a requirement for an additional 4,000 daily catch reports (2,000 trips x 2 boundary crossings x one report per crossing) annually. Daily electronic reporting of catch and discards is expected to take approximately 15 minutes (0.25 hours) per response. This estimate includes the time to read through all of the menus and options presented. It is likely this response time will decrease as operators become familiar with VMS operations, however. This results in a total annualized burden estimate of 1,000 hours (0.25 hours/report x 4,000 reports).

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in #12 above).

All participants in these programs must use VMS. All vessels that do not currently possess VMS must obtain one under this provision. The cost of purchasing and installing VMS, along with the associated basic operational costs, have already been considered in previous information collection submissions of the "Northeast Permit Family of Forms" (OMB Control Number 0648-0202) and another information collection request submitted for Framework 40A for the pool of vessels expected to participate in these programs. Accordingly, the costs associated with the purchase, installation, and operation of VMS units are not included in this submission. Please refer to the supporting statement accompanying the Northeast Multispecies Framework Adjustment 40A Data Collection (OMB Control No. 0648-0501) and the most recent submission of OMB Control No. 0648-0202 submitted for the provisions contained within Framework 40A for more information.

Costs involved with this information collection submission include only those associated with the additional submission of daily catch and discard reports for vessels operating within these programs. The original submission for OMB Control No. 0648-0502 indicated that the NE VMS Program would pay for the cost associated with the submission of form based data (i.e., daily catch reports). As a result, the original submission did not include any public costs associated with the daily catch reports. This was based on a preliminary information used during the development of Framework 40A. However, the final policy for the NE VMS Program indicated that vessels would pay for the submission of form based data. Therefore, this renewal submission would revise the cost estimates to specify that the costs associated with submitting daily catch reports via VMS for the programs implemented under Framework 40A would be borne by the public, not the government as described below. The estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record-keepers resulting from this collection are summarized in Table 1 below.

Vessels fishing in the Category B (regular) DAS Pilot Program would be required to report daily catch information for each stock of concern for each statistical area fished. Framework 40A proposes a total of eight (8) stocks of concern. These eight stocks of concern involve only six (6) species (both cod and yellowtail flounder are listed for two stock areas each). Framework 40A also specifies the particular stock area for each stock of concern by listing the statistical

areas (three digit statistical area codes) defining each stock area. Each statistical area covers a large area of the ocean. Analysis of vessel operations indicated that over 98 percent of the trips made by NE multispecies vessels from 2000 - 2003 fished in only one statistical area per trip, although some trips fished in more than one area per trip. Therefore, a conservative estimate that each vessel would be required to report the catch for each stock of concern harvested in two statistical areas was used for this submission.

For the daily catch reports via VMS, each statistical area code submitted would require the entry of three (3) digits. The amount of each species kept and discarded would require the submission of up to six (6) digits per field or 12 digits per species. Reports for the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program would involve the submission of catch data for six (6) species, while reports for vessels not in the GB Cod Hook Sector and operating in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP would require the submission of catch data for only two (2) species (GB cod and GB haddock). The most expensive vendor charges a fee of \$0.004 for each character in an electronic message. Using a cost of \$0.004 per character, the cost for reporting the daily catch from each statistical area would amount to \$0.30 [75 characters ((12 characters/species x 6 species) + 3 characters for the area code) x \$0.004/character] for the Category B (regular) DAS pilot program and \$0.10 [27 characters (12 characters/species x 2 species) + 3 characters for the area code) x \$0.004/character] for the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP. Each submission of these daily catch reports would cost \$0.50.

The Category B (regular) DAS Pilot Program requires that each vessel submit daily catch reports for each stock of concern for each statistical area fished. Assuming each vessel fishes in two (2) statistical area per day, the total cost per day would amount to \$1.60 (\$0.30 for each area + \$0.50 for each submission). Since the Category B (regular) DAS Pilot Program is limited to 4,000 DAS, the annualized cost to the public for this program would be \$6,400 (\$1.60 x 4,000 DAS).

The costs associated with the daily catch reports for vessels intending to fish in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP would be different between vessels participating in the GB Cod Hook Sector and those not participating in the Sector due to the different reporting requirements specified above. Vessels participating in the GB Cod Hook Sector would be required to report daily catches of cod and haddock to the Sector Manager. According to GB Cod Hook Sector representatives, vessels would submit VTRs to the Sector Manager to fulfill this requirement. As a result, the information collection burden for this provisions under Framework 40A for GB Cod Hook Sector vessels is not included as it has previously been assessed under OMB Control No. 0648-0212.

Vessels not participating in the GB Cod Hook Sector would be required to report their catch of GB haddock and GB cod per statistical area on a daily basis through VMS. Using a cost of \$0.004 per character, the cost for reporting the daily catch from each statistical area would amount to \$0.10 [27 characters (12 characters/species x 2 species) + 3 characters for the area code) x \$0.004/character]. Each submission of these daily catch reports would cost \$0.50. Therefore, assuming each vessel fishes in two (2) statistical area per day, the total cost per day would amount to \$1.20 (\$0.10 for each area + \$0.50 for each submission). As specified above, vessels not participating in the Sector are estimated to make approximately 2,130 catch reports under this provision. This includes 1,420 daily catch reports and an additional 710 catch reports

when crossing into and out of the CA I Hookgear haddock SAP area. Using the estimated 2,130 days per year for this reporting burden, the annualized public costs associated with this submission would be \$2,556 (\$1.20/day x 2,130 days).

The requirement for daily reports while fishing in the Western U.S./Canada Area was implemented through Amendment 13 and the reporting burden was included in an earlier submission for OMB Control No. 0648-0212. This burden estimated the cost of submitting daily catch reports of GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder. Framework 40A adds a requirement to submit a catch report for each statistical area fished when crossing the boundary into or out of the Western U.S./Canada Area on a combined trip to fish in other areas. Every trip is assumed to fish both inside and outside the area, and to cross the boundary twice. This results in an additional 4,000 daily catch reports (2,000 trips x two boundary crossings x one report per crossing) for this provision annually. Each submission of catch information would require the entry of a maximum of 39 characters per submission (12 characters/species + 3 characters for the area code) with a charge of \$0.004 per character. Each submission of catch information would cost \$0.50 to submit, in addition to the cost of characters, for a maximum charge of \$0.66 per submission. Assuming each vessel fishes in two (2) statistical area per day, the total cost per day would amount to \$1.32 (\$0.16 for each area + \$0.50 for each submission). This results in an annualized cost to the public of \$5,280 (\$1.32/submission x 4,000 reports) for this provision under Framework 40A.

In total, the annualized cost to the public stemming from provisions included within Framework 40A is \$14,236.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

The NMFS Northeast Region currently operates a VMS system for the Atlantic sea scallop and NE multispecies fisheries. The estimates of the annual administrative and enforcement costs to the Federal Government from this program are summarized in Table 2. The ongoing (recurring) costs amount to \$320,000 a year and include staff costs, internet connection, training, travel and the annual costs for equipment and the back-up system. These costs are not expected to increase with the VMS requirement for the submission of electronic catch reporting for vessels participating in the programs authorized by Framework 40A.

The original submission for Framework 40A indicated that the government would pay for the submission of daily catch reports via VMS under Framework 40A. However, as specified above, the final policy for the NE VMS Program indicates that vessels would pay for the submission of daily catch reports via VMS. Therefore, this renewal submission removes the costs to the government associated with submitting daily catch reports under Framework 40A and specifies them as public costs.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB 83-I.

Amendment 13 met Magnuson-Stevens Act requirements to adopt formal rebuilding programs for overfished fisheries, and to end overfishing. The regulations required to reduce fishing

mortality on several groundfish stocks will likely result in substantial negative social and economic impacts to the fishing industry. Accordingly, a number of provisions within Framework 40-A strive to provide flexibility and opportunities for the industry to take advantage of stocks in better condition. This data collection would be used to implement and manage the measures approved under Framework 40-A.

As described above, this information collection renewal request renews the information collection burdens associated with the previously approved information collection for measures included in Framework 40-A (OMB Control No. 0648-0502). The measures contained in Framework 40-A are the result of a deliberate government action and are under government control. For this submission, the participation of non-Sector vessels in the CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP was disapproved by the Secretary. However, although the Secretary disapproved access to this SAP by non-Sector vessels, a forthcoming action by the Council would reinstate access to non-Sector vessels. Accordingly, this information collection renewal for OMB Control No. 0648-0502 does not remove the information collection burdens for the disapproved non-Sector vessel access to the Closed Area I Hookgear Haddock SAP at this time as they would be reinstates should the Secretary approve this forthcoming action to reinstate access to this SAP by non-Sector vessels. Therefore, there are no burden-related program changes in this renewal submission.

However, this renewal submission does include revisions to the public and government costs associated with the provisions in Framework 40A. This is due to a revised policy for the NE VMS Program. Based on this revised policy, the costs associated with these provisions would be included as public costs. Therefore, the \$14,236 cost to the public is considered a program change to the previous submission for OMB Control No. 0648-0502.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

Results form this collection may be used in scientific, management, technical or general informational publications such as <u>Fisheries of the United States</u> which follows prescribed statistical tabulations and summary table formats. Data are available to the general public on request in summary form only; data are available to NOAA Fisheries employees in detailed form on a need-to-know basis only.

17. <u>If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the</u> information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

This information submission would be carried out via electronic means. As a result, no standardized data collection forms would be collected as part of this submission.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I.

All instances of this submission comply with 5 CFR 1320.9.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

No statistical methods are employed in the information collection procedures; the requirements are optional for all eligible participants in the NE multispecies fishery.

Table 1: Costs associated with the Logbook Family of Forms (OMB Control # 0648-0212) as modified by Framework 40A to the NE Multispecies FMP

		Items Per	Total #	Response	Total	Cost	to:
Requirement	Entities	Entity	of Items	Time (hours)	Burden	Public	Govt.
Electronic Vessel Trip Reports - Category B (regular) DAS Pilot Program	997	4	4,000	0.25	1,000	\$6,400.00	\$0.00
Electronic Vessel Trip Reports - CA I Hookgear Haddock SAP							
Vessels Not Participating in the GB Cod Hook Sector	142	15	2,130	0.25	533	\$2,556.00	\$0.00
Electronic Vessel Trip Reports - Combined Trips Into Western U.S./Canada Area	400	10	4,000	0.25	1,000	\$5,280.00	\$0.00
Table	007		40.400		0.500	£44.000.00	60.00

Totals 997 10,130 2,533 \$14,236.00 \$0.00

Table 2. Current Costs to the Government from VMS Monitoring.

VMS Monitoring		
Annual Costs	Salary and Benefits ¹	\$230,000
	Internet Connection ²	7,500
	Equipment ³	20,000
	Back-up System ⁴	38,960
	Software Licensing	3,500
	Supplies⁵	11,000
	Training and travel	8,000
	Total ongoing costs	\$300,000
Start-up Costs	Software adaptations	\$100,000
	Total fixed costs	\$100,000
	Annualized Start-up Costs (at 5 year amortization)	\$20,000
Total Annual Costs ⁶		\$320,000
Previously Committed		
Costs		\$300,000
Total Annual Costs ⁷		
Net Annual Costs to		
Government from Herring		\$20,000

Source: Data supplied by NMFS, Office of Enforcement, Northeast Regional Center, and NMFS Headquarters

1. Salary and benefits, three program support personnel.

VMS Monitoring

- 2. 24-hour maintenance of secure Internet note at Gloucester, MA.
- 3. Lease and maintenance contract on CPU and monitor.
- 4. Lease and maintenance contract on CPU and monitor.
- 5. Optical storage disks, repairs and supplies associated wit non-lease equipment (modem, router, printer, thermal paper, WORM drive).
- 6. Estimated by adding up annualized start-up costs (\$2,383) to total ongoing costs.
- 7. System operating costs currently funded to support program for the sea scallop fishery.

ATTACHMENT 1: INFORMATION THAT MUST BE DISPLAYED ON FORMS USED TO COLLECT INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC

1. The policy reasons for collecting the information.

This information has been outlined in the preamble of the proposed and interim final rules implementing Framework 40-A as well as in a permit holder letter explaining the provisions of the measures in Framework 40-A.

2. The way in which the information will be used to further performance of agency functions.

This information has been outlined in the preamble of the proposed and interim final rules implementing Framework 40-A as well as in a permit holder letter explaining the provisions of the measures in Framework 40-A.

3. An estimate of the average burden using the specified format.

This information has been outlined in the preamble of the proposed and interim final rules implementing Framework 40-A.

4. Whether responses are voluntary, required to obtain or retain a benefit, or mandatory.

This information will be included in a permit holder letter to be sent to all vessels with a valid NE multispecies DAS permit once implemented according to the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act.

5. The nature and extent of confidentiality to be provided, if any.

This information will be outlined in a permit holder letter to be drafted at a later time. A summary of the information that will be presented in that letter is as follows:

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. NOAA Fisheries will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a predissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

6. <u>A particular sentence involving the OMB Control Number.</u>

This information has been outlined in the preamble of the proposed and interim final rules implementing Framework 40-A.