

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
MARINE RECREATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAM  
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0052**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

This request is in the form of a focused supporting statement for a change to this information collection.

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

Collection of recreational fisheries catch and effort, biological and socioeconomic data is necessary to fulfill statutory requirements of Section 303 of the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) (16 U.S.C. 1852 *et. seq.*) and to comply with [Executive Order 12962](#) on Recreational Fisheries. Section 303 (a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act specifies data and analyses to be included in Fishery Management Plans (FMPs), as well as pertinent data that shall be submitted to the Secretary of Commerce under the plan.

In cooperation with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MDMF), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) would like to collect economic valuation information from the directory frame of licensed marine recreational anglers in Massachusetts in 2012. The objective of the study will be to test the effectiveness of alternative data collection methods for collecting recreational fishing data and to evaluate the reliability of stated preference (SP) compared with behavioral models that use information on the actual choices made by recreational anglers.

The objectives of MRIP Economic Surveys are as follows:

1. To collect demographic, social and economic data on the people who participate in marine recreational fishing in the various regions of the continental United States (U.S.).
2. To collect data needed for the statistical estimation of models to assess the net values of marine recreational fishing for specific finfish species that are highly sought by marine recreational anglers and are either currently managed by the Fishery Management Councils and/or the Interstate Marine Fisheries Commissions, or are expected to come under management in the near future;
3. To collect data needed for construction of models to assess the economic impacts of management actions on communities and both fishery-dependent and fishery-independent businesses.

Although catch, effort and economic valuation information have been collected on the West Coast from directory frames of licensed marine recreational anglers, on the East Coast, these data have been collected only through add-ons to the MRIP surveys. In 2010, however, NMFS implemented a National Saltwater Angler Registry as part of a major initiative to improve how NMFS

gathers, analyzes and reports recreational fishing data. In response to this initiative, every coastal state on the East Coast has implemented its own angler registry system that complies with MRIP requirements. Thus, it is now possible to collect information from anglers on the East Coast via license in addition to add-ons to the MRIP intercept or household telephone survey.

In 2012 saltwater anglers fishing in Massachusetts will be required to purchase a fishing license for \$10. This is an annual fee that will apply to both resident and non-residents and only applies to saltwater fishing. Anglers will be required to provide a home mailing address, telephone number and other identifying information when applying for the license.

A market for access to saltwater fishing in Massachusetts in 2012 will be simulated by sending cash offers in return for an angler's license. Three separate treatment groups will be surveyed. The first sample shall consist of 500 randomly selected anglers that purchased a license during the first 4 months of 2012. According to Dillman (2009) a sample size of 384 is needed to expand up to a population of about 1 million people with 95% confidence level. Assuming the response rate will be approximately 75% translates into a sample of about 500 anglers. Each of the 500 anglers will be mailed a short questionnaire that collects avidity and demographic information along with a check, the amount of which varies from angler to angler (\$15 to \$500), as a cash offering for the angler's 2012 Massachusetts fishing license. Instruction will be provided that each angler should return either the check or his or her fishing license and that the offer will expire on a certain date in the future (approximately 6 weeks later). A self-addressed stamped envelope will be provided to return the questionnaire.

Two additional samples of randomly selected anglers from the Massachusetts license frame shall be drawn during the first 4 months of 2012. One sample of 700 anglers will be sent a short questionnaire (1-2 pages) that collects the same avidity and demographic data as the simulated market samples along with a hypothetical question about the angler's willingness to sell his/her license for a specified price. The hypothetical prices will vary from angler to angler and will match the amount of the cash offerings indicated above for the simulated market. Another sample of 700 anglers will be sent the same short questionnaire except the hypothetical question will inquire about the angler's willingness to pay for his/her license. The estimated values from this hypothetical willingness to sell/accept approach will be directly comparable to the simulated market values. Lower response rates are anticipated for the hypothetical surveys; therefore a sample size of 700 should provide the required data necessary for expansion to a population of about 1 million anglers.

**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.**

The data are used annually by NMFS, regional fishery management councils, interstate marine fisheries commissions, and state fishery agencies in developing, implementing and monitoring fishery management programs. Social and economic data are used to provide descriptive and behavioral information on marine recreational fishing participants; provide estimates of the value of important recreational fisheries; analyze fisheries management decisions regarding allocation,

changes in management strategies or changes in factors that affect catch rates and/or access to marine recreational species for fishing sites; estimate the contribution of recreational fisheries to regional economies; and estimate the impact of fisheries regulations on regional economies.

The questions in the survey instruments are based on those in existing economic surveys (most closely on Follow-On Economic Survey (2<sup>nd</sup> instrument in the MRIP Survey IC, first IC in ROCIS, where the new surveys and related correspondence have been posted), Economic Intercept Add-On and Follow-up, which, as originally approved, were meant to include both economic valuation and demographic information – these are included as supplementary documents).

This will be one-time survey conducted only in the state of Massachusetts. There are three versions of the survey, each containing a different valuation question.

Specific questions asked in each questionnaire:

### **Recreational Saltwater Fishing Activity Questions**

1. Approximately how many days did you recreationally fish in Massachusetts marine waters during 2011?
2. How many days have you recreationally fished in Massachusetts marine waters so far in 2012?
3. Approximately how many days do you think you will actually recreationally fish in Massachusetts marine waters during all of 2012?
4. Will you most often be recreational fishing from shore, a private boat, or a charter boat in Massachusetts marine waters in 2012?
5. Do you currently own a boat that you will use to fish recreationally in Massachusetts marine waters in 2012?
6. Will anyone in your household purchase a Massachusetts permit to operate a for-hire recreational fishing boat or purchase a Massachusetts commercial fishing permit this year?

**About You and Your Household** (with introduction: Different types of anglers may value fishing in different ways. These questions will help us understand the relationship between demographic characteristics and the value that anglers place on being able to go recreational saltwater fishing).

7. How many people live in your household (including yourself)?
8. What is your marital status?
9. What best describes your employment status?
10. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
11. Which of the following best describes your household's 2011 total annual income before taxes?

Version 1 has a check enclosed, and instructions in the cover letter direct the recipient either to keep the check and return their angler's license, or return the check.

Version 2 inserts this section and questions between the two sections above:

**Your 2012 Massachusetts Saltwater Recreational Fishing Permit**

Imagine that a check payable to you for \$[ranging from \$15 to \$500, randomly assigned] was included along with this survey as a cash offer for your 2012 Massachusetts Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit. Knowing that the fishing permit is required for anyone that fishes recreationally in Massachusetts marine waters during 2012, would you be willing to send us your permit, and in doing so, give up your right to fish recreationally in Massachusetts marine waters for the rest of this year in return for \$[ranging from \$15 to \$500, randomly assigned, same amount]?

Although the question is hypothetical, before you provide your answer please keep in mind your household budget. Try to answer the question as if this was an actual cash offer to you for your 2012 Massachusetts Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit, and then check the indicated box below.

Version 3 inserts this section and question between the two sections above:

**Your 2012 Massachusetts Saltwater Recreational Fishing Permit**

In this section, we ask you a hypothetical question about your willingness to pay for your 2012 Massachusetts Saltwater Recreational Fishing

Imagine that you had not yet purchased your 2012 Massachusetts Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit, and that the cost you would have to pay to obtain the permit was \$[ranging from \$15 to \$500, randomly assigned]. Knowing that the fishing permit is required for anyone that fishes recreationally in Massachusetts marine waters during 2012, would you have been willing to pay [ranging from \$15 to \$500, randomly assigned, same amount] for your permit?

Although the question is hypothetical, before you provide your answer please keep in mind your household budget. Try to answer the question as if you really had to pay this amount for your 2012 Massachusetts Recreational Saltwater Fishing Permit, and then check the indicated box below.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (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 to Question 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. Although the information collected is not expected to be disseminated directly to the public, survey results will be used in scientific, management, technical and general information publications. Should NOAA Fisheries decide to disseminate the information, it will be subject to the quality control measures and pre-dissemination review pursuant to [Section 515 of Public Law 106-554](#).

**3. 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.**

The surveys will be conducted by mail.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

NMFS collaborates with state natural resource agencies and regional interstate fisheries commissions on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts to ensure that recreational fisheries data collections are not duplicative. Every five years, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) of the U.S. Department of the Interior conducts the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (OMB Control No. 1018-0088). This survey collects minimal information about annual recreational saltwater fishing activity within the context of additional recreation activities. That survey does not provide the spatial or temporal resolution needed by managers of fishery resources to monitor and manage recreational fisheries landings.

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

No small businesses will be impacted by this revision. Individuals and households will be the respondents.

**6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.**

If the survey were conducted less frequently, NMFS and state natural resource agencies would experience difficulty in effectively carrying out their responsibilities to meet statutory, administrative, and other obligations to end overfishing of marine fishery resources. An ongoing survey of recreational anglers is required to monitor changing conditions in the fishery and support modifications in fishery regulations both within fishing seasons and among fishing years. In addition, a continuous time series of data is scientifically essential to assess the impact of recreational fishing on fish stocks.

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

The collection is consistent with OMB guidelines.

**8. Provide information on 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.**

A Federal Register Notice published on May 17, 2011, seeking comments on NOAA Fisheries' intentions to use angler contact information contained in alternate frameworks (e.g., angler registries) to develop more efficient and accurate data collection methods in the areas of catch, effort, biological data and respondent socioeconomic characteristics, to meet the requirements of MSA. No comments were received.

There will also be an [FAQ on the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries Web site](#).

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

In Treatment 1, there will be a check ranging from \$15 to \$500, the amount randomly assigned to each respondent. The check is *not* an incentive to respond to the survey. The respondents will be instructed to return either the check or their recreational fishing license. The rationale for this "payment" is explained in Question 1.

**10. Describe any assurance or confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

As stated on the cover letters, responses are kept confidential as required by section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens and [NOAA Administrative Order 216-100](#), Confidentiality of Fisheries Statistics, and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form without identification as to its source. Section 402(b) stipulates that data required to be submitted under an FMP shall be confidential and shall not be released except to Federal employees and Council staff responsible for FMP monitoring and development or when required under court order. Data such as personal addresses and phone numbers will remain confidential.

**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.**

No sensitive questions are asked.

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

The currently approved responses are 963,557 and hours, 53,494. The responses and hours below are already covered by that approved burden.

Total burden attributable to this revision will be approximately 211 hours, determined as follows:

Treatment	# Respondents	# Responses	Minutes / activity	Total Hours
Treatment 1	375 <sup>1</sup>	375	10.0	63
Treatment 2	375 <sup>2</sup>	440	10.0	74
Treatment 3	375 <sup>2</sup>	440	10.0	74
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,155</b>	<b>1,155</b>		<b>192<sup>3</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> An estimated 75% of a sample of 500.

<sup>2</sup> An estimated 63% of a sample of 700.

<sup>3</sup> Rounded up to 193 in ROCIS.

**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 Question 12 above).**

These data collections will incur no cost burden on respondents beyond the costs of response time. Postage-paid envelopes will be included with each survey. Currently, there are no costs for this information collection overall.

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

Total annual cost to the Federal government for the entire collection is approximately \$3,700,000: \$2,500,000 in data collection costs and \$200,000 in professional staff, overhead and computing costs.

For this survey, a total of \$143K was allocated for contractor survey costs (\$70K) and offers to anglers to relinquish their license (\$73K).\* These costs were already covered in the existing costs above; there were no additional costs.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.**

This new survey, with questions based on those in existing economic surveys, did not change the overall burden.

\*However, \$47K in offers were returned, so the total administration cost was less than \$100K. Thus, accounting for estimated analysis costs by NMFS professional staff of \$200K results in a total cost of about \$300K.

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

All data collected and analyzed will be included in table format available on the web pages of the Economic and Sociocultural Analysis Division, Office of Science and Technology, NMFS and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Social Sciences Branch. The web site addresses are <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/economics/index> <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/read/socialsci/>. Findings from the study will be presented at appropriate profession meetings (e.g., North American Association of Fisheries Economists) and will be submitted for publication in appropriate economic or fisheries peer-reviewed journals.

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

Not Applicable.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.**

Not Applicable.