

**JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
ALASKA PACIFIC HALIBUT AND SABLEFISH FISHERIES: INDIVIDUAL FISHING
QUOTA (IFQ) COST RECOVERY
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0398**

JUSTIFICATION: Merge temporary collection OMB Control No. 0648-0650 into OMB Control No. 0648-0398.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Alaska Region and International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) manage fishing for Pacific halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*) through regulations established under the authority of the Convention between the United States Halibut Fishery of the Northern Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea and the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982 (Halibut Act). The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council manages the fixed gear Pacific Halibut and Sablefish Fisheries Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program.

NMFS administers the IFQ Programs in the North Pacific (see OMB Control No. 0648-0272). The IFQ Programs are limited-access systems authorized by the Magnuson–Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, as amended in 2006, and the Halibut Act. On March 20, 2000, NMFS published regulations (65 FR 14919) implementing the Cost Recovery Program for IFQ landings of halibut and sablefish. The purpose of the IFQ fee is to recover actual costs incurred in managing and enforcing the IFQ Program (75%) and to make funds available for Congress to appropriate for support of the North Pacific IFQ Loan Program (25%).

OMB Control No. 0648-0398 consists of two forms: Value and Volume Report (also referred to as IFQ Buyer Report) and Fee form. Both of these forms are available online as well as in .pdf format.

NMFS would merge OMB Control No. 0648-0398 and OMB Control No. 0648-0650. OMB Control No. 0648-0650 is a temporary new collection developed in conjunction with RIN 0648-BB42 when OMB Control No. 0648-0398 was in the process of a request for extension. The 0650 collection will be discontinued once this change request is approved.

Final Rule 0648-BB42 required that Registered Buyers who purchase Western Alaska Community Development Quota (CDQ) halibut, in addition to IFQ halibut and IFQ sablefish, to report annually on the Value & Volume Report the monthly total weight of CDQ halibut landed and purchased by the Registered Buyer, the monthly total price paid for CDQ halibut, and the monthly total amount paid for any retro-payments of CDQ halibut. The prices on the Value & Volume Reports are used to recover costs incurred by the agency for IFQ Program management in that same year, to assess the observer fee liability for each landing, and to estimate the total ex-vessel value of the fisheries for the coming year.

In 2012 under OMB Control No. 0648-0272, NMFS issued 3,962 active IFQ permits, 2,997 halibut and 965 sablefish. Of those active permits, there were 2,838 unduplicated IFQ

permitholders. The 0648-0272 collection shows that 445 Registered Buyer permits were issued; of those, 142 are unique, unduplicated Registered Buyer permits.

This action specifically affects an estimated 125 IFQ Registered Buyers of those 142. The 125 Registered Buyers are shoreside processors and stationary floating processors that receive and purchase IFQ landings of sablefish or halibut or CDQ landings of halibut. Seventeen Registered Buyers do not receive IFQ halibut or sablefish or CDQ halibut landings.

The respondents, responses, and burden estimates for OMB Control No. 0648-0398 are currently: 2,980 (2838 IFQ permitholders and 142 Registered Buyers) respondents, 2,980 responses, 5,960 hours, and \$866 in miscellaneous costs.

The respondents, response, and burden estimates for OMB Control No. 0648-0650 are: 125 respondents (registered buyers), 125 responses, 250 hours and \$82 in miscellaneous costs.

The new totals of respondents, response, and burden estimate for OMB Control No. 0648-0398 are: 2,963 respondents (2,838 IFQ permitholders and 125 Registered Buyers), 2,963 responses (17 fewer buyer reports), 5,926 hours (34 fewer hours due to decrease in buyer reports), and \$898 miscellaneous costs (decrease of \$6 due to fewer responses, but increase of \$38 for buyer reports due to correction, including faxing as an option).