

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
WEST COAST SALTWATER FISHING SURVEY
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX**

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

The Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) and Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) are undertaking an economics research project to assess the behavior of saltwater recreational anglers in response to catch rates, bag limits, and the timing and length of the season, and how these actions affect the value of saltwater recreational fishing. The West Coast Saltwater Fishing Survey (WCSFS) will provide critical economic data related to saltwater recreational fishing on the Pacific West Coast. More specifically, the WCSFS will collect data needed to (1) assess the socioeconomic characteristics of recreational saltwater fishing participants; (2) assess the economic value of saltwater recreational fishing trips through statistical estimation of models; and (3) assess the change in these values associated with possible changes in management policies related to catch rates, bag limits, season timing and length, time and area closures, and changes in economic, ocean, or fishery conditions.

Currently, the data necessary to estimate such models are both incomplete in coverage and not up to date. More specifically, prior data collections were conducted only for Washington and Oregon – California anglers were not included – and were completed approximately 10 years ago.

The economic model estimated with these data will be linked with existing stock assessment models to update an existing draft bioeconomic model of saltwater recreational fishing on the West Coast. Similar bioeconomic models have been developed in other regions. In particular, a recreational bioeconomic model has been used as a management tool by the Northeast Fishery Management Council when determining bag limits and season length.

Overall, the data and models reliant on such data will inform management decisions of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, operating under the authority of the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq) as well as the NMFS West Coast Regional Office, and the Washington, Oregon, and California Departments of Fish and Wildlife.

All of the protocols that will be used in the final survey will be tested prior to the full survey administration. If the survey needs revision based on this pretest, we will submit the revised instruments as part of a non-substantive change request.

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 information collected will be used to estimate an economic model of angler behavior, depicting the trade-offs anglers are willing to make among fishing trips with different attributes (catch rates, bag limits, species composition) and not going fishing. The estimates from this behavioral model will, in turn, be used to update a bioeconomic model of saltwater recreational fishing on the West Coast. We anticipate that the model will be used at least annually to produce estimates of angler effort conditional on potential fishery management changes. The model will be run by NWFSC and SWFSC scientists.

The individual sections of the test and the final survey survey are discussed below in more detail, using Washington as the example.

Section A: Your Washington Sport Fishing Activities

The first part of Section A is intended to screen out respondents who have not fished in the saltwater from a boat off Washington State within the past 12 months.

If a respondent has done such fishing, the remainder of this section gathers information on the respondent's typical trips. This information includes types of trips taken, the locations most often used, the mode of fishing (private boat, charter boat, or shore) and primary reasons for taking trips.

Section B: Your Typical Washington Saltwater Fishing Trip Expenses

Section B gathers information on the respondent's typical expenses associated with a boat based saltwater fishing trip.

Section C: Trips You Would Likely Take During a Season

Section C gathers information on how a respondent is likely to react to different fishing opportunities, as described by target species availability, expected catch, bag limits, and fishing cost.

Section D: About You and Your Household

Section D asks a series of demographic and other questions the answers to which can be used to improve the estimation of the recreational fishing behavioral model. These questions will gather information on age, gender, education, household size, household income, and whether the respondent takes time off work to take saltwater fishing trips.

The Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers 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, results may be used in scientific, management, technical or general informational publications. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to [Section 515 of Public Law 106-554](#).

The data from this information collection will be disseminated to the public through a NOAA technical memorandum, which will describe the methodology as well as summarize the data.

Before the bioeconomic model is used in the fishery management process, the model described here (together with the data collected through the collection of information described herein) will be reviewed by the Scientific and Statistical Committee of the Pacific Fishery Management Council. In addition, the economic model will be peer reviewed prior as part of the publication process in academic journals.

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 data collection does not involve the use of automated, mechanical or other technological techniques with the exception that the survey instrument will be administered online to respondents who prefer that medium to a paper form.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

We reviewed the existing literature on recreational activities in the region and could not find any studies that imply our effort is duplicative of any work conducted within the past decade. We also conferred with state officials in Washington, Oregon, and California with responsibilities for managing recreational saltwater fishing and they could not identify any existing or planned duplicative efforts.

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

The collection of information does not involve small businesses or small entities.

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

As noted before, the survey will collect information needed to develop economic models of recreational saltwater fishing in Washington, Oregon, and California. This research will provide scientific support for management agencies such as the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, as well as the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Not conducting the information

collection will undercut the ability to account for the economic value of recreational fishing, thus limiting the ability of agencies to manage fisheries consistent with federal and state law.

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

Not Applicable.

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 June 22, 2016 (81 FR 40676) solicited public comments. No comments were received. We have also consulted with personnel at the Departments of Fish and Wildlife in Washington, Oregon, and California regarding the data we are collecting.

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

There will not be any payment or gift to respondents.

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

To support the anonymity of this research, no participant names will be included on the survey document. Participant names will be tracked in a separate database to code participants for protection during data analysis, confirm receipt of a survey from each individual, and avoid duplication of responses.

Documents containing names will be kept in a locked container such as a lock box in the field or a locked file cabinet in the office setting. All electronic versions will be kept under password protected systems, accessible only by study researchers.

When writing final reports and publishing the findings of this research, tabulations of individual responses will occur at a high enough level of aggregation so that no single individual may be identified. In addition to the confidentiality protection measures, survey participants are provided the option to skip questions of concern and stop their participation in the survey at any time with no consequence to themselves. Finally, in the event of a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, we will protect the confidentiality to the extent possible under the Exemption 4 of the FOIA.

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.

The survey includes questions that gather demographic information, including information on income. This is considered sensitive information for some households. This information will be used as part of the statistical analysis of survey responses, as is common in estimating economic demand functions.

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

We estimate the annual burden of this data collection to be 408.4 (408) hours and 1,987 total responses: 578 completed surveys from saltwater anglers, 831 completed surveys from anglers who have not fished in saltwater, and 578 completed telephone screening surveys (all annualized).

We estimate a 43% response rate. For more detail, see the response to B1.

The steps in the data collection follow a modified Dillman Method protocol, and are as follows. Overall, attempted contacts are first made by email, then phone, and finally mail.

Email attempt:

Each record will be examined to determine whether there is an email address. Records that have an email address will be contacted by email, requesting participation in the survey. License holders who do not respond to the email request by completing a survey are attempted by phone.

Phone attempt:

Records without an email address, along with those who do not respond to the email request, will be examined to see whether there is a valid phone number. Upon receipt of the sample, the contractor will submit the entire sample to a national reverse directory search to verify telephone numbers, and to fill in any missing or incorrect telephone and address information. Records with phone numbers at this stage will be contacted by phone a minimum of eight times, with attempts rotated through day, evening, and weekend shifts. Those who are eventually reached by the repeated phone contact attempts will be given a short survey to determine whether they qualify for the study (whether they fished in saltwater in the last 12 months) and asked whether they prefer taking a web version or a mail version along with a few short questions that can be used to examine potential differences between those who respond and those who do not. License holders who are not reached by the phone attempts are next contacted by mail.

Mail attempt after phone screening:

If a mail survey is to be sent after an angler requested this format during the telephone screening survey, the first mail contact will be a prenotice letter. Next, the full survey packet itself will be sent. The survey packet includes a personalized cover letter, a survey booklet, and a business reply envelope. The cover letter will be personalized with the respondent's name and mailing address and will be dated with the mail out date. If no response is achieved with the first mailing, a second mailing of the full survey packet will be sent.

Mail attempt with no prior successful contact:

If the mail survey is to be sent and the angler has not yet been reached through any format, the first mail contact will be a prenotice letter describing the survey, establishing its importance, and inviting the angler to complete the survey online by using a personalized link. If the survey is not completed, a post card reminder will be sent by mail, again with a personalized link. Next, the first mailing of the full survey packet will be sent to those who have not responded to the request to complete a web survey. If there is no response, a second complete mailing of the survey packet will occur.

These steps are outlined in Figures A1, A2, and A3 of the Appendix.

As part of the total sample, we will conduct a pretest, resulting in 200 completes across the three states (see response to B4), in order to test the data collection prior to the subsequent full survey administration. This pretest is estimated to account for 47.1 annual burden hours, reflected in the 408 total annualized burden hours noted above.

Burden estimates were calculated by multiplying the estimated time to complete each contact by the number of estimated contacts of each type. Specifically, we estimate that it will require 25 minutes, 10 minutes, and 3 minutes to complete the full survey for a saltwater angler, the full survey for an angler who has not fished in saltwater, and the telephone screening survey, respectively. Including the pretest, we estimate 578 completed surveys from saltwater anglers, 831 completed surveys from anglers who have not fished in saltwater, and 578 completed telephone screening surveys (all annualized).

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).

There are no costs excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12. Mailed surveys will be accompanied by a postage-paid envelope.

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

The survey is being administered by an outside contractor. The costs to the federal government are limited to the cost of the contract, which is estimated to total \$48,333 per year over three years on an annualized basis, plus an estimated 30 hours each from two NOAA economists, one at the ZP3 pay band and one at the ZP4 pay band. Although the economists will be employed full time by the federal government with or without this project, these hours would be diverted to other valuable tasks in the absence of this data collection. We use hourly loaded wage rates to estimate these opportunity costs. Assuming annual salaries of \$90,000 and \$110,000, and a 40% benefit load, these hours amount to \$8,400 annually for salary and benefits related to this data collection.

Therefore, the total estimated annual costs incurred by the federal government as a result of implementing this survey are \$56,733.

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

This is a new program.

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

The methodology and results of the data collection will be published in a NOAA technical memorandum. Tabulations of responses will be aggregated in order to maintain sufficient confidentiality, as described in the answer to question 10, above.

Reporting of results from economic and bio-economic models for management purposes or in peer reviewed journals will be aggregated to maintain sufficient anonymity, as described in the answer to 10, above.

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.

This is not applicable, as we are not seeking such an approval.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

This is not applicable, as we are not seeking such an exception.