

for Search and Rescue, to contact the distressed person(s) or alternate party via a phone call or radio broadcast. Other data provides rescuers with descriptive material of the element in distress. The registration information must be kept up-to-date.

Four registration forms are used. The EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) form is used for nautical beacons. The ELT (Emergency Locator Transmitter) form is used for aircraft beacons. The PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) is used to register portable beacons carried by individuals. Ship Security Alerting System (SSAS) beacons are carried aboard ships, are similar to EPIRBs and are used in the event of an emergency situation such as piracy or terrorism.

These forms are being updated in response to the development of 406MHz second generation beacons (SGBs), which are in development and are projected to be available to the public in 2023. Changes to the forms are as follows:

**23-Hex Beacon ID line:** SGBs have 23-character hexadecimal unique identifiers. NOAA's 406 MHz Beacon Registration Database (RGDB) currently allows registrations for first generation beacons (FGBs) that contain 15-character hexadecimal identifiers. Once SGBs are on the market, beacon owners will have the capability to register either FGBs or SGBs in the RGDB. Even though each registration will be for only one beacon ID, the hardcopy registration form must contain separate lines for FGBs and SGBs due to the differing number of characters and their presentation on manufacture labels and packaging—FGB IDs are presented in groups of 5–5–5 and SGB IDs will be 6–6–6–5.

**Old 23-Hex ID:** This field was added to enable registration of a replacement SGB beacon. The RGDB will continue to capture data for both FGB and SGB replacements.

**Beacon Serial No.:** This field was added to capture the beacon's serial number, which appears on the manufacturer-supplied label and/or on the beacon or its packaging. The serial number provides additional verification of the beacon ID and can be used by RGDB staff to resolve cases of incorrect or duplicate beacon IDs.

**Other:** An Automatic Identification System (AIS) Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number was added to the EPIRB form. The following fields were added to the PLB form to provide additional pertinent information to search and rescue (SAR) forces: Radio Call Sign (on EPIRB form), Vessel MMSI # (on EPIRB form), AIS MMSI # (just

added to EPIRB form), and Aircraft Registration (Tail) No. (on ELT form).

**Affected Public:** Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit organizations; Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local, or Tribal government; Federal government.

**Respondent's Obligation:** Mandatory.  
**Legal Authority:** Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations at 47 CFR 80.1061, 47 CFR 87.199 and 47 CFR 95.1402.

This information collection request may be viewed at [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov). Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function and entering either the title of the collection or the OMB Control Number 0648–0295.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

*Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Commerce Department.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XB886]

#### Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permits

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

**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS, has made a preliminary determination that an Exempted Fishing Permit application from Pioneers for a Thoughtful Coexistence, Inc. contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act require

publication of this notice to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed Exempted Fishing Permits.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before April 4, 2022.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit written comments by any of the following methods:

- *Email:* [NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov](mailto:NMFS.GAR.EFP@noaa.gov). Include in the subject line "Comments on Pioneers Ropeless Fishing EFP." If you are unable to submit comments via the above email, please contact Laura Hansen at (978) 281–9225, or email at [Laura.Hansen@noaa.gov](mailto:Laura.Hansen@noaa.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Laura Hansen, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281–9225.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pioneers for a Thoughtful Coexistence Inc. (Pionners), in collaboration with the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) submitted a complete application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) on December 20, 2021, to conduct a ropeless lobster gear testing project. Pioneers is requesting an exemption from Federal lobster regulations that would authorize three federally permitted commercial lobster vessels to participate in a ropeless lobster gear study in the Massachusetts Bay Restricted Area (MBRA). Pioneers is requesting an exemption from gear marking requirements at 50 CFR 697.21(b)(2) to allow for the use of no surface markers on a trawl of more than three traps.

The purpose of this study is to test real-world use of acoustic-release systems that would reduce the risk of entangling protected species, including the North Atlantic right whale.

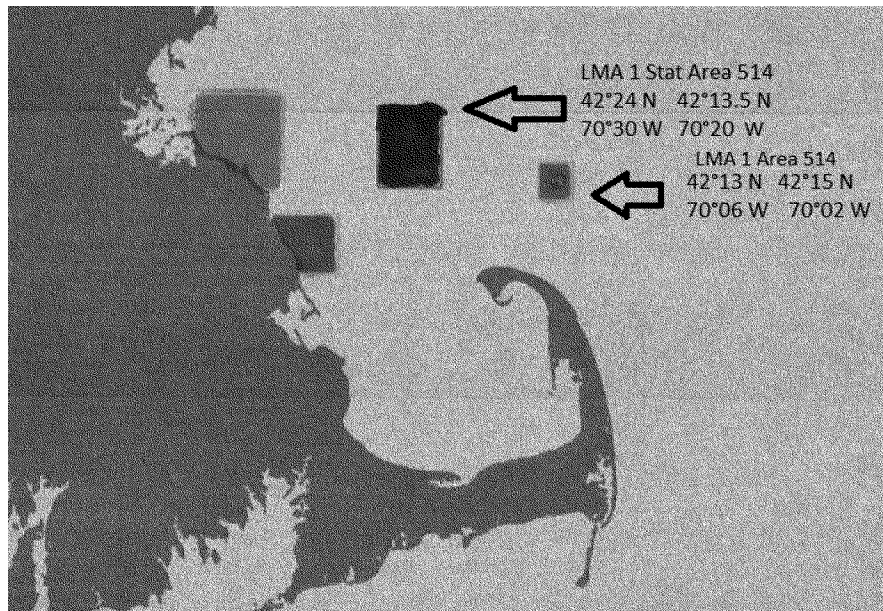
The EFP would authorize three federally permitted lobster vessels to modify some of their existing trawls to use "on-demand access" technology for the retrieval of the gear. Each vessel would use 10 sets of acoustic releases and equipment to fish 10, 20-pot trawls each. Experimental trawls would either have a rope spool, a buoy and stowed rope system, or a lift bag system fitted with an acoustic release, deployed on one end of the trawl. One vessel would have 5 of the 10 trawls fixed with acoustic releases on both ends of the trawl. Two state-permitted vessels would also participate in the study exclusively in state waters of the MBRA, and do not require Federal EFPs. Participating vessels would be testing gear in discrete areas in the MBRA that were selected by the applicant based on their claim of limited historical right whale usage, desired bottom composition, minimal gear conflict

exposure, and history of viable fishing grounds. NEFSC and project participants have been working to develop and test ropeless gear technology since 2019. To date, there have been no premature releases of the gear. Smart Buoy technology would be used to send an automated electronic notification to an email list within approximately 20 minutes of surfacing in the event of an unintended release. The mail list includes the Principal Investigator, Lori Caron, and Eric Matzen, NEFSC, who would immediately notify enforcement and

any on-the-water marine patrol, research, and/or rescue efforts. Positioning will be tracked in real time and recovery would occur as soon as possible. The gear would be transported ashore for assessment. For a map of the areas where sampling would occur, please see Figure 1.

Soak time would be no longer than 14 days, gear retrieval would be limited to daylight hours, and gear would not be set or retrieved when right whales are in close proximity, to further minimize any potential interactions with right whales. Sampling would occur from the date the

permit is issued, through the end of the closure on April 30, 2022. Pioneers estimated that there would be approximately 117 hauls of the ropeless gear. Data would be collected with data sheets developed by the NEFSC to ensure consistency among and between different ropeless fishing projects. This project would also collect whale sighting data. NEFSC staff would assist with data recording, when available. The outcome of this project would be to inform discussions on the utility of ropeless gear to allow potential fishing access to vertical line closure areas.



**Figure 1: Map of Discrete Sampling Areas in the MBRA**

Participants would adhere to additional precautions to mitigate concerns regarding enforcement, gear identification and retrieval, and protected species interactions including:

- Unique marking of ground lines and on-demand vertical lines beyond the regional requirements and the on-demand vertical line would be supervised while in the water column at all times;
- Unique flag would be flown by participating vessels for enforcement recognition;
- Weekly mandatory gear loss and gear conflict reporting;
- Stored vertical lines would be enhanced with weak links every 40 feet and are designed to break at less than 1700 lb (771 kg);
- Participating vessels would operate at a 10-knot (18.5 kph) speed limit and, if within a 500 yard (457.2 m) buffer zone of a surfacing right whale, would

immediately depart the area at a safe, slow speed;

- Weekly communication with Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and NEFSC on project activities; and,
- Use of the Trap Tracker application for retrieval and set positioning of trawls. This information would be accessible to Federal, state, and corresponding enforcement personnel, as requested.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. We may grant EFP modifications and extensions without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. The EFP would prohibit any fishing activity

conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activities.

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

Dated: March 15, 2022.

**Ngagne Jafnar Gueye,**  
*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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**COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED**

**Procurement List; Proposed Additions**

**AGENCY:** Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

**ACTION:** Proposed additions to the Procurement List.

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