

(18) Delaware and Pennsylvania:

(i) Radio stations, August 1, 1998.

(ii) Television stations, August 1, 1999.

(b) For the cutoff date for the filing of applications mutually exclusive with renewal applications that are filed on or before May 1, 1995 and for the deadline for filing petitions to deny renewal applications, see § 73.3516(e).

(c) The license of a broadcasting station that fails to transmit broadcast signals for any consecutive 12-month period expires as a matter of law at the end of that period, notwithstanding any provision, term, or condition of the license to the contrary.

(Secs. 4, 5, 303, 48 Stat., as amended, 1066, 1068, 1082 (47 U.S.C. 154, 155, 303))

[49 FR 4382, Feb. 6, 1984, as amended at 52 FR 25604, July 8, 1987; 59 FR 63051, Dec. 7, 1994; 61 FR 18291, Apr. 25, 1996; 61 FR 28767, June 6, 1996; 62 FR 5347, Feb. 5, 1997]

[FR Doc. 01-55508 Filed 3-20-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 1505-01-D

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

47 CFR Part 73

[DA 01-626; MM Docket No. 00-70; RM-9843]

Radio Broadcasting Services; Key West, FL

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This document allots Channel 244A to Key West, Florida, in response to a petition filed by Adolphus Warfield, Inc. See 65 FR 30046, May 10, 2000. The coordinates for Channel 244A at Key West are 24-33-06 NL and 81-47-48 WL. A filing window for Channel 244A at Key West will not be opened at this time. Instead, the issue of opening this allotment for auction will be addressed by the Commission in a subsequent order.

DATES: Effective April 23, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathleen Scheuerle, Mass Media Bureau, (202) 418-2180.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a summary of the Commission's Report and Order, MM Docket No. 00-70, adopted February 28, 2001, and released March 9, 2001. The full text of this Commission decision is available for inspection and copying during normal business hours in the Commission's Reference Center, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC. The complete text of

this decision may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractors, International Transcription Services, Inc., 1231 20th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20036, (202) 857-3800, facsimile (202) 857-3805.

List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 73

Radio broadcasting.

Part 73 of title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

PART 73—RADIO BROADCAST SERVICES

1. The authority citation for Part 73 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 154, 303, 334 and 336.

§ 73.202 [Amended]

2. Section 73.202(b), the Table of FM Allotments under Florida, is amended by adding Channel 244A at Key West.

Federal Communications Commission.

John A. Karousos,

Chief, Allocations Branch, Policy and Rules Division, Mass Media Bureau.

[FR Doc. 01-6971 Filed 3-20-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

47 CFR Part 73

[DA 01-627; MM Docket No. 00-145; RM-9845]

Radio Broadcasting Services; Lowry City, Missouri

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This document allots Channel 285A to Lowry City, Missouri, in response to a petition filed by Bott Communications, Inc. See 65 FR 53690, September 5, 2000. The coordinates for Channel 285A at Lowry City are 38-02-24 NL and 93-38-28 WL. A filing window for Channel 285A at Lowry City will not be opened at this time. Instead, the issue of opening this allotment for auction will be addressed by the Commission in a subsequent order.

DATES: Effective April 23, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kathleen Scheuerle, Mass Media Bureau, (202) 418-2180.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a summary of the Commission's Report and Order, MM Docket No. 00-145, adopted February 28, 2001, and released March 9, 2001. The full text of this Commission decision is available for

inspection and copying during normal business hours in the Commission's Reference Center, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC. The complete text of this decision may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractors, International Transcription Services, Inc., 1231 20th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20036, (202) 857-3800, facsimile (202) 857-3805.

List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 73

Radio broadcasting.

Part 73 of title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

PART 73—RADIO BROADCAST SERVICES

1. The authority citation for Part 73 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 154, 303, 334 and 336.

§ 73.202 [Amended]

2. Section 73.202(b), the Table of FM Allotments under Missouri, is amended by adding Lowry City, Channel 285A.

Federal Communications Commission.

John A. Karousos,

Chief, Allocations Branch, Policy and Rules Division, Mass Media Bureau.

[FR Doc. 01-6970 Filed 3-20-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 300

[Docket No. 010119023-1062-02; I.D. 121900A]

RIN 0648-AO80

Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Catch Sharing Plans

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

ACTION: Final rule; annual management measures for Pacific halibut fisheries and approval of catch sharing plans.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), on behalf of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), publishes annual management measures promulgated as regulations by the IPHC and approved by the Secretary of State governing the Pacific halibut fishery. The AA also announces the approval of modifications to the Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for Area 2A and implementing

regulations for 2001. These actions are intended to enhance the conservation of the Pacific halibut stock and further the goals and objectives of the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC).

DATES: Effective March 15, 2001.

ADDRESSES: NMFS Alaska Region, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668; or NMFS Northwest Region, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115-0070 (<http://www.nwr.noaa.gov>).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nina Mollett, 907-586-7462 or Yvonne deReynier, 206-526-6140.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The IPHC has promulgated regulations governing the Pacific halibut fishery in 2001, under the Convention between the United States and Canada for the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea (Convention), signed at Ottawa, Ontario, on March 2, 1953, as amended by a Protocol Amending the Convention (signed at Washington, D.C., on March 29, 1979). The IPHC regulations have been approved by the Secretary of State of the United States under section 4 of the Northern Pacific Halibut Act (Halibut Act, 16 U.S.C. 773-773k). Pursuant to regulations at 50 CFR 300.62, the approved IPHC regulations setting forth the 2001 IPHC annual management measures are published in the **Federal Register** to provide notice of their effectiveness, and to inform persons subject to the regulations of the restrictions and requirements.

The IPHC held its annual meeting in Vancouver, B.C., on January 22-25, 2001, and adopted regulations for 2001. The substantive changes to the previous IPHC regulations (65 FR 14909, March 20, 2000) include the following.

1. New catch limits for all areas.
2. Establishment of opening dates for the Area 2A commercial directed halibut fishery.

3. Licensing change - The Area 2A licensing regulations remained the same as in 2000, with the exception that vessels fishing in the incidental halibut fishery concurrent with the sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis are also required to get a commercial license from the IPHC.

4. Logbooks - In the United States, vessels with an overall length over 25 ft (7.6 meters (m)) fishing for halibut are required to keep halibut fishing information in a logbook. A regulatory change for 2001 provides for using an Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) Longline-Port fishery logbook as a fourth option to the logbook options previously allowed, which include: (1)

NMFS' catcher vessel daily fishing logbook, (2) Alaska hook-and-line sablefish logbook, and (3) the logbook issued by IPHC.

Other logbook regulation changes include an IPHC requirement that the logbook be kept on the vessel until the offload is completed, instead of 5 days after the offload as previously required. The regulations will also require more specific data in the logbook.

5. Halibut weight records - The regulations have been changed to clarify that total halibut weight be recorded on both State and Federal catch records, not one or the other, in the United States.

6. Nazan Bay - The IPHC approved Nazan Bay on Atka Island as an additional port where Area 4A clearance prior to fishing can be obtained.

7. Clearance forms - A new requirement in 2001 will be that the clearance forms must be signed.

In addition, this action implements the CRP for regulatory Area 2A. This CRP was developed by the PFMC under authority of the Halibut Act. Section 5 of the Halibut Act (16 U.S.C. 773c) provides that the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) shall have general responsibility to carry out the Halibut Convention (Convention) between the United States and Canada, and that the Secretary shall adopt such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and objectives of the Convention and the Halibut Act. The Secretary's authority has been delegated to the AA. Section 5 of the Halibut Act also authorizes the Regional Fishery Management Council having authority for the geographic area concerned to develop regulations governing the Pacific halibut catch in United States Convention waters that are in addition to, but not in conflict with, regulations of the IPHC. Pursuant to this authority, NMFS requested the PFMC to allocate halibut catches should such allocation be necessary.

Catch Sharing Plan for Area 2A

The PFMC's Area 2A CSP allocates the halibut catch limit for Area 2A among treaty Indian, non-Indian commercial, and non-Indian sport fisheries in and off the States of Washington, Oregon, and California. Under the CSP, 35 percent of the Area 2A total allowable catch (TAC) is allocated to Washington treaty Indian tribes in Subarea 2A-1, and 65 percent is allocated to non-treaty fisheries in Area 2A. Treaty fisheries are divided into commercial fisheries, and ceremonial and subsistence fisheries. The allocation to non-treaty fisheries is divided into three shares, with the

Washington sport fishery (north of the Columbia River) receiving 36.6 percent, the Oregon/California sport fishery receiving 31.7 percent, and the commercial fishery receiving 31.7 percent. The non-treaty commercial allocation is further divided between a directed longline fishery (85 percent) and an incidental catch allowance in the salmon troll fishery (15 percent). The directed commercial fishery in Area 2A is confined to southern Washington (south of 46°53'18" N. lat.), Oregon and California. For the first time, in 2001 the overall Area 2A TAC is high enough to allow an incidental catch of halibut north of 46°53'18" N. lat. in the regular, fixed-gear sablefish fishery. This fishery will not begin until early August; the PFMC will make recommendations at its April and June meetings on managing the incidental catch of halibut in the directed sablefish fishery. The CSP also divides the sport fisheries into seven geographic areas each with separate allocations, seasons, and bag limits.

For 2001, PFMC recommended changes to the CSP to modify the Pacific halibut commercial and sport fisheries in Area 2A in 2001 and beyond, pursuant to recommendations from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). The purpose of these changes is to improve non-treaty commercial fisheries management by providing a clear separation of quota and seasons for the directed commercial fishery and the incidental halibut landings in the salmon troll fishery. Modifications to sport fishery management off the southern coast of the State of Washington should increase management flexibility for regulators and fishery participants.

A complete description of the PFMC-recommended changes to the CSP, notice of a draft Environmental Assessment and Regulatory Impact Review (EA/RIR), and proposed sport fishery management measures were published in the **Federal Register** on March 6, 2001 (66 FR 13480) with a request for public comments by March 9, 2001. No public comments were received. Therefore, NMFS has approved the changes to the CSP as proposed, made a finding of no significant impact, and finalized the EA/RIR. Copies of the complete CSP for Area 2A as modified and the final EA/RIR are available from the NMFS Northwest Regional Office (see ADDRESSES).

In accordance with the CSP, the WDFW and the ODFW held public workshops (after the IPHC set the Area 2A quota) on February 2 and 13, 2001,

to develop recommendations on the opening dates and weekly structure of the sport fisheries. The WDFW and ODFW sent letters to NMFS discussing the outcome of the workshops and provided the following recommendations on the opening dates and season structure for the sport fisheries.

WDFW recommended a May 17 to July 22 season, 5 days per week (closed Tuesday and Wednesday) for the Puget Sound subarea sport fishery. The recommended number of fishing days is based on an analysis of past harvest patterns in this fishery and meets the requirements of the CSP for this subarea. For the Washington North Coast subarea, WDFW has recommended a season opening May 1 and continuing until the May-June sub-quota is taken, 5 days per week (closed Sunday and Monday), and a second season for July 1-4, with a possibility of re-opening this subarea if sufficient quota remains after July 4. For the Washington South Coast subarea, WDFW has recommended a season opening May 1 and continuing until the quota is taken, 5 days per week (closed Friday and Saturday) in the offshore area and 7 days per week in the nearshore area. WDFW recommendations for both the North Coast and South Coast Washington subareas meet the requirements of the CSP.

Both WDFW and ODFW have recommended opening the Columbia River subarea on May 1 and continuing the season until the quota has been reached, 7 days per week. This recommended season meets the requirements of the CSP.

ODFW recommended starting the nearshore fishery in the Oregon Central Coast and South Coast subareas, on May 1 and continuing the season until the sub-quota for that fishery is taken, 7 days per week. For the all-depth fisheries in those subareas, ODFW recommended a 4-day season of May 11, 12, 18, and 19, based on an analysis of past harvest rates, which indicated an increasing annual trend in this sport fishery. ODFW further recommended a 2-day August all-depth season from August 3 to 4. If the May season does not take the entire May sub-quota for these subareas, ODFW recommended additional opening dates on June 8 and/or June 9. If the August season does not take the entire August sub-quota for these subareas, ODFW recommended additional opening dates on August 17 and/or 18, and September 21 and/or 22. These recommendations meet the requirements of the CSP for these subareas.

For the southernmost subarea, south of Humbug Mountain, OR, ODFW recommended opening this subarea on May 1 and continuing the season until the quota has been reached, 7 days per week. This recommended season meets the requirements of the CSP.

NMFS has implemented sport fishing management measures in Area 2A based on recommendations from the states in accordance with the CSP.

Annual Halibut Management Measures

The annual management measures for the 2001 Pacific halibut fishery that follow are identical to those recommended by the IPHC and approved by the Secretary of State.

2001 Pacific Halibut Fishery Regulations

Regulations Respecting the Convention Between Canada and the United States of America for the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the Northern Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea

1. Short Title

These regulations may be cited as the Pacific Halibut Fishery Regulations.

2. Interpretation

(1) In these Regulations,

(a) *Authorized officer* means any State, Federal, or Provincial officer authorized to enforce these regulations including, but not limited to, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Alaska Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection (ADFWP), United States Coast Guard (USCG), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon State Police;

(b) *Authorized clearance personnel* means an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor;

(c) *Charter vessel* means a vessel used for hire in sport fishing for halibut, but not including a vessel without a hired operator;

(d) *Commercial fishing* means fishing, the resulting catch of which is sold or bartered; or is intended to be sold or bartered;

(e) *Commission* means the International Pacific Halibut Commission;

(f) *Daily bag limit* means the maximum number of halibut a person may take in any calendar day from Convention waters;

(g) *Fishing* means the taking, harvesting, or catching of fish, or any activity that can reasonably be expected to result in the taking, harvesting, or

catching of fish, including specifically the deployment of any amount or component part of setline gear anywhere in the maritime area;

(h) *Fishing period limit* means the maximum amount of halibut that may be retained and landed by a vessel during one fishing period;

(i) *Land*, with respect to halibut, means the offloading of halibut from the catching vessel;

(j) *License* means a halibut fishing license issued by the Commission pursuant to section 3;

(k) *Maritime area*, in respect of the fisheries jurisdiction of a Contracting Party, includes without distinction areas within and seaward of the territorial sea or internal waters of that Party;

(l) *Operator*, with respect to any vessel, means the owner and/or the master or other individual on board and in charge of that vessel;

(m) *Overall length of a vessel* means the horizontal distance, rounded to the nearest foot, between the foremost part of the stem and the aftermost part of the stern (excluding bowsprits, rudders, outboard motor brackets, and similar fittings or attachments);

(n) *Person* includes an individual, corporation, firm, or association;

(o) *Regulatory area* means an area referred to in section 6;

(p) *Setline gear* means one or more stationary, buoyed, and anchored lines with hooks attached;

(q) *Sport fishing* means all fishing other than commercial fishing and treaty Indian ceremonial and subsistence fishing;

(r) *Tender* means any vessel that buys or obtains fish directly from a catching vessel and transports it to a port of landing or fish processor;

(2) In these Regulations, all bearings are true and all positions are determined by the most recent charts issued by the National Ocean Service or the Canadian Hydrographic Service.

(3) In these Regulations all weights shall be computed on the basis that the heads of the fish are off and their entrails removed.

3. Licensing Vessels

(1) No person shall fish for halibut from a vessel, nor possess halibut on board a vessel, used either for commercial fishing or as a charter vessel in Area 2A, unless the Commission has issued a license valid for fishing in Area 2A in respect of that vessel.

(2) A license issued for a vessel operating in Area 2A shall be valid only for operating either as a charter vessel or a commercial vessel, but not both.

(3) A vessel with a valid Area 2A commercial license cannot be used to sport fish for Pacific halibut in Area 2A.

(4) A license issued for a vessel operating in the commercial fishery in Area 2A shall be valid only for one of the following, but not both:

(a) The directed commercial fishery during the fishing periods specified in paragraph (2) of section 8 and the incidental catch fishery during the sablefish fishery specified in paragraph (3) of section 8; or

(b) The incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fishery specified in paragraph (4) of section 8.

(5) A license issued in respect of a vessel referred to in paragraph (1) must be carried on board that vessel at all times and the vessel operator shall permit its inspection by any authorized officer.

(6) The Commission shall issue a license in respect of a vessel, without fee, from its office in Seattle, Washington, upon receipt of a completed, written, and signed "Application for Vessel License for the Halibut Fishery" form.

(7) A vessel operating in the directed commercial fishery or the incidental commercial fishery during the sablefish fishery in Area 2A must have its "Application for Vessel License for the Halibut Fishery" form postmarked no later than 11:59 P.M. on April 30, or on the first weekday in May if April 30 is a Saturday or Sunday.

(8) A vessel operating in the incidental commercial fishery during the salmon troll season in Area 2A must have its "Application for Vessel License for the Halibut Fishery" form postmarked no later than 11:59 P.M. on March 31, or the first weekday in April if March 31 is a Saturday or Sunday.

(9) Application forms may be obtained from any authorized officer or from the Commission.

(10) Information on "Application for Vessel License for the Halibut Fishery" form must be accurate.

(11) The "Application for Vessel License for the Halibut Fishery" form shall be completed and signed by the vessel owner.

(12) Licenses issued under this section shall be valid only during the year in which they are issued.

(13) A new license is required for a vessel that is sold, transferred, renamed, or redocumented.

(14) The license required under this section is in addition to any license, however designated, that is required under the laws of the United States or any of its States.

(15) The United States may suspend, revoke, or modify any license issued

under this section under policies and procedures in Title 15, Code of Federal Regulations, part 904.

4. In-Season Actions

(1) The Commission is authorized to establish or modify regulations during the season after determining that such action:

(a) Will not result in exceeding the catch limit established preseason for each regulatory area;

(b) Is consistent with the Convention between the United States of America and Canada for the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the Northern Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea, and applicable domestic law of either Canada or the United States; and;

(c) Is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with any domestic catch sharing plans developed by the United States or Canadian governments.

(2) In-season actions may include, but are not limited to, establishment or modification of the following:

- (a) Closed areas;
- (b) Fishing periods;
- (c) Fishing period limits;
- (d) Gear restrictions;
- (e) Recreational bag limits;
- (f) Size limits; or
- (g) Vessel clearances.

(3) In-season changes will be effective at the time and date specified by the Commission.

(4) The Commission will announce in-season actions under this section by providing notice to major halibut processors; Federal, State, United States treaty Indian, Provincial fishery officials, and the media.

5. Application

(1) These Regulations apply to persons and vessels fishing for halibut in, or possessing halibut taken from, waters off the west coast of Canada and the United States, including the southern as well as the western coasts of Alaska, within the respective maritime areas in which each of those countries exercises exclusive fisheries jurisdiction as of March 29, 1979.

(2) Sections 6 to 21 apply to commercial fishing for halibut.

(3) Section 7 applies to the Community Development Quota (CDQ) fishery in Area 4E.

(4) Section 22 applies to the United States treaty Indian tribal fishery in Area 2A-1.

(5) Section 23 applies to sport fishing for halibut.

(6) These Regulations do not apply to fishing operations authorized or conducted by the Commission for research purposes.

6. Regulatory Areas

The following areas shall be regulatory areas for the purposes of the Convention:

(1) Area 2A includes all waters off the States of California, Oregon, and Washington;

(2) Area 2B includes all waters off British Columbia;

(3) Area 2C includes all waters off Alaska that are east of a line running 340° true from Cape Spencer Light (58°11'57" N. lat., 136°38'18" W. long.) and south and east of a line running 205° true from said light;

(4) Area 3A includes all waters between Area 2C and a line extending from the most northerly point on Cape Aklek (57°41'15" N. lat., 155°35'00" W. long.) to Cape Ikolik (57°17'17" N. lat., 154°47'18" W. long.), then along the Kodiak Island coastline to Cape Trinity (56°44'50" N. lat., 154°08'44" W. long.), then 140° true;

(5) Area 3B includes all waters between Area 3A and a line extending 150° true from Cape Lutke (54°29'00" N. lat., 164°20'00" W. long.) and south of 54°49'00" N. lat. in Isanotski Strait;

(6) Area 4A includes all waters in the Gulf of Alaska west of Area 3B and in the Bering Sea west of the closed area defined in section 10 that are east of 172°00'00" W. long. and south of 56°20'00" N. lat.;

(7) Area 4B includes all waters in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska west of Area 4A and south of 56°20'00" N. lat.;

(8) Area 4C includes all waters in the Bering Sea north of Area 4A and north of the closed area defined in section 10 which are east of 171°00'00" W. long., south of 58°00'00" N. lat., and west of 168°00'00" W. long.;

(9) Area 4D includes all waters in the Bering Sea north of Areas 4A and 4B, north and west of Area 4C, and west of 168°00'00" W. long.;

(10) Area 4E includes all waters in the Bering Sea north and east of the closed area defined in section 10, east of 168°00'00" W. long., and south of 65°34'00" N. lat.

7. Fishing in Regulatory Area 4E

(1) A person may retain halibut taken with setline gear in the Area 4E CDQ fishery that are smaller than the size limit specified in section 13, provided that no person may sell or barter such halibut.

(2) The manager of a CDQ organization that authorizes persons to harvest halibut in the Area 4E CDQ fishery must report to the Commission the total number and weight of undersized halibut taken and retained

by such persons pursuant to section 7, paragraph (1). This report, which shall include data and methodology used to collect the data, must be received by the Commission prior to December 1 of the year in which such halibut were harvested.

(3) Section 7 shall be effective until December 31, 2001.

8. Fishing Periods

(1) The fishing periods for each regulatory area apply where the catch limits specified in section 11 have not been taken.

(2) Each fishing period in the Area 2A directed fishery¹ shall begin at 0800 hours and terminate at 1800 hours local time on June 27, July 11, July 25, August 8, August 22, and September 5, unless the Commission specifies otherwise.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (7) of section 11, an incidental catch fishery² is authorized during the sablefish seasons in Area 2A in accordance with regulations promulgated by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (2), and paragraph (7) of section 11, an incidental catch fishery is authorized during salmon troll seasons in Area 2A in accordance with regulations promulgated by NMFS.

(5) The fishing period in Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E shall begin at 1200 hours local time on March 15 and terminate at 1200 hours local time on November 15, unless the Commission specifies otherwise.

(6) All commercial fishing for halibut in Areas 2A, 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E shall cease at 1200 hours local time on November 15.

9. Closed Periods

(1) No person shall engage in fishing for halibut in any regulatory area other than during the fishing periods set out in section 8 in respect of that area.

(2) No person shall land or otherwise retain halibut caught outside a fishing period applicable to the regulatory area where the halibut was taken.

(3) Subject to paragraphs (7), (8), (9), and (10) of section 19, these Regulations do not prohibit fishing for any species of fish other than halibut during the closed periods.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (3), no person shall have halibut in his/her possession while fishing for any other species of fish during the closed periods.

(5) No vessel shall retrieve any halibut fishing gear during a closed period if the vessel has any halibut on board.

(6) A vessel that has no halibut on board may retrieve any halibut fishing gear during the closed period after the operator notifies an authorized officer or representative of the Commission prior to that retrieval.

(7) After retrieval of halibut gear in accordance with paragraph (6), the vessel shall submit to a hold inspection at the discretion of the authorized officer or representative of the Commission.

(8) No person shall retain any halibut caught on gear retrieved referred to in paragraph (6).

(9) No person shall possess halibut aboard a vessel in a regulatory area during a closed period unless that vessel is in continuous transit to or within a port in which that halibut may be lawfully sold.

10. Closed Area

All waters in the Bering Sea north of 55°00'00" N. lat. in Isanotski Strait that are enclosed by a line from Cape Sarichef Light (54°36'00" N. lat., 164°55'42" W. long.) to a point at 56°20'00" N. lat., 168°30'00" W. long.; thence to a point at 58°21'25" N. lat., 163°00'00" W. long.; thence to Strogonof Point (56°53'18" N. lat., 158°50'37" W. long.); and then along the northern coasts of the Alaska Peninsula and Unimak Island to the point of origin at Cape Sarichef Light are closed to halibut fishing and no person shall fish for halibut therein or have halibut in his/her possession while in those waters except in the course of a continuous transit across those waters. All waters in Isanotski Strait between 55°00'00" N. lat. and 54°49'00" N. lat. are closed to commercial halibut fishing.

11. Catch Limits

(1) The total allowable catch of halibut to be taken during the halibut fishing periods specified in section 8 shall be limited to the weight expressed in pounds or metric tons shown in the following table:

CATCH LIMITS

Regulatory Area	Pounds	Metric tons
2A: Directed commercial and incidental commercial during salmon troll fishery	226,972	102.9
2A: Incidental commercial during sablefish fishery	47,946	21.7
2B	10,510,000	4,766.4
2C	8,780,000	3,981.9
3A	21,890,000	9,927.4
3B	16,530,000	7,496.6
4A	4,970,000	2,254.0
4B	4,910,000	2,226.8
4C	2,030,000	920.6
4D	2,030,000	920.6
4E	390,000	176.9

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), regulations pertaining to the division of the Area 2A catch limit between the directed commercial fishery and the incidental catch fishery as described in paragraph (4) of section 8 will be

promulgated by NMFS and published in the **Federal Register**.

(3) The Commission shall determine and announce to the public the specific dates during which the directed fishery will be allowed in Area 2A and the date

on which the catch limit for Area 2A will be taken.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), Area 2B will close only when all Individual Vessel Quotas (IVQ) assigned by Canada's Department of Fisheries

¹ The directed fishery is restricted to waters that are south of Point Chehalis, WA (46°53'18" N. lat.) under regulations promulgated by NMFS and published in the **Federal Register**

² The incidental fishery during the directed, fixed gear sablefish season is restricted to waters that are north of Point Chehalis, WA (46°53'18" N. lat.)

under regulations promulgated by NMFS and published in the **Federal Register**.

and Oceans are taken, or November 15, whichever is earlier.

(5) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E will each close only when all Individual Fishing Quotas (IFQ) and all CDQ issued by NMFS have been taken, or November 15, whichever is earlier.

(6) If the Commission determines that the catch limit specified for Area 2A in paragraph (1) would be exceeded in an unrestricted 10-hour fishing period as specified in paragraph (2) of section 8, the catch limit for that area shall be considered to have been taken unless fishing period limits are implemented.

(7) When under paragraphs (2), (3), and (6) the Commission has announced a date on which the catch limit for Area 2A will be taken, no person shall fish for halibut in that area after that date for the rest of the year, unless the Commission has announced the reopening of that area for halibut fishing.

12. Fishing Period Limits

(1) It shall be unlawful for any vessel to retain more halibut than authorized by that vessel's license in any fishing period for which the Commission has announced a fishing period limit.

(2) The operator of any vessel that fishes for halibut during a fishing period when fishing period limits are in effect must, upon commencing an offload of halibut to a commercial fish processor, completely offload all halibut on board said vessel to that processor and ensure that all halibut is weighed and reported on State fish tickets.

(3) The operator of any vessel that fishes for halibut during a fishing period when fishing period limits are in effect must, upon commencing an offload of halibut other than to a commercial fish processor, completely offload all halibut on board said vessel and ensure that all halibut are weighed and reported on state fish tickets.

(4) The provisions of paragraph (3) are not intended to prevent retail over-the-side sales to individual purchasers so long as all the halibut on board is ultimately offloaded and reported.

(5) When fishing period limits are in effect, a vessel's maximum retainable catch will be determined by the Commission based on

- (a) the vessel's overall length in feet and associated length class;
- (b) the average performance of all vessels within that class; and
- (c) the remaining catch limit.

(6) Length classes are shown in the following table:

Overall Length	Vessel Class
1-25	A
26-30	B
31-35	C
36-40	D
41-45	E
46-50	F
51-55	G
56+	H

(7) Fishing period limits in Area 2A apply only to the directed halibut fishery referred to in paragraph (2) of section 8.

13. Size Limits

(1) No person shall take or possess any halibut that

(a) With the head on, is less than 32 inches (81.3 cm) as measured in a straight line, passing over the pectoral fin from the tip of the lower jaw with the mouth closed, to the extreme end of the middle of the tail, as illustrated in Figure 2; or

(b) With the head removed, is less than 24 inches (61.0 cm) as measured from the base of the pectoral fin at its most anterior point to the extreme end of the middle of the tail, as illustrated in Figure 2.

(2) No person shall possess on board a vessel a halibut filleted or a halibut that has been mutilated, or otherwise disfigured in any manner that prevents the determination of whether the halibut complies with the size limits specified in this section, except that:

(a) This paragraph shall not prohibit the possession on board a vessel of halibut cheeks cut from halibut caught by persons authorized to process the halibut on board in accordance with NMFS regulations published at Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, part 679; and

(b) Fillets from halibut that have been offloaded in accordance with section 17 may be possessed on board a vessel in the port of landing up to 1800 hours local time on the calendar day following the offload.

14. Careful Release of Halibut

All halibut that are caught and are not retained shall be immediately released outboard of the roller and returned to the sea with a minimum of injury by

- (a) Hook straightening;
- (b) Cutting the gangion near the hook; or
- (c) Carefully removing the hook by twisting it from the halibut with a gaff.

15. Vessel Clearance in Area 4

(1) The operator of any vessel that fishes for halibut in Areas 4A, 4B, 4C, or 4D must obtain a vessel clearance

before fishing in any of these areas, and before the unloading of any halibut caught in any of these areas, unless specifically exempted in paragraphs (10), (13), (14), (15), or (16).

(2) An operator obtaining a vessel clearance required by paragraph (1) must obtain the clearance in person from the authorized clearance personnel and sign the Commission form documenting that a clearance was obtained, except that when the clearance is obtained via very high frequency (VHF) radio referred to in paragraphs 5, 8, and 9, the authorized clearance personnel must sign the Commission form documenting that the clearance was obtained.

(3) The vessel clearance required under paragraph (1) prior to fishing in Area 4A may be obtained only at Nazan Bay on Atka Island, Dutch Harbor or Akutan, AK, from an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor.

(4) The vessel clearance required under paragraph (1) prior to fishing in Area 4B may only be obtained at Nazan Bay on Atka Island or Adak, AK, from an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor.

(5) The vessel clearance required under paragraph (1) prior to fishing in Area 4C or 4D may be obtained only at St. Paul or St. George, AK, from an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor by VHF radio and allowing the person contacted to confirm visually the identity of the vessel.

(6) The vessel operator shall specify the specific regulatory area in which fishing will take place.

(7) Before unloading any halibut caught in Area 4A, a vessel operator may obtain the clearance required under paragraph (1) only in Dutch Harbor or Akutan, AK, by contacting an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor.

(8) Before unloading any halibut caught in Area 4B, a vessel operator may obtain the clearance required under paragraph (1) only in Nazan Bay on Atka Island or Adak, AK, by contacting an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor by VHF radio or in person.

(9) Before unloading any halibut caught in Area 4C or 4D, a vessel operator may obtain the clearance required under paragraph (1) only in St. Paul, St. George, Dutch Harbor, or

Akutan, AK, either in person or by contacting an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor. The clearances obtained in St. Paul or St. George, AK, can be obtained by VHF radio and allowing the person contacted to confirm visually the identity of the vessel.

(10) Any vessel operator who complies with the requirements in section 18 for possessing halibut on board a vessel that was caught in more than one regulatory area in Area 4 is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1) of this section, but must comply with the following requirements:

(a) The operator of the vessel must obtain a vessel clearance prior to fishing in Area 4 in either Dutch Harbor, Akutan, St. Paul, St. George, Adak, or Nazan Bay on Atka Island, AK, by contacting an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor. The clearance obtained in St. Paul, St. George, Adak, or Nazan Bay on Atka Island, AK, can be obtained by VHF radio and allowing the person contacted to confirm visually the identity of the vessel. This clearance will list the Areas in which the vessel will fish; and

(b) Before unloading any halibut from Area 4, the vessel operator must obtain a vessel clearance from Dutch Harbor, Akutan, St. Paul, St. George, Adak, or Nazan Bay on Atka Island, AK, by contacting an authorized officer of the United States, a representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor. The clearance obtained in St. Paul or St. George can be obtained by VHF radio and allowing the person contacted to confirm visually the identity of the vessel. The clearance obtained in Adak or Nazan Bay on Atka Island, AK, can be obtained by VHF radio.

(11) Vessel clearances shall be obtained between 0600 and 1800 hours, local time.

(12) No halibut shall be on board the vessel at the time of the clearances required prior to fishing in Area 4.

(13) Any vessel that is used to fish for halibut only in Area 4A and lands its total annual halibut catch at a port within Area 4A is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1).

(14) Any vessel that is used to fish for halibut only in Area 4B and lands its total annual halibut catch at a port within Area 4B is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1).

(15) Any vessel that is used to fish for halibut only in Area 4C and lands its total annual halibut catch at a port

within Area 4C is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1).

(16) Any vessel that is used to fish for halibut only in Areas 4D and 4E and lands its total annual halibut catch at a port within Areas 4D, 4E, or the closed area defined in section 10, is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1).

16. Logs

(1) The operator of any United States vessel fishing for halibut that has an overall length of 26 ft (7.9 m) or greater shall maintain an accurate log of halibut fishing operations in the Groundfish/IFQ Daily Fishing Longline and Port Gear Logbook provided by NMFS, or Alaska hook-and-line logbook provided by Petersburg Vessel Owners Association or Alaska Longline Fisherman's Association, or the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) longline-pot logbook, or the logbook provided by the Commission.

(2) The logbook referred to in paragraph (1) must include the following information:

(a) The name of the vessel and the state vessel number (ADF&G) or Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife or Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife or California Department of Fish vessel number);

(b) The date(s) upon which the fishing gear is set or retrieved;

(c) The latitude and longitude or loran coordinates or a direction and distance from a point of land for each set or daily;

(d) The number of skates deployed or retrieved, and number of skates lost; and

(e) The total weight or number of halibut retained for each set or day.

(3) The logbook referred to in paragraph (1) shall be

(a) Maintained on board the vessel;

(b) Updated not later than 24 hours after midnight local time for each day fished and prior to the offloading or sale of halibut taken during that fishing trip;

(c) Retained for a period of 2 years by the owner or operator of the vessel;

(d) Open to inspection by an authorized officer or any authorized representative of the Commission upon demand; and

(e) Kept on board the vessel when engaged in halibut fishing, during transits to port of landing, and until the offloading of all halibut is completed.

(4) The log referred to in paragraph (1) does not apply to the incidental halibut fishery in Area 2A defined in paragraph (4) of section 8.

(5) The operator of any Canadian vessel fishing for halibut shall maintain an accurate log recorded in the British Columbia Halibut Fishery logbook

provided by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

(6) The logbook referred to in paragraph (5) must include the following information:

(a) The name of the vessel and the DFO's vessel number;

(b) The date(s) upon which the fishing gear is set or retrieved;

(c) The latitude and longitude or loran coordinates or a direction and distance from a point of land for each set or daily;

(d) The number of skates deployed or retrieved, and number of skates lost; and

(e) The total weight or number of halibut retained for each set or day.

(7) The logbook referred to in paragraph (5) shall be

(a) Maintained on board the vessel;

(b) Updated not later than 24 hours after midnight local time for each day fished and prior to the offloading or sale of halibut taken during that fishing trip;

(c) Retained for a period of 2 years by the owner or operator of the vessel;

(d) Open to inspection by an authorized officer or any authorized representative of the Commission upon demand;

(e) Kept on board the vessel when engaged in halibut fishing, during transits to port of landing, and until the offloading of all halibut is completed;

(f) Mailed to the DFO (white copy) within 7 days of offloading; and

(g) Mailed to the Commission (yellow copy) within seven days of the final offload if not collected by a Commission employee.

(6) The poundage of any halibut that is not sold, but is utilized by the vessel operator, his/her crew members, or any other person for personal use, shall be recorded in the vessel's log within 24 hours of offloading.

(7) No person shall make a false entry in a log referred to in this section.

17. Receipt and Possession of Halibut

(1) No person shall receive halibut from a United States vessel that does not have on board the license required by section 3.

(2) No person shall offload halibut from a vessel unless the gills and entrails have been removed prior to offloading.

(3) It shall be the responsibility of a vessel operator who lands halibut to continuously and completely offload at a single offload site all halibut on board the vessel.

(4) A registered buyer (as that term is defined in regulations promulgated by NMFS and codified at Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, part 679) who receives halibut harvested in IFQ and CDQ fisheries in Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A,

4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E, directly from the vessel operator who harvested such halibut must weigh all the halibut received and record the following information on Federal catch reports: date of offload; name of vessel; vessel number; scale weight obtained at the time of offloading, including the weight (in pounds) of halibut purchased by the registered buyer, the weight (in pounds) of halibut offloaded in excess of the IFQ or CDQ, the weight of halibut (in pounds) retained for personal use or for future sale, and the weight (in pounds) of halibut discarded as unfit for human consumption.

(5) The first recipient, commercial fish processor, or buyer in the United States who purchases or receives halibut directly from the vessel operator who harvested such halibut must weigh and record all halibut received and record the following information on state fish tickets: the date of offload, vessel number, total weight obtained at the time of offload including the weight (in pounds) of halibut purchased, the weight (in pounds) of halibut offloaded in excess of the IFQ, CDQ, or fishing period limits, the weight of halibut (in pounds) retained for personal use or for future sale, and the weight (in pounds) of halibut discarded as unfit for human consumption.

(6) The master or operator of a Canadian vessel that was engaged in halibut fishing must weigh and record all halibut on board said vessel at the time offloading commences and record on Provincial fish tickets or Federal catch reports the date, locality, name of vessel, the name(s) of the person(s) from whom the halibut was purchased; and the scale weight obtained at the time of offloading of all halibut on board the vessel including the pounds purchased; pounds in excess of IVQs; pounds retained for personal use; and pounds discarded as unfit for human consumption.

(7) No person shall make a false entry on a State or Provincial fish ticket or a Federal catch or landing report referred to in paragraphs (4), (5), and (6) of section 17.

(8) A copy of the fish tickets or catch reports referred to in paragraphs (4), (5), and (6) shall be

(a) Retained by the person making them for a period of three years from the date the fish tickets or catch reports are made; and

(b) Open to inspection by an authorized officer or any authorized representative of the Commission.

(9) No person shall possess any halibut that he/she knows to have been taken in contravention of these Regulations.

(10) When halibut are delivered to other than a commercial fish processor, the records required by paragraph (5) shall be maintained by the operator of the vessel from which that halibut was caught, in compliance with paragraph (8).

(11) It shall be unlawful to enter a Commission license number on a state fish ticket for any vessel other than the vessel actually used in catching the halibut reported thereon.

18. Fishing Multiple Regulatory Areas

(1) Except as provided in this section, no person shall possess at the same time on board a vessel halibut caught in more than one regulatory area.

(2) Halibut caught in Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, and 3B may be possessed on board a vessel at the same time providing the operator of the vessel:

(a) Has a NMFS-certified observer on board when required by NMFS regulations³ published at Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, § 679.7(f)(4); and

(b) Can identify the regulatory area in which each halibut on board was caught by separating halibut from different areas in the hold, tagging halibut, or by other means.

(3) Halibut caught in Regulatory Areas 4A, 4B, 4C, and 4D may be possessed on board a vessel at the same time providing the operator of the vessel:

(a) Has a NMFS-certified observer on board the vessel when halibut caught in different regulatory areas are on board; and

(b) Can identify the regulatory area in which each halibut on board was caught by separating halibut from different areas in the hold, tagging halibut, or by other means.

(4) Halibut caught in Regulatory Areas 4A, 4B, 4C, and 4D may be possessed on board a vessel when in compliance with paragraph (3) and if halibut from Area 4 are on board the vessel, the vessel can have halibut caught in Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, and 3B on board if in compliance with paragraph (2).

19. Fishing Gear

(1) No person shall fish for halibut using any gear other than hook and line gear.

(2) No person shall possess halibut taken with any gear other than hook and line gear.

(3) No person shall possess halibut while on board a vessel carrying any trawl nets or fishing pots capable of catching halibut.

³ Without an observer, a vessel cannot have on board more halibut than the IFQ for the area that is being fished even if some of the catch occurred earlier in a different area.

(4) All setline or skate marker buoys carried on board or used by any United States vessel used for halibut fishing shall be marked with one of the following:

(a) The vessel's name;

(b) The vessel's state license number;

or

(c) The vessel's registration number.

(5) The markings specified in paragraph (4) shall be in characters at least 4 inches in height and one-half inch in width in a contrasting color visible above the water and shall be maintained in legible condition.

(6) All setline or skate marker buoys carried on board or used by a Canadian vessel used for halibut fishing shall be

(a) Floating and visible on the surface of the water; and

(b) Legibly marked with the identification plate number of the vessel engaged in commercial fishing from which that setline is being operated.

(7) No person on board a vessel from which setline gear was used to fish for any species of fish anywhere in Area 2A during the 72-hour period immediately before the opening of a halibut fishing period shall catch or possess halibut anywhere in those waters during that halibut fishing period.

(8) No vessel from which setline gear was used to fish for any species of fish anywhere in Area 2A during the 72-hour period immediately before the opening of a halibut fishing period may be used to catch or possess halibut anywhere in those waters during that halibut fishing period.

(9) No person on board a vessel from which setline gear was used to fish for any species of fish anywhere in Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, or 4E during the 72-hour period immediately before the opening of the halibut fishing season shall catch or possess halibut anywhere in those areas until the vessel has removed all of its setline gear from the water and has either:

(a) Made a landing and completely offloaded its entire catch of other fish; or

(b) Submitted to a hold inspection by an authorized officer.

(10) No vessel from which setline gear was used to fish for any species of fish anywhere in Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, or 4E during the 72-hour period immediately before the opening of the halibut fishing season may be used to catch or possess halibut anywhere in those areas until the vessel has removed all of its setline gear from the water and has either:

(a) Made a landing and completely offloaded its entire catch of other fish; or

(b) Submitted to a hold inspection by an authorized officer.

(11) Notwithstanding any other provision in these regulations, a person may retain and possess, but not sell or barter, halibut taken with trawl gear only as authorized by Prohibited Species Donation regulations of NMFS.

20. Retention of Tagged Halibut

(1) Nothing contained in these Regulations prohibits any vessel at any time from retaining and landing a halibut that bears a Commission tag at the time of capture, if the halibut with the tag still attached is reported at the time of landing and made available for examination by a representative of the Commission or by an authorized officer.

(2) After examination and removal of the tag by a representative of the Commission or an authorized officer, the halibut:

(a) May be retained for personal use; or

(b) May be sold if it complies with the provisions of section 13, Size Limits.

21. Supervision of Unloading and Weighing

The unloading and weighing of halibut may be subject to the supervision of authorized officers to assure the fulfillment of the provisions of these Regulations.

22. Fishing by United States Treaty Indian Tribes

(1) Halibut fishing in subarea 2A-1 by members of United States treaty Indian tribes located in the State of Washington shall be regulated under regulations promulgated by NMFS and published in the **Federal Register**.

(2) Subarea 2A-1 includes all waters off the coast of Washington that are north of 46°53'18" N. lat. and east of 125°44'00" W. long., and all inland marine waters of Washington.

(3) Commercial fishing for halibut in subarea 2A-1 is permitted with hook and line gear from March 15 through November 15, or until 406,500 lb (184.4 metric tons (mt)) is taken, whichever occurs first.

(4) Ceremonial and subsistence fishing for halibut in subarea 2A-1 is permitted with hook and line gear from January 1 through December 31, and is estimated to take 17,500 lb (7.9 mt).

23. Sport Fishing for Halibut

(1) No person shall engage in sport fishing for halibut using gear other than

a single line with no more than two hooks attached; or a spear.

(2) In all waters off Alaska:

(a) The sport fishing season is from February 1 to December 31;

(b) The daily bag limit is two halibut of any size per day per person.

(3) In all waters off British Columbia:

(a) The sport fishing season is from February 1 to December 31;

(b) The daily bag limit is two halibut of any size per day per person.

(4) In all waters off the States of California, Oregon, and Washington:

(a) The total allowable catch of halibut shall be limited to 214,110 lb (97.1 mt) in waters off Washington and 226,972 lb (102.9 mt) in waters off California and Oregon;

(b) The sport fishing subareas, subquotas, fishing dates, and daily bag limits are as follows, except as modified under the inseason actions in Section 24. All sport fishing in Area 2A (except for fish caught in the North Washington coast area and landed into Neah Bay) is managed on a "port of landing" basis, whereby any halibut landed into a port counts toward the quota for the area in which that port is located, and the regulations governing the area of landing apply, regardless of the specific area of catch.

(i) In Puget Sound and United States waters in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, east of a line extending from 48°17'30" N. lat., 124°23'70" W. long. north to 48°24'70" N. lat., 124°23'10" W. long., there is no quota. This area is managed by setting a season that is projected to result in a catch of 57,393 lb (26 mt).

(A) The fishing season is May 17 through July 22, 5 days a week (Thursday through Monday).

(B) The daily bag limit is one halibut of any size per day per person.

(ii) In the area off the north Washington coast, west of the line described in paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this section and north of the Queets River (47°31' 42" N. lat.), the quota for landings into ports in this area is 108,030 lb (49 mt). Landings into Neah Bay of halibut caught in this area will be governed by this paragraph.

(A) The fishing seasons are:

(1) Commencing May 1 and continuing 5 days a week (Tuesday through Saturday) until 88,030 lb (39.9 mt) are estimated to have been taken and the season is closed by the Commission, or until June 30, whichever occurs first.

(2) From July 1 through July 4, and continuing thereafter for 5 days a week

(Tuesday through Saturday) until the overall area quota of 108,030 lb (49 mt) are estimated to have been taken and the area is closed by the Commission, or until September 30, whichever occurs first.

(B) The daily bag limit is one halibut of any size per day per person.

(C) A portion of this area about 19 nm (35 km) southwest of Cape Flattery is closed to sport fishing for halibut. The closed area is within a rectangle defined by these four corners: 48°18'00" N. lat., 125°11'00" W. long.; 48°18'00" N. lat., 124°59'00" W. long.; 48°04'00" N. lat., 125°11'00" W. long.; and, 48°04'00" N. lat., 124°59'00" W. long.

(iii) In the area between the Queets River, WA and Leadbetter Point, WA (46°38'10" N. lat.), the quota for landings into ports in this area is 42,739 lb (19.4 mt).

(A) The fishing season commences on May 1 and continues 5 days a week (Sunday through Thursday) in all waters, and commences on May 1 and continues 7 days a week in the area from Queets River south to 47°00'00" N. lat. and east of 124°40'00" W. long., until 42,739 lb (19.4 mt) are estimated to have been taken and the season is closed by the Commission, or until September 30, whichever occurs first.

(B) The daily bag limit is one halibut of any size per day per person.

(iv) In the area between Leadbetter Point, WA and Cape Falcon, OR (45°46'00" N. lat.), the quota for landings into ports in this area is 10,487 lb (4.8 mt).

(A) The fishing season commences on May 1, and continues every day through September 30, or until 10,487 lb (4.8 mt) are estimated to have been taken and the area is closed by the Commission, whichever occurs first.

(B) The daily bag limit is the first halibut taken, per person, of 32 inches (81.3 cm) or greater in length.

(v) In the area off Oregon between Cape Falcon and the Siuslaw River at the Florence north jetty (44°01'08" N. lat.), the quota for landings into ports in this area is 199,803 lb (90.6 mt).

(A) The fishing seasons are:

(1) The first season commences May 1 and continues every day through September 30, in the area inside the 30-fathom (55 m) curve nearest to the coastline as plotted on National Ocean Service charts numbered, 18580, and 18600, or until the combined subquotas of the north central and south central

inside 30-fathom fisheries (17,150 lb (7.8 mt)) or any inseason revised subquota is estimated to have been taken and the season is closed by the Commission, whichever is earlier.

(2) The second season is open on May 11, 12, 18, and 19. The projected catch for this season is 135,866 lb (61.6 mt). If sufficient unharvested catch remains for an additional days fishing, the season will reopen. Dependent on the amount of unharvested catch available, the season reopening dates will be June 8 and/or 9. If a decision is made inseason by NMFS to allow fishing on either of these additional dates, notice of the opening will be announced on NMFS' hotline (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825. No halibut fishing will be allowed on the additional dates unless the opening date is announced on NMFS' hotline.

(3) The third season is open on August 3 and/or 4 or until the combined quotas for the all-depth fisheries in the subareas described in paragraphs (v) and (vi) of this section totaling 198,473 lb (90 mt) are estimated to have been taken and the area is closed by the Commission, whichever is earlier. An inseason announcement will be made in mid-July as to whether the fishery will be open on August 3 and/or 4. If the harvest during this opening does not achieve the 198,473 lb (90 mt) quota, the season will reopen. Dependent on the amount of unharvested catch available, the season reopening date will be August 17 and/or 18, or September 21 and/or 22. If a decision is made inseason to allow fishing on one or more of these dates, notice of the reopening date will be announced on NMFS' hotline (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825.

(B) The daily bag limit is the first halibut taken, per person, of 32 inches (81.3 cm) or greater in length.

(vi) In the area off the State of Oregon between the Siuslaw River at the Florence north jetty and Humbug Mountain, OR (42°40'30" N. lat.), the quota for landings into ports in this area is 15,820 (7.2 mt).

(A) The fishing seasons are:

(1) The first season commences May 1 and continues every day through September 30, in the area inside the 30-fathom (55 m) curve nearest to the coastline as plotted on National Ocean Service charts numbered 18520, 18580, and 18600, or until the combined subquotas of the north central and south central inside 30-fathom fisheries (17,150 lb (7.8 mt)) or any inseason revised subquota is estimated to have been taken and the season is closed by the Commission, whichever is earlier.

(2) The second season is open on May 11, 12, 18, and 19. The projected catch for this season is 12,656 lb (5.7 mt). If sufficient unharvested catch remains for an additional days fishing, the season will reopen. Dependent on the amount of unharvested catch available, the season reopening dates will be June 8 and/or 9. If a decision is made inseason by NMFS to allow fishing on one or more of these additional dates, notice of the opening will be announced on the NMFS hotline (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825. No halibut fishing will be allowed on the additional dates unless the opening date is announced on NMFS' hotline.

(3) The third season is open on August 3 and/or 4 or until the combined quotas for the all-depth fisheries in the subareas described in paragraphs (v) and (vi) of this section totaling 198,473 lb (90 mt) are estimated to have been taken and the area is closed by the Commission, whichever is earlier. An inseason announcement will be made in mid-July as to whether the fishery will be open on August 3 and/or 4. If the harvest during this opening does not achieve the 198,473 lb (90 mt) quota, the season will reopen. Dependent on the amount of unharvested catch available, the season reopening date will be August 17 and/or 18, or September 21 and/or 22. If a decision is made inseason to allow fishing on one or more of these dates, the reopening date will be announced on NMFS' hotline (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825.

(B) The daily bag limit is the first halibut taken, per person, of 32 inches (81.3 cm) or greater in length.

(vii) In the area south of Humbug Mountain, OR (42°40'30" N. lat.) and off the State of California coast, there is no quota. This area is managed on a season that is projected to result in a catch of less than 6,809 lb (3.1 mt).

(A) The fishing season will commence on May 1 and continue every day through September 30.

(B) The daily bag limit is the first halibut taken, per person, of 32 inches (81.3 cm) or greater in length.

(C) The Commission shall determine and announce closing dates to the public for any area in which the subquotas in this Section are estimated to have been taken.

(D) When the Commission has determined that a subquota under paragraph (4)(b) of this section is estimated to have been taken, and has announced a date on which the season will close, no person shall sport fish for halibut in that area after that date for the rest of the year, unless a reopening of that area for sport halibut fishing is scheduled in accordance with the CSP

for Area 2A, or announced by the Commission.

(5) Any minimum overall size limit promulgated under Commission or NMFS regulations shall be measured in a straight line passing over the pectoral fin from the tip of the lower jaw with the mouth closed, to the extreme end of the middle of the tail.

(6) No person shall fillet, mutilate, or otherwise disfigure a halibut in any manner that prevents the determination of minimum size or the number of fish caught, possessed, or landed.

(7) The possession limit for halibut in the waters off the coast of Alaska is two daily bag limits.

(8) The possession limit for halibut in the waters off the coast of British Columbia is three halibut.

(9) The possession limit for halibut in the waters off the States of Washington, Oregon, and California is the same as the daily bag limit.

(10) The possession limit for halibut on land in Area 2A north of Cape Falcon, OR is two daily bag limits.

(11) The possession limit for halibut on land in Area 2A south of Cape Falcon, OR is one daily bag limit.

(12) Any halibut brought aboard a vessel and not immediately returned to the sea with a minimum of injury will be included in the daily bag limit of the person catching the halibut.

(13) No person shall be in possession of halibut on a vessel while fishing in a closed area.

(14) No halibut caught by sport fishing shall be offered for sale, sold, traded, or bartered.

(15) No halibut caught in sport fishing shall be possessed on board a vessel when other fish or shellfish aboard the said vessel are destined for commercial use, sale, trade, or barter.

(16) The operator of a charter vessel shall be liable for any violations of these regulations committed by a passenger aboard said vessel.

24. Flexible Inseason Management Provisions in Area 2A

(1) The Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS, after consultation with the Chairman of the PFMC, Commission Executive Director, and the Fisheries Director(s) of the affected state(s), is authorized to modify regulations during the season after making the following determinations.

(a) The action is necessary to allow allocation objectives to be met.

(b) The action will not result in exceeding the catch limit for the area.

(c) If any of the sport fishery subareas north of Cape Falcon, OR are not projected to utilize their respective quotas by September 30, NMFS may

take inseason action to transfer any projected unused quota to a State of Washington sport subarea projected to have the fewest number of sport fishing days in the calendar year.

(2) Flexible inseason management provisions include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Modification of sport fishing periods;

(b) Modification of sport fishing bag limits;

(c) Modification of sport fishing size limits; and

(d) Modification of sport fishing days per calendar week.

(3) Notice procedures.

(a) Actions taken under this section will be published in the **Federal Register**.

(b) Actual notice of inseason management actions will be provided by a telephone hotline administered by the Northwest Region, NMFS, at 206-526-6667 or 800-662-9825 (May through September) and by United States Coast Guard broadcasts. These broadcasts are announced on Channel 16 VHF-FM and 2182 kHz at frequent intervals. The announcements designate the channel or frequency over which the notice to mariners will be immediately broadcast. Since provisions of these regulations may be altered by inseason actions, sport fishers should monitor either the telephone hotline or United States Coast Guard broadcasts for current information for the area in which they are fishing.

(4) Effective dates.

(a) Any action issued under this section is effective on the date specified in the publication or at the time that the action is filed for public inspection at the Office of the Federal Register, whichever is later.

(b) If time allows, NMFS will invite public comment prior to the effective date of any inseason action filed at the **Federal Register**. If the Regional Administrator determines, for good cause, that an inseason action must be filed without affording a prior opportunity for public comment, public comments will be received until a period of 15 days after of the action is published in the **Federal Register**.

(c) Any inseason action issued under this section will remain in effect until the stated expiration date or until rescinded, modified, or superseded. However, no inseason action has any effect beyond the end of the calendar year in which it is issued.

(5) Availability of data. The Regional Administrator will compile, in aggregate form, all data and other information relevant to the action being taken and will make them available for public

review during normal office hours at the Northwest Regional Office, NMFS, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA.

25. Fishery Election in Area 2A

(1) A vessel that fishes in Area 2A may participate in only one of the following three fisheries in Area 2A:

(a) The sport fishery under Section 23;

(b) The commercial directed fishery for halibut during the fishing period(s) established in Section 8 and/or the incidental retention of halibut during the regular sablefish fishery described at 50 CFR 660.323(a)(2); or

(c) The incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fishery as authorized in Section 8.

(2) No person shall fish for halibut in the sport fishery in Area 2A under Section 23 from a vessel that has been used during the same calendar year for commercial halibut fishing in Area 2A or that has been issued a permit for the same calendar year for the commercial halibut fishery in Area 2A.

(3) No person shall fish for halibut in the directed halibut fishery during the fishing periods established in Section 8 and/or retain halibut incidentally taken in the regular sablefish fishery in Area 2A from a vessel that has been used during the same calendar year for the incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fishery as authorized in Section 8.

(4) No person shall fish for halibut in the directed commercial halibut fishery and/or retain halibut incidentally taken in the regular sablefish fishery in Area 2A from a vessel that, during the same calendar year, has been used in the sport halibut fishery in Area 2A or that is licensed for the sport charter halibut fishery in Area 2A.

(5) No person shall retain halibut in the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as authorized under Section 8 taken on a vessel that, during the same calendar year, has been used in the sport halibut fishery in Area 2A, or that is licensed for the sport charter halibut fishery in Area 2A.

(6) No person shall retain halibut in the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as authorized under Section 8 taken on a vessel that, during the same calendar year, has been used in the directed commercial fishery during the fishing periods established in Section 8 and/or retain halibut incidentally taken in the regular sablefish fishery for Area 2A or that is licensed to participate in these commercial fisheries during the fishing periods established in Section 8 in Area 2A.

26. Previous Regulations Superseded

These regulations shall supersede all previous regulations of the Commission, and these regulations shall be effective each succeeding year until superseded.

Classification

IPHC Regulations

Because approval by the Secretary of State of the IPHC regulations is a foreign affairs function, the notice-and-comment and delay-in-effective date requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 553, do not apply to this notice of the effectiveness and content of the IPHC regulations, *Jensen v. National Marine Fisheries Service*, 512 F.2d 1189 (9th Cir. 1975). Because prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required to be provided for these portions of this rule by 5 U.S.C. 553, or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*, are not applicable.

This action pertains to a foreign affairs function of the United States; therefore, it is exempt from review under Executive Order (E.O.) 12286.

Catch Sharing Plan for Area 2A

An Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review was prepared on the proposed changes to the CSP. NMFS has determined that the proposed changes to the CSP and the management measures implementing the CSP contained in these regulations will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, and the preparation of an environmental impact statement on the final action is not required by section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act or its implementing regulations. At the proposed rule stage, the Chief Counsel for Regulation, Department of Commerce, certified to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration that this action will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. No comments were received on the economic implications of the changes to the CSP. Consequently, no regulatory flexibility analysis has been prepared. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, finds that it is contrary to the public interest to delay the effective date of this rule for 30-days. This rule must be made effective for the opening of the 2001 Pacific halibut fishing season on March 15, 2001.

This action has been determined to be not significant for purposes of E.O. 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 773-773k.

Dated: March 15, 2001.

William T. Hogarth,

*Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries,
National Marine Fisheries Service*

[FR Doc. 01-6889 Filed 3-15-01; 3:46 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 010313064-1064-01; I.D. 022001C]

RIN 0648-XA64

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Notification of Annual Adjustment to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan

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

ACTION: Notification of 2001 target total allowable catch (TAC) levels.

SUMMARY: NMFS establishes target TAC levels for the Northeast multispecies fisheries and announces that the multispecies management measures currently in effect will remain unchanged for the fishing year beginning May 1, 2001.

DATES: Effective May 1, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Multispecies Monitoring Committee Report for 2000 may be obtained from the New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950; telephone (978) 465-0492.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David M. Gouveia, Fishery Policy Analyst, (978) 281-9280, fax (978) 281-9135, e-mail david.gouveia@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP) specifies a procedure for setting annual target TAC levels for Georges Bank (GB) cod, GB haddock, GB yellowtail flounder, Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod, Southern New England (SNE) yellowtail flounder and an aggregate TAC for the remaining regulated multispecies. The New England Fishery Management Council's (Council) Multispecies Monitoring Committee (MMC) reviews the best available scientific information, and recommends annual target TAC levels for several key groundfish stocks and management options to achieve the FMP

objectives. Adjustment of annual target TAC levels is often necessary to attain the fishing mortality rates (F) specified by Amendment 7 to the FMP to allow cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder stocks to rebuild and maintain current potential yield for the other regulated multispecies.

The MMC developed recommendations for target TACs for the 2001 fishing year that are consistent with the rebuilding targets specified in Amendment 7 to the FMP (61 FR 27710, May 31, 1996). While the Council revised the overfishing definitions for these stocks in Amendment 9 to the FMP (64 FR 55821, October 15, 1999), it has not yet developed any new rebuilding program associated with those definitions. The Council is developing Amendment 13 to specify new rebuilding programs, but until that time, the Amendment 7 rebuilding targets and F goals are the basis for establishing annual target TACs and any changes to management measures. Calculation of the annual TAC levels is based on the biological reference points of F_{max} for GOM cod and $F_{0.1}$ for the remaining stocks of cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder. However, as was the case for fishing year 2000, the Council directed the MMC to also estimate the TAC associated with $F_{0.1}$ for GOM cod for reference purposes.

The MMC utilized the assessment results from the Stock Assessment Workshop's Northern Demersal and Southern Demersal Working Groups' 2000 annual report to estimate the target TAC levels for various fish stocks for fishing year 2001. In its report delivered at the November 14-16, 2000, Council meeting, the MMC found that the stock status of GB cod, GB haddock, GB yellowtail flounder, and SNE yellowtail flounder has continued to improve. In 1999, F for these stocks was below the level defined as overfishing and near or below the Amendment 7 F targets. GB haddock and GB yellowtail flounder F values are below the Amendment 7 F targets, while the GB cod and SNE yellowtail F value are slightly above their Amendment 7 F targets. The differences between the projected GB cod and SNE yellowtail flounder F values for 1999 and the F targets, respectively, are not significant. Spawning stock biomass (SSB) has increased for these stocks but, with the exception of GB yellowtail, remains below Amendment 7 SSB thresholds. In general, recruitment through 1999 has been poor for GB cod and SNE yellowtail; near average for GB haddock; and above average for GB yellowtail.

The status of GOM cod is not clear because of the difficulty characterizing discards in the fishery in 1999 and 2000. F declined to 0.78 in 1998, but was still well above the overfishing definition ($F_{20\%}=0.41$) and Amendment 7 F target ($F_{max}=0.27$). Depending on the magnitude of discards, F in 1999 continued to decline and may have ranged from 0.29 (assuming no discards) to 0.76 (assuming 2,500 metric tons (mt) discards). The MMC report noted that better estimates of F in 1999 and 2000 for GOM cod will be available after the 33rd Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC 33) in June 2001. The SSB for GOM cod hit a record low in 1998, but increased slightly in 1999 under all discard assumptions. Recruitment for GOM cod has also been poor in 1999 despite early indications that suggest that the 1998 year class is above average.

Based on projected 2001 stock sizes and Amendment 7's F targets, the MMC recommended an increase to the target TAC levels for the 2001 fishing year for GB haddock, GB cod, and GB yellowtail flounder, and a slight decrease for SNE yellowtail flounder. However, because of the uncertainty about 1999 and 2000 discard levels, the MMC could not recommend any changes for target TACs for GOM cod in 2001. The Council voted to use the same target TACs in 2001 as in fishing year 2000 (for F_{max} and $F_{0.1}$) to prevent exploitation from increasing. These target TACs will be used until the updated assessment is available following SARC 33. Maintaining the 2000 GOM cod target TAC also means that the conditional closure of Cashes Ledge in November 2001, and a portion of Massachusetts Bay in January 2002, will be required if preliminary landings data through July 21, 2001, indicate that more than 1.67 million lb (759 mt) of GOM cod have been landed. An aggregate target TAC for the remaining regulated multispecies was not provided in the 2000 MMC annual report.

At its November 2000 meeting, the Council voted to approve the MMC recommendations to increase the target TAC levels for fishing year 2001 for GB cod, GB haddock, GB yellowtail flounder, and SNE yellowtail flounder, and voted to maintain the F_{max} and $F_{0.1}$ target TAC levels from fishing year 2000 as target TAC levels for GOM cod for fishing year 2001. The Regional Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS, concurs with the Council's recommendations. The target TAC levels for the 2001 fishing year are as follows: