

	Point	North lat.	West long.
A		24°33'00"	83°09'00"

[FR Doc. 02-18308 Filed 7-18-02; 8:45 am]
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 635

[I.D. 071202D]

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fisheries; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna

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

ACTION: Adjustment of General category daily retention limit.

SUMMARY: NMFS has determined that the Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) General category daily catch limit should be adjusted in order to allow for maximum utilization of the proposed 2002 General category June through August subquota. Therefore, NMFS increases the daily retention limit from one to two large medium (73 to less than 81 inches (185 to less than 206 cm)) or giant (81 inches or greater (206 cm or greater)) BFT for the remainder of the June through August time-period.

DATES: Effective July 18 through August 31, 2002.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Brad McHale, 978-281-9260.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations implemented under the authority of the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*) and the Magnuson-Stevens Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) governing the harvest of BFT by persons and vessels subject to U.S. jurisdiction are found at 50 CFR part 635. BFT fishing category quotas and General category effort controls (including time-period subquotas and Restricted-Fishing Days (RFDs)) are specified annually under §§ 635.23(a) and 635.27(a). The 2002 BFT quotas and General category effort controls were proposed June 25, 2002 (67 FR 43266, June 27, 2002).

Adjustment of Daily Retention Limit

Under § 635.23 (a)(4), NMFS may increase or decrease the daily retention limit of large medium and giant BFT over a range from zero (on RFDs) to a

maximum of three per vessel to allow for maximum utilization of the quota for BFT. Based on a review of dealer reports, daily landing trends, and the availability of BFT on the fishing grounds, NMFS has determined that an increase of the daily retention limit is appropriate and necessary to allow full use of the June through August subquota while ensuring an August fishery. Therefore, NMFS adjusts the daily retention limit for the remainder of the June through August subquota time-period to two large medium or giant BFT per vessel. This adjustment does not affect the proposed RFDs for August (August 10, 11, and 12), on which the daily retention in the General category would be zero, and on which General category vessels would not be allowed to fish for BFT.

The intent of this adjustment is to allow for maximum utilization of the June through August subquota (specified under §635.27(a)) by General category participants in order to help achieve optimum yield in the General category fishery, to collect a broad range of data for stock monitoring purposes, and to be consistent with the objectives of the Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, and sharks.

While catch rates have been low so far this season, NMFS recognizes that they may increase. In addition, due to the temporal and geographical nature of the fishery, certain gear types and areas are more productive at various times during the fishery. In order to ensure that the June through August subquota is not filled prematurely and to ensure equitable fishing opportunities in all areas and for all gear types, NMFS has not waived the proposed RFDs in August, which correspond to market closures in Japan, and could promote better ex-vessel prices.

Classification

This action is taken under § 635.23(a)(4) and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.* and 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: July 15, 2002.

Virginia M. Fay,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 02-18190 Filed 7-15-02; 4:10 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 020402077-01; I.D. 071202E]

Fisheries Off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; End of the Primary Season and Resumption of Trip Limits for the Shore-based Fishery for Pacific Whiting

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

ACTION: Fishing restrictions; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the end of the 2002 primary season for the shore-based fishery for Pacific whiting (whiting) at 0800 local time (l.t.) July 17, 2002, because the allocation is projected to be reached. This action is intended to keep the harvest of whiting at the 2002 allocation levels.

DATES: Effective from 0800 l.t. July 17, 2002, until the effective date of the 2003 specification and management measures for the Pacific Coast groundfish fishery which will be published in the **Federal Register**, unless modified, superseded or rescinded. Comments will be accepted through August 5, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments to D. Robert Lohn, Acting Administrator, Northwest Region (Regional Administrator), NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Seattle, WA 98115-0070; or Rod McInnis, Acting Regional Administrator, Southwest Region, NMFS, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Becky Renko at 206-526-6110.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action is authorized by regulations implementing the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), which governs the groundfish fishery off Washington, Oregon, and California. On April 15, 2002 (67 FR 18117), the levels of allowable biological catch, the optimum yield (OY) and the commercial OY (the OY minus the tribal allocation) for U.S. harvests of whiting were announced in the **Federal Register**. For 2002 the