

of greater than 5 percent had home ports in New York and North Carolina. These revenue losses result from the fact that these two states received quota transfers in 2004 which allowed them to land more than their initial coast wide quotas; however, in the absence of additional quota from transferring states in 2006 there is the potential for revenues to decrease compared to 2004. Similar to the other alternatives, the commercial quota transfer provision could be utilized to mitigate revenue losses, the extent to which would be dependent on a state's willingness and ability to partake in the transfer.

The impacts of Alternative 3 on commercial vessels in the south Atlantic area were assessed using trip ticket data. The analysis concludes that these impacts would result in revenue reductions associated with allowable landings of approximately 1.5 percent for 819 vessels identified as landing in North Carolina and no revenue reductions for vessels landing in Florida.

For the recreational sector of the fishery, there were no negative revenue impacts projected to occur with regard to the recommended recreational harvest limits because this level would be close to the recreational landings in 2004 (15.146 million lb (6,870 mt)), and well above the 5-year average (2000–2004) of 12.698 million lb (5,760 mt). The recommended recreational harvest limit represents the second lowest harvest level when compared with the two other alternatives, exceeding the average recreational landings over the past 5 years by approximately 15 percent. Given recent trends in bluefish recreational landings, the analysis concludes that landings would remain lower than the proposed recreational harvest limit. The recreational fishery impacts are expected to be similar for Alternatives 2 and 3, compared to the recommended measures under Alternative 1. Although there is very little empirical evidence regarding the sensitivity of charter/party anglers to regulation, it is anticipated that the proposed harvest levels will not affect the demand for charter/party boat trips.

The Council also analyzed the impacts on revenues of the proposed RSA amount and found that the social and economic impacts are minimal. Assuming that the full RSA of 363,677 lb (164,961 kg) is landed and sold to support the proposed research project (a supplemental finfish survey in the Mid-Atlantic) then all of the participants in the fishery would benefit from the anticipated improvements in the data underlying the stock assessments. Because the recommended overall

commercial quota is higher than 2004 landings, no overall negative impacts are expected in the commercial sector. Based on recent trends in the recreational fishery, recreational landings will more than likely remain below the recommended harvest level in 2006. A full analysis is available from the Council (see **ADDRESSES**).

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

Dated: December 13, 2005.

James W. Balsiger,

Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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BILLING CODE 3510–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[I.D. 022505B]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries; Amendment 11 Atlantic Mackerel Limited Access Program

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

ACTION: Supplemental notice of intent.

SUMMARY: On March 4, 2005, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council), in cooperation with NMFS, announced its intent to prepare a programmatic supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) and Amendment 9 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). As a result of that notice, the Council received public comment on the issue of whether or not to consider measures to control or limit future access to the Atlantic mackerel fishery in Amendment 9. Based on public comment received during that scoping comment period, the Council notified the public in a subsequent notice on June 9, 2005, of its intention to move the consideration of the development of a limited access program for mackerel to Amendment 10 to the FMP. Since then, the Council has been notified that it must develop a stock rebuilding program for butterfish as a result of that stock being designated as overfished. Consequently, Amendment 10 will now include a plan to rebuild the overfished butterfish stock. As a result, the Council hereby

notifies the public that the mackerel limited access program will now be developed in Amendment 11 to the FMP. While the Council believes that this action will result in a slight delay in the development of a limited access program for Atlantic mackerel, no other changes are anticipated.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eric Jay Dolin, Fishery Policy Analyst, 978–281–9259; fax 978–281–9135. e-mail: eric.dolin@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Atlantic mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*) is a migratory species that supports important recreational and commercial fisheries along the Atlantic coast of the United States and Canada. The Council has considered the possibility of limiting entry to the Atlantic mackerel fishery for more than a decade. In April 2002, because the Council was concerned about rapid expansion of harvesting capacity in the fishery, possible overcapitalization, and the fact that nearly 5 years had passed since the most recent control date for the fishery was established, the Council requested that a new control date for the Atlantic mackerel fishery be established. As a result, NMFS published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPR) on July 5, 2002 (67 FR 44792), which established that date as the new control date for the Atlantic mackerel fishery. The ANPR was intended to discourage speculative entry into the fishery while potential management regimes to control access into the fishery were considered by the Council, and to help the Council distinguish established participants from speculative entrants to the fishery, should such a program be developed.

On March 4, 2005 (70 FR 10605), the Council published a notice of intent to prepare an SEIS to consider impacts of alternatives for limiting access to the Atlantic mackerel fishery. The Council subsequently conducted scoping meetings on the development of a limited access program for Atlantic mackerel, which the Council planned to include in Amendment 9 to the FMP. The first scoping meeting was held on March 17, 2005, in Kill Devil Hills, NC, and the second meeting was held on March 28, 2005, in Newport, RI. However, because the Council decided to complete and submit for review by the Secretary of Commerce several other measures in Amendment 9 that were further along in their development than the mackerel limited access program, the Council voted on May 4, 2005, to complete Amendment 9 without a limited access program for the Atlantic mackerel fishery, and to pursue the

Atlantic mackerel limited access program in Amendment 10 to the FMP. NMFS informed the public of the Council's decision in a subsequent notice on June 9, 2005 (70 FR 33728).

Since then, the Council has been notified that it must develop a stock rebuilding program for butterfish as a result of that stock being designated as overfished. The Council was also informed that the stock rebuilding program for butterfish must be developed in an amendment to the FMP rather than in a framework adjustment as the Council had originally intended. Consequently, Amendment 10 will now include a plan to rebuild the overfished butterfish stock. The Council has concluded that Amendment 10 will require only an Environmental Assessment under the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As a result, the Council hereby notifies the public that the mackerel limited access program will now be developed in Amendment 11 to the FMP. Other than the sequencing of the amendments to this FMP and a slight time delay, the Council anticipates that the development of the limited access program for mackerel will proceed as described in previous notices to the public. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the measures and alternatives being considered by the Council for Amendment 11 through public meetings and public comment periods required by NEPA, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and the Administrative Procedure Act. This notification also reminds the public that interested participants should locate and preserve records that substantiate and verify their participation in the Atlantic mackerel fishery in Federal waters.

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

Dated: December 13, 2005.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 05-24206 Filed 12-16-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 051014263-5330-02; I.D. 120805A]

RIN 0648-AU00

Fisheries Off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Specifications and Management Measures

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes a rule to implement revisions to the 2006 commercial and recreational groundfish fishery management measures for groundfish taken in the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. Proposed management measures that are new for 2006 are intended to: achieve but not exceed optimum yields (OYs); prevent overfishing; rebuild overfished species; and reduce and minimize the bycatch and discard of overfished and depleted stocks. NMFS additionally proposes to revise the 2006 darkblotched rockfish OY, at the request of the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Pacific Council), and under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). These actions, which are authorized by the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and the Magnuson-Stevens Act, are intended allow fisheries to access more abundant groundfish stocks while protecting overfished and depleted stocks. Finally, NMFS announces with this **Federal Register** document that the coastwide lingcod stock is no longer considered overfished and is fully rebuilt.

DATES: Comments on this proposed rule will be accepted through January 15, 2006.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by I.D. 120805A by any of the following methods:

- E-mail:

GroundfishInseason6.nwr@noaa.gov. Include the I.D. number 120805A in the subject line of the message.

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 206-526-4646, Attn: Jamie Goen.

- Mail: D. Robert Lohn, Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS, Attn: Jamie Goen, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115-0070.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jamie Goen (Northwest Region, NMFS), phone: 206-526-6140; fax: 206-526-6736; and e-mail: jamie.goen@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

This **Federal Register** document is available on the Government Printing Office's website at: www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html.

Background information and documents are available at the NMFS Northwest Region website at: www.nwr.noaa.gov/1sustfsh/gdfsh01.htm and at the Pacific Council's website at: www.pcouncil.org.

Background

The Pacific Coast Groundfish FMP and its implementing regulations at title 50 in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 660, subpart G, regulate fishing for over 80 species of groundfish off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. Groundfish specifications and management measures are developed by the Pacific Council, and are implemented by NMFS. The specifications and management measures for 2005-2006 were codified in the CFR (50 CFR part 660, subpart G). They were published in the **Federal Register** as a proposed rule on September 21, 2004 (69 FR 56550), and as a final rule on December 23, 2004 (69 FR 77012). The final rule was subsequently amended on March 18, 2005 (70 FR 13118); March 30, 2005 (70 FR 16145); April 19, 2005 (70 FR 20304); May 3, 2005 (70 FR 22808); May 4, 2005 (70 FR 23040); May 5, 2005 (70 FR 23804); May 16, 2005 (70 FR 25789); May 19, 2005 (70 FR 28852); July 5, 2005 (70 FR 38596); August 22, 2005 (70 FR 48897); August 31, 2005 (70 FR 51682); October 5, 2005 (70 FR 58066); October 20, 2005 (70 FR 61063); October 24, 2005 (70 FR 61393); and November 1, 2005 (70 FR 65861).

Acceptable biological catches (ABCs) and OYs are established for each year. Management measures are established at the start of the biennial period, and are adjusted throughout the biennial management period, to keep harvest within the OYs. At the Pacific Council's October 31 - November 4, 2005, meeting in San Diego, CA, the Pacific Council's Groundfish Management Team (GMT) considered 2005 catch data and new West Coast Groundfish Observer