

fishery, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season to ensure that the recreational ACL is not exceeded. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for scamp and yellowmouth grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero. The recreational ACL for scamp and yellowmouth grouper, combined, is 23,678 lb (10,740 kg), round weight, for the 2025 fishing year; 26,053 lb (11,817 kg), round weight, for the 2026 fishing year; 27,478 lb (12,464 kg), round weight, for the 2027 fishing year; 28,903 lb (13,110 kg), round weight, for the 2028 fishing year; and 29,853 lb (13,541 kg), round weight, for the 2029 and subsequent fishing years.

(3) *Total ACL*. The total ACL for scamp and yellowmouth grouper, combined, is 67,450 lb (30,595 kg), round weight, for the 2025 fishing year; 72,200 lb (32,749 kg), round weight, for the 2026 fishing year; 75,050 lb (34,042 kg), round weight, for the 2027 fishing year; 77,900 lb (35,335 kg), round weight, for the 2028 fishing year; 79,800 lb (36,197 kg), round weight, for the 2029 and subsequent fishing years.

(j) *Other SASWG complex (including red hind, rock hind, yellowfin grouper, coney, and graysby)—(1) Commercial sector.* (i) If commercial landings for other SASWG combined, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 53,380 lb (24,213 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for this complex for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of red hind, rock hind, yellowfin grouper, coney, and graysby is prohibited, and harvest or possession of any of these species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

(ii) If commercial landings for other SASWG combined, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 100,151 lb (45,428 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and at least one of the species in other SASWG combined is overfished based on the most recent status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a

notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.* (i) If recreational landings for other SASWG combined, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 46,771 lb (21,215 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if any stock in other SASWG combined is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other SASWG combined in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(ii) If recreational landings for other SASWG combined, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if at least one of the species in other SASWG combined is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 100,151 lb (45,428 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other SASWG combined in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 250813-0136]

RIN 0648-BN65

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking To Establish a Control Date for the Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass, and Bluefish Recreational For-Hire Fisheries

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

ACTION: Advance notice of proposed rulemaking; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This advance notice of proposed rulemaking seeks comment on the benefits or disadvantages of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) potentially recommending future restrictions for the federally permitted recreational for-hire fisheries for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish. The Council requested NMFS establish a control date while managers consider if, and how, participation may be affected through the ongoing Recreational Sector Separation and Data Collection Amendment. NMFS is informing the public of the new control date to promote awareness of the potential changes to eligibility criteria for future access and to discourage speculative entry into the Federal for-hire fisheries.

DATES: Comments must be received by September 24, 2025.

ADDRESSES: A plain language summary of this proposed rule is available at: <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/NOAA-NMFS-2025-0029>. You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2025-0029, by the following method:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Visit <https://www.regulations.gov> and type NOAA-NMFS-2025-0029 in the Search box. Click on the “Comment” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on <https://www.regulations.gov>

without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, *etc.*), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Savannah Lewis, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9348, or Savannah.Lewis@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This advance notice of proposed rulemaking establishes February 11, 2025, as the new control date for potential use in determining historical or traditional participation in the Federal for-hire summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish fisheries. NMFS seeks comment on the benefits or disadvantages of the Council potentially recommending future restrictions, resulting in subsequent rulemakings from NMFS, which may utilize this date. The summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish fisheries are jointly managed by the Council and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission). Under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, NMFS approved the Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) and implements them through regulations at 50 CFR part 648 subparts G–J.

As part of their ongoing Recreational Reform Initiative, the Council and Commission are considering potential revisions to the federally permitted for-hire fisheries for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish through the Recreational Sector Separation Amendment. At its February 2025 meeting, the Council voted to request that NMFS establish a control date of February 11, 2025, for federally permitted recreational for-hire participants in these for-hire fisheries. There is currently no control date for these fisheries, and Federal permits to participate in these fisheries are currently available on an open access basis.

The purpose of a control date is to enable the Council to inform current and potential participants that it is considering whether to recommend restrictions that limit participation in a fishery. The Council is considering recommending a future action that may use the control date as a reference point when determining fishery access criteria as management measures are developed, and may use this control date for establishing qualification criteria. Consideration of a control date does not

commit the Council to develop a recommendation for any particular management regime or criteria for participation in the fishery. If the Council decides to recommend an amendment to the FMPs to restrict participation in the Federal for-hire summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish fisheries in relation to this control date, an analysis of the specific administrative, biological, economic, and social effects will be prepared at that time. If NMFS were to implement future actions recommended by the Council, NMFS would need to publish a proposed rule containing the amendments to the respective FMPs in the **Federal Register** with a public comment period and issue a final rule.

NMFS is therefore informing current and potential fishery participants in the Federal for-hire recreational fisheries for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish that began participating after February 11, 2025 that they may not be ensured participation under future management of these fisheries should NMFS codify further restrictions as recommended by the Council.

The Federal for-hire permits for these for-hire components are currently open access and available to be applied for by anyone with a valid vessel registration. Control dates exist for these four fisheries for only the commercial sectors; there are no prior control dates for these four for-hire fisheries.

Publication of the control date does not have any immediate impact on fishery participants or fishing privileges. The Council may choose to make recommendations using additional criteria or different qualification criteria that do not incorporate the new control date. Control dates are intended to discourage speculative entry or fishing activity while managers consider if, and how, participation in the fishery may be affected. The Council may also choose to recommend NMFS take no further action to control entry or access to the for-hire fisheries. This action proposes no changes to the Federal recreational management measures for any of these species.

Dated: August 13, 2025.

Samuel D. Rauch III,
*Deputy Assistant Administrator for
Regulatory Programs, National Marine
Fisheries Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 250813-0140]

RIN 0648-BN75

Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Biennial Specifications; 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 Specifications for Pacific Mackerel

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

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes to implement annual harvest specifications and management measures for Pacific mackerel in the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) off the West Coast for the fishing year July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, and the fishing year July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027. These specifications include overfishing limits (OFL), allowable biological catch (ABC), annual catch limits (ACL), harvest guidelines (HG), and annual catch targets (ACT) for each respective fishing year. If the fishery attains the ACT for either fishing year, 8,143 metric tons (mt) for 2025–2026 or 9,448 mt for 2026–2027, the directed fishery will close, reserving the 1,000-mt difference between the HG and ACT as a set-aside for incidental landings in other coastal pelagic species (CPS) fisheries and other sources of mortality. The HG is 9,143 mt for 2025–2026 and 10,448 mt for 2026–2027. This rulemaking is made pursuant to the CPS Fishery Management Plan (FMP), and is intended to conserve and manage the Pacific mackerel stock off the U.S. West Coast.

DATES: Comments must be received by September 24, 2025.

ADDRESSES: A plain language summary of this proposed rule is available at: <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/NOAA-NMFS-2025-XXXX>. You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2025-0034, by any of the following methods:

Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and enter NOAA-NMFS-2025-0034 in the Search box. Click on the “Comment” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method or received after the end