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PUBLIC NOTICE

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PACIFIC COAST GROUND FISH FISHERY

Trawl Rationalization Program Notice on Vessel Account Number Information and Errata for Compliance Guide and Public Notice

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) emphasizes the importance of the vessel account number, and announces errata to correct the Compliance Guide for the Pacific Coast Groundfish Trawl Rationalization Program - Covering Program Details, published on December 17, 2010, and the public notice (NMFS-SEA-10-23), published on December 31, 2010. The errata correct the table on p.44 of the compliance guide and on p.3 of the public notice, which provided guidance on moving between the Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program and other fisheries. The purpose of this public notice is to clarify the actions required by fishermen deciding to switch between different fisheries within the same fishing year and the incidental catch within those fisheries.

Vessel Account Number

The vessel account number must be provided to complete an electronic fish ticket. The vessel account number can be found by logging into the vessel account, and the number appears in green at the top of each page when logged into the vessel account. It is made up of four letters and four numbers. The vessel owner should secure their vessel account number and provide it only to those who require it for business purposes. Vessel owners and IFQ first receivers should be aware that the vessel account User ID that NMFS sent to the vessel owner or vessel account manager is distinct from the vessel account number.

Switching between Fisheries

Vessels participating in the Shorebased IFQ Program may find they want to fish in other fisheries during the year, either because their vessel account is in deficit or because they want to pursue other fishing opportunities. The status of the vessel's registration to a limited entry trawl permit may have to be changed in order to be eligible to participate in some West Coast fisheries. The matrix below provides information on various options fishermen may want to consider and reflects new regulations under the Shorebased IFQ Program and existing restrictions on Limited Entry Fixed Gear and Open Access fisheries. Prior to making a decision on changing any fishing strategy, call the NMFS Northwest Region Permit Office (206-526-4353) to explore your options (and restrictions) fully.

Any updates, including interim 2011 allocations for the trawl Shorebased IFQ Program, will be posted on the **NMFS Trawl Program website** at:

<http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Groundfish-Halibut/Groundfish-Fishery-Management/Trawl-Program/index.cfm>

Groundfish E-mail Group

Subscribe to "wcgroundfish" by visiting the following website: <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Groundfish-Halibut/Groundfish-Fishery-Management/Public-Notices/Index.cfm> and clicking "sign up"

Any discrepancies between this public notice and the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

CLARIFICATION ON GEAR SWITCHING:

Switching between fisheries as explained in this public notice is NOT gear switching. Gear switching in the Shorebased IFQ Program means the vessel remains registered to a trawl limited entry permit (LEP) and declared into the Shorebased IFQ Program. However, if, for example, they are switching between trawl gear and longline gear, they must change their vessel declaration before their trip from “limited entry bottom trawl, shorebased IFQ” to “limited entry groundfish non-trawl, shorebased IFQ.” Catch of IFQ species would be debited from the vessel’s QP balance in their vessel account using the online IFQ accounting system.

Switching from the Shorebased IFQ Program

If a vessel begins the fishing season registered to a trawl LEP and has declared into the Shorebased IFQ Program, they may then declare into any open access (OA) fishery (except non-groundfish trawl for California halibut, ridgeback prawn, or sea cucumber) without changing their trawl LEP’s vessel registration status. Any groundfish caught while the vessel is declared into the OA fishery may be retained subject to OA trip limits.

If a vessel begins the fishing season registered to a trawl LEP and has declared into the Shorebased IFQ Program and then decides to declare into the OA non-groundfish trawl fisheries for California halibut, ridgeback prawn, or sea cucumber fisheries, the permit owner must first change their vessel registration on the trawl LEP to “unidentified” or register the trawl LEP to another vessel. This must be done before the vessel owner makes an OA declaration to NMFS Office of Law Enforcement (OLE). Any change in vessel registration to the same or another vessel is effective at the beginning of the next cumulative limit period. Any groundfish caught while the vessel is declared into the OA fishery may be retained subject to OA trip limits.

If a vessel begins the fishing season registered to a trawl LEP and has declared into the Shorebased IFQ Program, and decides to declare into the limited entry fixed gear fishery, the permit owner must first change the vessel registration on the trawl LEP to “unidentified” or register the trawl LEP to another vessel. The vessel then must be registered to a fixed gear LEP before the vessel owner can declare into the limited entry fixed gear fishery. Any change in

vessel registration to the same or another vessel is effective at the beginning of the next cumulative limit period.

If a vessel begins the fishing season registered to a trawl LEP and has declared into the Shorebased IFQ Program, they may then declare into the limited entry midwater trawl Pacific whiting mothership sector without changing their trawl LEP’s vessel registration status. However, the vessel’s trawl LEP must have either an MS/CV endorsement or permission of a coop to participate. Any groundfish caught while the vessel is declared into the limited entry midwater trawl Pacific whiting mothership sector are subject to the allocations within that sector and are not subject to trip limits or QP.

Switching from Limited Entry Fixed Gear

Under existing regulations for limited entry fixed gear fishery, if a vessel begins the fishing season registered to a fixed gear LEP and has declared into the limited entry fixed gear fishery, they may then declare into any OA fishery without changing their fixed gear LEP’s vessel registration status. Any groundfish caught incidentally while the vessel is declared into the OA fishery may be retained subject to OA trip limits.

If a vessel begins the fishing season registered to a fixed gear LEP and has declared into the limited entry fixed gear fishery, and decides to declare into the Shorebased IFQ Program, the permit owner must first change the vessel registration on the fixed gear LEP to “unidentified” or register the fixed gear LEP to another vessel. The vessel then must be registered to a trawl LEP before the vessel owner can declare into the Shorebased IFQ Program. Any change in vessel registration to the same or another vessel will NOT go into effect until the beginning of the next cumulative limit period. Catch of IFQ species will be debited from the vessel’s QP balance in their vessel account using the online IFQ accounting system. Any incidental catch of non-groundfish species, such as California halibut, ridgeback prawn, or sea cucumber, caught while declared into the Shorebased IFQ Program may be subject to more restrictive state regulations.

Switching from Open Access

If a vessel begins the fishing season declared into an OA fishery and is not registered to an LEP, then the

permit owner must register the vessel to their trawl LEP before the vessel owner can declare the vessel into the Shorebased IFQ Program. This change in the trawl LEP's vessel registration will not be effective until the beginning of the next cumulative limit period. Catch of IFQ species will be debited from the vessel's QP balance in their vessel account using the online IFQ accounting system. Any incidental catch of non-groundfish species, such as California halibut, ridgeback prawn, or sea cucumber, caught while declared into the Shorebased IFQ Program may be subject to more restrictive state regulations.

How many times may I change vessel registration?

If a vessel starts the year in the Shorebased IFQ Program/registered to a trawl LEP and then moves to the OA, non-groundfish trawl fishery for California halibut, ridgeback prawn, or sea cucumber, it can return to the Shorebased IFQ Program in the same year. However, generally only one change in vessel registration (back to the same vessel or to another vessel) on an LEP is allowed after January 1. Placing an LEP permit in an inactive status (permit is registered as "unidentified") is not considered a change in vessel registration for the purposes of this restriction. In addition, an LEP registration change from one vessel to another vessel or from an "unidentified" status to a vessel will be effective at the beginning of the next cumulative limit period.

If the permit has an MS/CV endorsement, then the permit may have two changes in vessel registration in a calendar year as long as the second change in vessel registration is back to the original vessel and the vessel participates exclusively in the MS Coop Program and is declared into the limited entry midwater trawl Pacific whiting mothership sector.

Below is a table to guide folks that are interested in moving between the Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program and other fisheries.

Vessel's Current Fishery-Gear/Permit Registration	Which Fishery do I want to declare into	Permit Action Required of permit owner/vessel owner	OLE Declaration Action
Shorebased IFQ Program/ Registered to trawl limited entry permit (LEP)	Open Access (OA) (includes any open access gear, EXCEPT non-groundfish trawl gear for California (CA) halibut, ridgeback prawn, or sea cucumber)	No permit action required. (Please see exceptions and required permit action for non-groundfish trawl gear for CA halibut, ridgeback prawn, or sea cucumber as listed below)	Vessel owner declares into one of the following open access fisheries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open access longline gear for groundfish • Open access groundfish pot/trap gear • Open access line gear for groundfish • Open access prawn pot/trap gear • Open access Dungeness crab pot/trap gear • Open access Pacific halibut longline gear • Open access salmon troll gear • Open access CA halibut line gear • Open access sheephead pot/trap gear • Open access HMS line gear • Open access CPS net gear • Open access CA gillnet complex gear • Non-groundfish trawl gear for pink shrimp
Shorebased IFQ Program / Registered to trawl LEP (2)	Non-groundfish trawl gear for ridgeback prawn	Permit owner/Vessel owner <i>must</i> make a change in vessel registration either moving the LEP to “unidentified” (i.e., not registered to a vessel) or moving the LEP to another vessel before making OA declaration to Office of Law Enforcement (OLE). (1)	Vessel owner declares into “non-groundfish trawl gear for ridgeback prawn.” OLE will check to see that vessel is not registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code.
Shorebased IFQ Program / Registered to trawl LEP (2)	Non-groundfish trawl gear CA halibut	Permit owner/Vessel owner <i>must</i> make a change in vessel registration either moving the LEP to “unidentified” (i.e., not registered to a vessel) or moving the LEP to another vessel before making OA declaration to OLE. (1)	Vessel owner declares into “non-groundfish trawl gear for CA halibut.” OLE will check to see that vessel is not registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code.
Shorebased IFQ Program / Registered to trawl LEP (2)	Non-groundfish trawl for sea cucumber	Permit owner/Vessel owner <i>must</i> make a change in vessel registration either moving the LEP to “unidentified” (i.e., not registered to a vessel) or moving the LEP to another vessel before making OA declaration to OLE. (1)	Vessel owner declares into “non-groundfish trawl gear for sea cucumber.” OLE will check to see that vessel is not registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code.

Shorebased IFQ Program / Registered to trawl LEP	Limited entry midwater trawl Pacific whiting mothership sector	No permit action required.	Declares into midwater trawl, mothership sector. Must have an MS/CV endorsement or permission of a coop. OLE will check to see that vessel is registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code.
Open Access (any gear)/ Vessel is not registered to LEP	Shorebased IFQ Program (any gear)	Vessel owner <i>must</i> register vessel to trawl LEP (effective at beginning of next cumulative limit period). This is a change in vessel registration. For the IFQ fishery and LEP without MS/CV endorsements, only one LEP change in vessel registration allowed in a calendar year. (1)	Vessel owner declares into Shorebased IFQ Program (any gear). OLE will check to see that vessel is registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code.
Limited entry fixed gear fishery/ Registered to fixed gear LEP	Shorebased IFQ Program	Permit owner/Vessel owner <i>must</i> make a change in vessel registration either moving the LEP to “unidentified” (i.e., not registered to a vessel) or moving the LEP to another vessel, and register trawl LEP to vessel. The trawl LEP would NOT be effective until the beginning of the next cumulative limit period.(1)	Vessel owner declares into Shorebased IFQ Program (any gear). OLE will check to see that vessel is registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code.
Limited entry fixed gear fishery/ Registered to fixed gear LEP	Open Access (any gear)	No permit action required.	Vessel owner declares into an open access fishery.

(1) Only one change in vessel registration (back to the same vessel or to another vessel) is allowed after January 1 on an LEP without an MS/CV endorsement or participating in the Shorebased IFQ Program. Placing an LEP in an inactive status (permit is registered as “unidentified”) is not considered a change in vessel registration for purpose of this restriction. If a vessel starts in the Shorebased IFQ Program and then switches to OA/non-groundfish trawl for CA halibut, ridgeback prawn, or sea cucumber, it can return to the Shorebased IFQ Program in the same year subject to the restrictions on changes in vessel registration on an LEP.

(2) CA halibut, ridgeback prawn, and sea cucumber may also be caught incidentally with legal groundfish trawl gear while declared into the Shorebased IFQ Program and may be subject to more restrictive state regulations.