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PUBLIC NOTICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PACIFIC COAST GROUND FISH FISHERY

Trawl Rationalization Program: Final Rule on Additional Program Details and Compliance Guide

In preparation for implementation of the trawl rationalization program on January 1, 2011 or shortly thereafter, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces the following:

1. A final rule (75 FR 78344, December 15, 2010) implementing additional program details for the trawl rationalization program (program).
2. A compliance guide for the final rule.
3. Applications available for first receiver site licenses.
4. Accepting requests for vessel accounts.
5. IADs for QS permits, MS permits, MS/CV endorsements, and C/P endorsements to be mailed late December and extension of the deadline to appeal.

A final rule and compliance guide, along with other useful information including fact sheets, frequently asked questions, first receiver site license applications, and a template for vessel account requests, are posted on NMFS Trawl Program website at:

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

Program Components Final Rule & Compliance Guide

Availability of the final rule, as delivered to the *Federal Register*, was previously announced in a December 3, 2010 public notice (NMFS-SEA-10-20). The “program components” final rule, effective January 1, 2011, implements additional program details for the trawl rationalization program, including gear switching, observer programs, retention requirements, equipment requirements, catch monitors, catch weighing requirements, coop permits, coop agreement requirements, first receiver site licenses, quota share (QS) accounts, vessel accounts, further tracking and monitoring components, and economic data collection requirements.

A small entity compliance guide (compliance guide) is available on NMFS Trawl Program website. The compliance guide will provide a plain language guide to the additional details of the program and responses to frequently asked questions.

Groundfish E-mail Group

Subscribe to “**wcgroundfish**” by visiting the following website: http://listserver.afsc.noaa.gov/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=wcgroundfish

Availability of IADs & Extension of Appeals Deadline

For QS permit and associated QS and/or IBQ, MS permit, MS/CV endorsement and associated catch history assignment, and C/P endorsement applications that were received by the application deadline, NMFS will mail initial administrative determination (IAD) letters at the end of December. For applicants that qualify for the permit or endorsement, the letter will include the permit or revised permit with the endorsement, respectively. For applicants that qualify for QS permits, these letters will also include associated QS and IBQ amounts for IFQ species. Also, NMFS will establish an online QS account for all QS permit owners. A separate letter will be mailed to QS permit owners with information on how to access their QS account. For applicants that qualify for an MS/CV endorsement, the IAD letter will also include the associated whiting catch history assignment.

With the final rule (75 FR 78344, December 15, 2010), NMFS has decided to extend the deadline to appeal an IAD for the initial issuance of the following permits and endorsements: QS permit and associated QS and/or IBQ, MS permit, MS/CV endorsement and associated catch history assignment, and C/P endorsement. **The deadline to appeal has been extended – you have 60 calendar days from the date on the IAD letter to appeal.**

Vessel Accounts

Any vessel owner who anticipates fishing in the 2011 Shorebased IFQ Program must have an online vessel account and sufficient quota pounds to cover any landing of IFQ species. NMFS is currently working to finish development of the online quota share (QS) and vessel account system and hopes to have these completed in mid-December. To provide participants as much time as possible to prepare for the 2011 Shorebased IFQ fishery, NMFS is now accepting requests for a vessel account from vessel owners. For NMFS to process your request for a vessel account, your vessel must be registered to a trawl-endorsed Pacific coast groundfish limited entry permit. A template to request a vessel account is available on the NMFS Trawl Program website.

First Receiver Site License Applications

NMFS has mailed first receiver site license applications to our list of first receivers. In addition, applications, along with guidelines for catch monitor plans, are available on NMFS Trawl Program website. More details on these applications were included in the December 3, 2010 public notice (NMFS-SEA-10-20).