



National Marine Fisheries Service, Northwest Region  
7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115  
[www.nwr.noaa.gov](http://www.nwr.noaa.gov)



## PUBLIC NOTICE

For Information Contact:  
The Groundfish Branch (206) 526-6140

NMFS-SEA-11-14  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 2, 2011

### **PACIFIC COAST GROUND FISH FISHERY**

#### *Trawl Rationalization Program –*

- 1. Proposed Program Improvement and Enhancement Rule and Amendment 21-1 Available for Public Comment**
- 2. Correction**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces the publication of several *Federal Register* notices related to the trawl rationalization program, a catch share program.

- A notice of availability of Amendment 21-1 to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) (76 FR 50449, August 15, 2011).
- A proposed program improvement and enhancement (PIE) rule (76 FR 54888, September 2, 2011).
- A final rule correcting inadvertent non-substantive errors that resulted with implementation of the regulations for Amendments 20 and 21 (76 FR 53833, August 30, 2011).

These Federal Register notices are available on the NMFS Northwest Region website at <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Groundfish-Halibut/Groundfish-Fishery-Management/Regulations/Index.cfm>. More information on these notices follows.

### **Public Comment Open on Am 21-1 and Proposed PIE Rule**

NMFS announces publication of a notice of availability for Amendment 21-1 to the FMP as well as a proposed rule. The rule proposes revisions to the trawl rationalization program, and includes regulations that would affect all commercial groundfish sectors (limited entry trawl, limited entry fixed gear, and open access).

NMFS solicits written public comments on whether the Secretary of Commerce should approve, disapprove, or partially approve Amendment 21-1 and on the proposed implementing regulations in the PIE rule. A NMFS Report (Agenda Item G.1.a, Supplemental Attachment 4) submitted to the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) at its September 2011 meeting highlights some items where NMFS is specifically requesting further public input (<http://www.pcouncil.org/resources/archives/briefing-books/september-2011-briefing-book/>).

**Comments on the Amendment 21-1 and on the proposed PIE rule must be received no later than October 14, 2011.**

You may submit written comments by any of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submissions:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal, at <http://www.regulations.gov>. To submit comments via the e-Rulemaking Portal, first click the “submit a comment” icon. For the proposed PIE rule, enter NOAA-NMFS-2011-0201 in the keyword search. For the NOA on Am 21-1, enter RIN 0648-BB13 and select document with a posted date of 8/15/2011. Locate the document you wish to comment on from the resulting list and click on the “Submit a Comment” icon on the right of that line.
- **Fax:** 206-526-6736; Attn: Jamie Goen.
- **Mail:** William W. Stelle, Jr., Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115-0070; Attn: Jamie Goen.

**Instructions:** All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (if submitting comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking portal, enter “N/A” in the relevant required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

**The draft FMP language for Amendment 21-1 is available electronically through the Council’s website**

<http://www.pcouncil.org/groundfish/fishery-management-plan/amendment-21-1/>

**or by calling the Council at 866-806-7204 to request a copy.**

### Background

Amendment 21–1 would modify the FMP to clarify that Amendment 21 supersedes the limited entry/open access allocations for groundfish species allocated through Amendment 21. Amendment 21–1 would also revise the formula in the FMP to allocate Pacific halibut bycatch to the limited entry trawl fishery.

The PIE rule proposes revisions to the trawl rationalization program, and includes regulations that would affect all commercial groundfish sectors. The rule proposes regulatory amendments to further implement Amendments 20 and 21 to the FMP and an FMP amendment to further revise Amendment 21 (called Amendment 21-1). The proposed rule includes, but is not limited to: revisions to the Pacific halibut trawl bycatch mortality limit, clarification that Amendment 21 supersedes limited entry/open access allocations for certain groundfish species, revisions to the observer coverage requirement while a vessel is in port and before the offload is complete, revisions to the electronic fish ticket reporting requirements, revisions to the first receiver site license requirement, further clarification on moving between limited entry and open access fisheries, a process for end-of-the-year vessel account reconciliation, and an exemption from processing at sea for qualified participants in the Shorebased IFQ Program.

### Correction

NMFS also announces publication of a final rule correcting inadvertent non-substantive errors in the regulations that resulted with implementation of the regulations for Amendments 20 and 21. The correction was effective beginning August 30, 2011.