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PUBLIC NOTICE

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INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS TO COMMERCIAL FISHERIES Effective October 9, 2018

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces four routine inseason adjustments to management measures for commercial groundfish fisheries, including:

- (1) an increase to the sablefish trip limits for the limited entry fixed gear (LEFG) fishery north of 36° North latitude (N. lat.) and the open access fixed gear (OAFG) fishery north and south of 36° N. lat.;
- (2) an increase to the bocaccio trip limits for the LEFG fishery between 40°10' N. lat and 34°27' N. lat.;
- (3) transferring Pacific Ocean perch (POP) and darkblotched rockfish from the incidental open access (IOA) set-asides to the set asides for unforeseen catch events for those species; and
- (4) an increase to the incidental halibut retention allowance in the LEFG sablefish primary fishery.

These actions, which were recommended to NMFS by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) at its September 2018 meeting, are intended to allow recreational fishing vessels to access more abundant groundfish stocks while protecting overfished and depleted stocks.

Therefore, beginning October 9, 2018, the following inseason adjustments will be effective:

(1) Sablefish Limits for the for the LEFG and OAFG Fisheries:

	September	October	November	December
LEFG north of 36° N. lat.	1,400 lb/week, not to exceed 4,200 lb/ 2 months			
LEFG south of 36° N. lat.	2,000 lb/ week ¹			
OAFG north of 36° N. lat.	300 lb/ day, or 1 landing per week of up to 1,400 lb, not to exceed 2,800 lb/ 2 months			
OAFG south of 36° N. lat.	300 lb/ day, or 1 landing per week of up to 1,600 lb, not to exceed 4,800 lb/ 2 months			

¹ The Council did not suggest changes for LEFG south of 36° N. lat. at this time.

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(2) Bocaccio Limits for the LEFG Fishery

	September	October	November	December
LEFG between 40°10' N. lat. and 34°27' N. lat.	1,500 lb/ 2 months			

(3) POP and Darkblotched Rockfish Transfer to the Buffer

As of October 9, 2018, 9.7 mt of POP and 17.7 mt of darkblotched rockfish are redistributed from the off-the-top deductions for the incidental open access fishery to the buffer for unforeseen catch events. This redistribution creates a larger buffer for all sectors, and reduces the risk of a closure of one or both of the motherships or catch/processor sectors. Transfer of POP and darkblotched rockfish to the set-aside for unforeseen catch events is not expected to result in greater impacts to either species, or other overfished species, than what was originally projected through the 2017—18 harvest specifications.

(4) Halibut Retention in the Sablefish Primary Fishery

Beginning October 9, 2018, vessels fishing in the sablefish primary fishery will be allowed to take “200 lb dressed weight of halibut for every 1,000 lb dressed weight of sablefish landed and up to 2 additional halibut in excess of the 200 lb per 1,000 lb ratio per landing.” This modest increase in the allowed halibut retention ratio over the last few weeks of the fishery is unlikely to cause catch to exceed the incidental halibut allocation for the sablefish primary fishery north of Pt. Chehalis, WA, but will provide some additional benefit to fishery participants.

For more detailed information on each of these changes, please see the [NMFS West Coast Region Federal Register Notices Website](#).

For the full trip limit tables see: [LEFG N of 40°10' N. lat.](#), [LEFG S of 40°10' N. lat.](#), [OAFG N. of 40°10' N. lat.](#), and [OAFG S of 40°10' N. lat.](#)