



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Building. 1
Seattle, WA 98115-0070

DATE: August 18, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: DISTRIBUTION

FROM: ~~For~~ D. Robert Lohn
Regional Administrator

SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF THE 2008 PACIFIC WHITING FISHERIES

This communication serves as the official notice of the end of the primary seasons for the catcher/processor, mothership, and the shore-based sectors of the whiting fishery, because the best available information on August 18, 2008 indicated that the 4.7 metric tons (mt) canary rockfish bycatch limit for the non-tribal whiting fisheries will be reached. Catch estimates for at-sea processing sectors were based on NMFS observer data. Catch estimates for the shore-based vessels were derived from electronic fish ticket submissions plus the best estimates of catch that was discarded at sea.

For the reasons stated here and in accordance with the regulations at 50 CFR 660.370 (c)(1)(ii), NMFS herein announces that **effective noon local time August 19, 2008**: 1) further taking and retaining, receiving or at-sea processing of whiting by a catcher-processor is prohibited; 2) further taking and retaining, receiving or at-sea processing of whiting by a mothership processor is prohibited, and 3) no more than 10,000-lb (4,536 kg) of whiting may be taken and retained, possessed or landed by any vessel participating in the shore-based sector of the whiting fishery, unless otherwise announced in the Federal Register. Shore-based vessels fishing shoreward of the 100 fm (183 m) contour in the Eureka area (43° - 40°30' N. lat.) at any time during a fishing trip, the 10,000-lb (4,536 kg) trip limit applies, as announced in the management measures 660.373 (d).

For vessels in the at-sea processing sectors, no additional unprocessed whiting may be brought on board after at-sea processing is prohibited, but a catcher-processor or mothership may continue to process whiting that was on board before at-sea processing was prohibited. For vessels in the shore-based sector, fishing must cease at the time of the closure and the vessel must proceed to port. Offloading of primary season whiting must begin within 36 hours of the time that the fishery closes. Vessels must continue to have and use the Vessel Monitoring System with the whiting declaration during this time.

Official Closure Notice

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