

on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational fishery for vermilion snapper for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such notification, the bag and possession limit of vermilion snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is zero. This bag and possession limit also applies in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in State or Federal waters.

(B) Without regard to overfished status, if vermilion snapper recreational landings exceed the ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year, to reduce the ACL for that fishing year by the amount of the overage.

(C) Recreational landings will be evaluated relative to the ACL as follows. For 2010, only 2010 recreational landings will be compared to the ACL; in 2011, the average of 2010 and 2011 recreational landings will be compared to the ACL; and in 2012 and subsequent fishing years, the most recent 3-year running average recreational landings will be compared to the ACL.

[FR Doc. 2010-32831 Filed 12-29-10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 0908191244-91427-02]

RIN 0648-XA073

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Temporary rule; quota transfer.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the State of North Carolina is transferring a portion of its 2010 commercial summer flounder quota to the Commonwealth of Virginia. In addition, the State of Maine is transferring a portion of its 2010 commercial summer flounder quota to the State of Rhode Island. By this action, NMFS adjusts the quotas and announces

the revised commercial quota for each state involved.

DATES: Effective December 27, 2010, through December 31, 2010.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah Heil, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9257.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery are found at 50 CFR part 648. The regulations require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned among the coastal states from North Carolina through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state are described in § 648.100.

The final rule implementing Amendment 5 to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan, which was published on December 17, 1993 (58 FR 65936), provided a mechanism for summer flounder quota to be transferred from one state to another. Two or more states, under mutual agreement and with the concurrence of the Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), can transfer or combine summer flounder commercial quota under § 648.100(d). The Regional Administrator is required to consider the criteria set forth in § 648.100(d)(3) in the evaluation of requests for quota transfers or combinations.

North Carolina has agreed to transfer 11,815 lb (5,359 kg) of its 2010 commercial quota to Virginia. This transfer was prompted by summer flounder landings of two North Carolina vessels that were granted safe harbor in Virginia due to mechanical problems on November 19, 2010, and December 6, 2010. In addition, Maine has agreed to transfer 6,000 lb (2,722 kg) of its 2010 commercial quota to Rhode Island. The Regional Administrator has determined that the criteria set forth in § 648.100(d)(3) have been met. The revised summer flounder quotas for calendar year 2010 are: North Carolina, 3,358,231 lb (1,523,268 kg); Virginia, 2,922,226 lb (1,325,499 kg); Maine, 126 lb (57 kg); and Rhode Island, 2,025,915 lb (918,940 kg).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: December 27, 2010.

Emily H. Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2010-32947 Filed 12-27-10; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 100204079-0199-02]

RIN 0648-XA084

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Bluefish Fishery; Quota Transfer

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Temporary rule; inseason quota transfer.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the Commonwealth of Virginia is transferring commercial bluefish quota to the State of North Carolina from its 2010 quota. By this action, NMFS adjusts the quotas and announces the revised commercial quotas for Virginia and North Carolina.

DATES: Effective December 27, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah Heil, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9257.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations governing the Atlantic bluefish fishery are found at 50 CFR part 648. The regulations require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned among the coastal States from Florida through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each State is described in § 648.160.

Two or more States, under mutual agreement and with the concurrence of the Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), can transfer or combine bluefish commercial quota under § 648.160(f). The Regional Administrator is required to consider the criteria set forth in § 648.160(f)(1) in the evaluation of requests for quota transfers or combinations.

Virginia has agreed to transfer 250,000 lb (113,398 kg) of its 2010 commercial quota to North Carolina. The Regional Administrator has determined that the criteria set forth in § 648.160(f)(1) have been met. The revised bluefish quotas for calendar year 2010 are: Virginia, 963,280 lb (436,937 kg); and North Carolina, 3,524,441 lb (1,528,860 kg).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: December 27, 2010.

Emily H. Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2010-32951 Filed 12-27-10; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 101221628-0628-01]

RIN 0648-BA40

Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan; Amendments 20 and 21; Trawl Rationalization Program; Allocations for the Start of the 2011 Fishery

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Temporary rule; emergency action; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS issues this rule to implement an interim reduction to the 2010 harvest level for sablefish, issue revised quota pounds for individual fishing quota (IFQ) species, revise the calculation for the Pacific halibut trawl bycatch mortality limit for the trawl rationalization program; and adjust the trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) and landing allowances for non-IFQ species and Pacific whiting for the start of the 2011 groundfish fishery.

DATES: This rule is effective January 1, 2011. Comments must be received no later than 5 p.m. local time on January 31, 2011.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by 0648-BA40, by any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submissions:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal, at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

- *Fax:* 206-526-6736, Attn: Kevin Duffy.

- *Mail:* William W. Stelle, Jr., Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE., Seattle, WA 98115-0070, Attn: Kevin Duffy.

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.

Background information and documents, including the environmental assessment for this action, are available from William W. Stelle, Jr., Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS, 7600 Sand Point Way, NE., Seattle, WA 98115-0070; or by phone at 206-526-6150.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kevin C. Duffy, 206-526-4743; (fax) 206-526-6736; Kevin.Duffy@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In this emergency action, NMFS is implementing interim measures for the Pacific coast groundfish fisheries beginning in January, 2011. The interim measures include: interim reductions to the 2010 harvest level for sablefish; issuance of quota pounds (QP) for IFQ species; revisions to the calculation for the Pacific halibut trawl bycatch mortality limit; and adjustment of the trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) and landing allowances for non-IFQ species and Pacific whiting. These interim measures are necessary due to a delay in the finalization of the 2011-2012 harvest specifications and management measures, and are needed to meet the scheduled implementation of the trawl rationalization program in January 2011. These measures are intended to manage the early part of the 2011 groundfish fishery in a manner that prevents any conservation concerns until the 2011-2012 harvest specifications and management measures are implemented, currently anticipated in April 2011, and to accommodate the transition to a rationalized trawl fishery. For more background on the trawl rationalization program, see the preamble to the June 10, 2010, proposed rule (75 FR 32994), the August 31, 2010, proposed rule (75 FR 53380), the October 1, 2010, final rule (74 FR 60868), and the December 15, 2010, final rule (75 FR 78344).

The 2011-2012 harvest specifications and management measures final rule was scheduled to publish late in 2010 so that the trawl rationalization program and the 2011-2012 harvest specifications and management

measures (2011-2012 specifications) would be implemented simultaneously. However, the 2011-2012 specifications, including several pieces necessary to sustainably manage the entire fishery and to begin the rationalized trawl fishery, have been delayed and will not be in place for the start of the 2011 groundfish fisheries. As a result of this delay, the harvest specifications and management measures that were implemented during 2010 will remain in place for the start of 2011, until NMFS takes action through a rulemaking to revise them. This may be problematic in some instances, as discussed below. Therefore, NMFS is taking action in this interim, emergency rulemaking to revise some harvest specifications and management measures.

Interim 2011 Harvest Specifications

Because the 2011-2012 harvest specifications and management measures rulemaking is delayed, if NMFS does not take any action, the harvest specifications and management measures that were implemented during 2010 will remain in place in 2011 until they are revised through a subsequent rulemaking. If the 2010 harvest specifications are allowed to remain in place and if catch early in 2011 is too high, both the biological resource and communities may be subject to overfishing and early fishery closure, respectively. This concern is highest for species that are caught by fisheries early in the year and where there may be limited ability to manage the fishery inseason to reduce catch later in the year. NMFS raised these issues to the Pacific Fishery Management Council at its November 2-9, 2010 meeting in Costa Mesa, California, and received recommendations from the Council regarding this interim rule to address these concerns.

The proposed rule for the 2011-2012 Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures; Amendment 16-5; and Amendment 23 published on November 3, 2010 (75 FR 67810). As part of that rulemaking, in August 2010, the Council published a draft Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Harvest Specifications and Management Measures for the 2011-2012 Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery (DEIS), which included a range of 2011-2012 harvest levels. When the proposed 2011 harvest levels are compared with the levels that were in place for 2010, there are many species of groundfish for which the proposed 2011 harvest levels are lower than those that were in place for 2010. However, for many of those species, there is a low level of concern