

(b) *Employees.* The employees of any person used by a railroad in the operation of a route under this part shall be considered an employee of that railroad and subject to the applicable Federal laws and regulations governing similar crafts or classes of employees of Amtrak, including provisions under § 121 of the Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act of 1997 relating to employees who provide food and beverage service.

(c) *Hiring Preference.* The winning bidder shall provide hiring preference to qualified Amtrak employees displaced by the award of the bid, consistent with the staffing plan submitted by the winning bidder.

§ 269.17 Cessation of service.

If a railroad awarded a route under this part ceases to operate the service or fails to fulfill its obligations under the contract required under § 269.13, the Administrator, in collaboration with the Surface Transportation Board, shall take any necessary action consistent with title 49 of the United States Code to enforce the contract and ensure the continued provision of service, including the installment of an interim service provider and re-bidding the contract to operate the service. The entity providing service shall either be Amtrak or a railroad eligible for this pilot program under § 269.7.

Issued in Washington DC on August 29, 2011.

Karen J. Rae,

Deputy Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Parts 300 and 679

[Docket No. 101027534-0559-01]

RIN 0648-BA37

Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Extension of Public Comment Period on Proposed Rule for a Catch Sharing Plan for Guided Sport and Commercial Fisheries in Alaska

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

ACTION: Proposed rule, extension of public comment period.

SUMMARY: NMFS is extending the date by which public comments are due concerning proposed regulations to implement a catch sharing plan for the guided sport and commercial fisheries for Pacific halibut in waters of International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Regulatory Areas 2C (Southeast Alaska) and 3A (Central Gulf of Alaska). NMFS published the proposed rule on July 22, 2011 and announced that the public comment period would end on September 6, 2011. With this notice, NMFS is extending the comment period to September 21, 2011.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of comments on the proposed rule published on July 22, 2011 (76 FR 44156), is extended from September 6, 2011, to September 21, 2011.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. You may submit comments identified by 0648-BA37 by any one of the following methods:

- *Electronic submissions:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal Web site at <http://www.regulations.gov>.
- *Mail:* P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668.
- *Fax:* 907-586-7557.
- *Hand delivery:* 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK.

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 (e.g., name, address) 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 (enter N/A in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe portable document file (pdf) formats only.

Written comments regarding the burden-hour estimates or other aspects of the collection-of-information requirements contained in this proposed rule may be submitted to NMFS at the above address and by e-mail to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to 202-395-7285.

Electronic copies of the proposed rule and the Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis prepared for this action are available from <http://www.regulations.gov> or from the

NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov>. The Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis for the charter halibut limited access program is available from the NMFS Alaska Region Web site at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Rachel Baker, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On July 22, 2011, NMFS published regulations at 76 FR 44156, that would implement a catch sharing plan for the guided sport and commercial fisheries for Pacific halibut in waters of IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C (Southeast Alaska) and 3A (Central Gulf of Alaska). The proposed catch sharing plan will change the annual process of allocating halibut between the guided sport and commercial fisheries in Area 2C and Area 3A, establish allocations for each sector, and specify harvest restrictions for guided sport anglers that are intended to limit harvest to the annual guided sport fishery catch limit. The proposed catch sharing plan also will authorize annual transfers of commercial halibut quota to charter halibut permit holders for harvest in the guided sport fishery.

NMFS received several requests from members of the public and representatives of recreational fishing organizations to extend the comment period on the proposed rule due to overlap with the recreational halibut fishing season and the complexity of the proposed catch sharing plan. Several commenters requested a 30-day extension and one commenter asked for an additional 60 days. We have considered these comments and conclude that a 15-day extension should allow sufficient time for the public to review and comment on the proposed rule without significantly delaying the rulemaking process.

Dated: September 1, 2011.

John Oliver,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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