

Management Area before 0001 hr local time, May 13, 2016. This closure is in effect through February 28, 2017.

### Classification

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

NMFS finds good cause pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) to waive prior notice and the opportunity for public comment because it would be contrary to the public interest and impracticable. The NGOM Scallop Management Area opened for the 2016 fishing year on March 1, 2016. The regulations at § 648.60(b)(2) require this closure to ensure that federally permitted scallop vessels do not harvest more than the allocated TAC for the NGOM Scallop Management Area. The projections of the date on which the NGOM Scallop Management Area TAC will be harvested become apparent only as trips into the area occur on a real-time basis and as activity trends begin to appear. As a result, an accurate projection only can be made very close in time to when the TAC is harvested. In addition, proposing a closure would likely increase activity, triggering an earlier closure than predicted. To allow federally permitted scallop vessels to continue to take trips in the NGOM Scallop Management Area during the period necessary to publish and receive comments on a proposed rule would likely result in vessels over harvesting the 2016 TAC for the NGOM Scallop Management Area. Over harvest from the NGOM Scallop Management Area would result in excessive fishing effort in the area, where effort controls are critical, thereby undermining conservation objectives of the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan and requiring more restrictive future management measures. Also, the public had prior notice and full opportunity to comment on this closure process when we put these provisions in place. NMFS further finds, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), good cause to waive the 30-day delayed effectiveness period for the reasons stated above.

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

Dated: May 11, 2016.

**Emily H. Menashes,**

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

[FR Doc. 2016-11494 Filed 5-11-16; 4:15 pm]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 160126053-6398-02]

RIN 0648-BF74

#### Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Annual Specifications and Management Measures for the 2016 Tribal and Non-Tribal Fisheries for Pacific Whiting

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

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS issues this final rule for the 2016 Pacific whiting fishery under the authority of the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), and the Pacific Whiting Act of 2006. This final rule announces the 2016 U.S. Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 367,553 metric tons of Pacific whiting, establishes the tribal allocation of 64,322 metric tons, establishes a set-aside for research and bycatch of 1,500 metric tons, and announces the allocations of Pacific whiting to the non-tribal fishery for 2016. This rule will ensure that the 2016 Pacific whiting fishery is managed in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the FMP, the Pacific Whiting Act of 2006, and other applicable laws.

**DATES:** Effective May 12, 2016.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Miako Ushio (West Coast Region, NMFS), phone: 206-526-4644, and email: [Miako.Ushio@noaa.gov](mailto:Miako.Ushio@noaa.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Electronic Access

This final rule is accessible via the Internet at the Office of the Federal Register Web site at <https://www.federalregister.gov>. Background information and documents are available at the NMFS West Coast Region Web site at [http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/management/whiting/pacific\\_whiting.html](http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/management/whiting/pacific_whiting.html) and at the Pacific Fishery Management Council's Web site at <http://www.pcouncil.org/>.

The final environmental impact statement (FEIS) regarding Harvest

Specifications and Management Measures for 2015-2016 and Biennial Periods Thereafter is available on the NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region Web site at:

[www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/publications/nepa/groundfish/groundfish\\_nepa\\_documents.html](http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/publications/nepa/groundfish/groundfish_nepa_documents.html) and copies are available from Donald McIsaac, Executive Director, Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Portland, OR 97220, phone: 503-820-2280.

### Background

This final rule announces the TAC for Pacific whiting, expressed in metric tons (mt). This is the fifth year that the TAC for Pacific whiting has been determined under the terms of the Agreement with Canada on Pacific Hake/Whiting (the Agreement) and the Pacific Whiting Act of 2006 (the Whiting Act), 16 U.S.C. 7001-7010. The Agreement and the Whiting Act establish bilateral bodies to implement the terms of the Agreement, each with various responsibilities, including: The Joint Management Committee (JMC), which is the decision-making body; the Joint Technical Committee (JTC), which conducts the stock assessment; the Scientific Review Group (SRG), which reviews the stock assessment; and the Advisory Panel (AP), which provides stakeholder input to the JMC (The Agreement, Art. II-IV; 16 U.S.C. 7001-7005). The Agreement establishes a default harvest policy (F-40 percent with a 40/10 adjustment) and allocates 73.88 percent of the TAC to the United States and 26.12 percent of the TAC to Canada. The JMC is primarily responsible for developing a TAC recommendation to the Parties (United States and Canada). The Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Secretary of State, has the authority to accept or reject this recommendation.

### Historic Catch

Coastwide Pacific whiting landings averaged 224,376 mt from 1966 to 2015, with a low of 89,930 mt in 1980 and a peak of 363,135 mt in 2005. The coastwide catch in 2015 was 190,663 mt of a 440,000 mt bilateral TAC. The U.S. harvested 47.4 percent and Canada 31.8 percent of their respective allocations. The overall catch of Pacific whiting in U.S. waters was much less than anticipated. Industry reported that this lower catch was due to several factors including unusual, dispersed distribution of the fish later in the season after the at-sea fleet returned from Alaska, possibly due to anomalously warm ocean conditions. Catches may also have been impacted

by reduced global market demand resulting from, among other things, a strong U.S. dollar and other market conditions. The Catcher/Processor (C/P) Coop Program, Mothership Coop Program, and Shore-Based IFQ Program fleets caught 67.9 percent, 38.8 percent, and 46.6 percent of their total quotas, respectively. Tribal fisheries did not land any Pacific whiting in 2015.

#### *2016 Pacific Whiting Stock Assessment*

The JTC prepared the stock assessment document "Status of Pacific hake (whiting) stock in U.S. and Canadian waters in 2016," which was completed on March 1, 2016, and presents a model that depends primarily upon an acoustic survey biomass index, catches, and age compositions for information on the scale of the current Pacific whiting stock. The most recent survey was conducted in 2015, and was a result of collaboration between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and NOAA Fisheries. The 2015 coast-wide survey biomass estimate was 2.156 million mt, which is estimated to be the highest on record for the survey. The amount of spawning biomass in 2016 is estimated to be 79 percent of historic average levels, well above the target 40 percent.

As with past estimates, there is a considerable range of uncertainty around the most recent estimates because young cohorts that make up a large portion of the survey biomass have not been observed very long. However, age-composition data from both the aggregated fisheries (1975–2015) and the acoustic survey (1998–2015) indicate an exceptionally strong 2010 cohort (age-5 whiting in 2015) contributing to recent increases in the survey index. Coast-wide catches in recent years have largely depended on the 2010 cohort, accounting for 70 percent of the commercial catch in 2013, 67 percent in 2014, and 67 percent in 2015. Similarly, the 2015 survey age composition was nearly 60 percent age-5 fish from the 2010 cohort. Both survey and fishery data sources provided initial indications that the 2014 cohort (age-1 whiting in 2015) was above average. Current estimates suggest that the 2014 cohort is potentially similar in magnitude to the 2010 cohort, but because it has been observed only once (in 2015 data) the estimate is highly uncertain.

The JTC provided tables showing catch alternatives for 2016. Using the default F=40 percent harvest rate identified in the Agreement (Paragraph 1 of Article III), the coastwide TAC for 2016 would be 804,399 mt. The stock assessment model predicts that the probability of the spawning stock

biomass dropping below 40 percent under the default harvest rate catch scenario is 54 percent, and the probability of dropping below 10 percent of unfished biomass in 2016 is less than 1 percent. Spawning biomass in 2017 is likely to be less than in 2016 under any catch level, because the dominant 2010 cohort is projected to lose biomass due to natural mortality at a faster rate than it will increase in biomass due to growth.

#### *Scientific and Management Reviews*

The SRG met in Seattle, Washington, on February 23–25, 2016, to review the draft stock assessment document prepared by the JTC. The SRG noted that the 2015 acoustic-trawl survey was successfully completed, and that the 2015 survey biomass was 12 percent higher than the 2013 survey estimate, with approximately 21.4 percent of the estimated biomass in Canadian waters and 78.6 percent in U.S. waters and that as with past assessments, uncertainty in current stock status projections is likely underestimated. The SRG determined that substantive improvements had been made in the biomass estimate. In particular, a geostatistical approach, kriging, has been applied to develop index estimates since 2011, and important refinements were made this year that increased the SRG's confidence in the extrapolated biomass estimates. The SRG noted that according to the stock assessment, projected median catches of 830,124 mt in 2016 and 955,423 mt in 2017 could be achievable without overfishing.

The AP met on March 16–18, 2016, and provided its 2016 TAC recommendation to the JMC on March 18, 2016. At its March 17–18, 2016, meeting, the JMC reviewed the advice of the JTC, the SRG, and the AP, and agreed on a TAC recommendation for transmittal to the Parties. Paragraph 1 of Article III of the Agreement directs the default harvest rate to be used unless scientific evidence demonstrates that a different rate is necessary to sustain the offshore whiting resource.

After consideration of the 2016 stock assessment and other relevant scientific information, the JMC did not use the default harvest rate. Instead, a more conservative approach was agreed upon. There were two primary reasons for choosing a TAC well below the default level of F=40 percent: (1) A desire to minimize mortality of the potentially strong 2014 year class, which is anticipated to be important to the fishery over the next several years, but the scale of which is uncertain, and (2) to extend the harvest available from the 2010 year class. The JMC recommended

an unadjusted TAC of 439,995 mt for 2016, which is approximately half of what the TAC would be by using the default harvest rate. This conservative approach was endorsed by the AP. Both the U.S. and Canada caught significantly less than their individual TACs in 2015. Therefore, 15 percent of each Party's individual unadjusted 2015 TACs is added to that Party's TAC for 2016 in accordance with Article II of the Agreement, resulting in a 2016 adjusted coastwide TAC of 497,500 mt.

The recommendation for an unadjusted 2016 United States TAC of 325,068 mt, plus 42,485 mt carryover of uncaught quota from 2015 results in an adjusted United States TAC of 367,553 mt for 2016 (73.88 percent of the coastwide TAC). This recommendation is consistent with the best available science, provisions of the Agreement, and the Whiting Act. The recommendation was transmitted via letter to the Parties on March 18, 2016. NMFS, under delegation of authority from the Secretary of Commerce, approved the adjusted TAC recommendation of 367,553 mt for U.S. fisheries on April 21, 2016.

#### *Tribal Fishery Allocation and Reapportionment*

This final rule establishes the tribal allocation of Pacific whiting for 2016. NMFS issued a proposed rule regarding this allocation on March 10, 2016 (81 FR 12676). This action finalizes the tribal allocation. Since 1996, NMFS has been allocating a portion of the U.S. TAC of Pacific whiting to the tribal fishery using the process described in § 660.50(d)(1). According to § 660.55(b), the tribal allocation is subtracted from the total U.S. Pacific whiting TAC. The tribal Pacific whiting fishery is managed separately from the non-tribal Pacific whiting fishery, and is not governed by limited entry or open access regulations or allocations.

The proposed rule described the tribal allocation as 17.5 percent of the U.S. TAC, and projected a range of potential tribal allocations for 2016 based on a range of U.S. TACs over the last 10 years (plus or minus 25 percent to capture variability in stock abundance). As described in the proposed rule, the resulting range of potential tribal allocations was 17,842 to 71,110 mt.

As described earlier in this preamble, the U.S. TAC for 2016 is 367,553 mt. Applying the approach described in the proposed rule, NMFS is establishing the 2016 tribal allocation of 64,322 mt (17.5 percent of the U.S. TAC) at § 660.50(f)(4) by this final rule. While the total amount of Pacific whiting to which the Tribes are entitled under their treaty

right has not yet been determined, and new scientific information or discussions with the relevant parties may impact that decision, the best available scientific information to date suggests that 64,322 mt is within the likely range of potential treaty right amounts.

As with prior tribal Pacific whiting allocations, this final rule is not intended to establish precedent for future Pacific whiting seasons, or for the determination of the total amount of whiting to which the Tribes are entitled under their treaty right. Rather, this rule adopts an interim allocation, pending the determination of the total treaty amount. That amount will be based on further development of scientific information and additional coordination and discussion with and among the coastal tribes and State of Washington.

#### *Harvest Guidelines and Allocations*

This final rule establishes the fishery harvest guideline (HG) and allocates it among the three non-tribal sectors of the Pacific whiting fishery. The fishery harvest guideline, sometimes called the non-tribal allocation, was not included in the tribal whiting proposed rule published on March 10, 2016 (81 FR 12676), for two reasons related to timing and process. First, a recommendation on the coastwide TAC for Pacific whiting for 2016, under the terms of the Agreement with Canada, was not available until March 18, 2016. This recommendation for a U.S. TAC was approved by NMFS, under delegation of authority from the Secretary of Commerce, on April 21, 2016. Second, the fishery HG is established following deductions from the U.S. TAC for the tribal allocation, mortality in scientific research activities, and fishing mortality in non-groundfish fisheries. The Council establishes the amounts deducted from the U.S. TAC for scientific research and non-groundfish fisheries on an annual basis at its April meeting, based on estimates of scientific research catch and estimated bycatch mortality in non-groundfish fisheries. For 2016, the Council recommended and NMFS approves a scientific research and bycatch set-aside of 1,500 mt. These amounts are not set until the TAC is available. The fishery HG is therefore being finalized with this rule. The 2016 HG, sometimes referred to as the non-tribal allocation, for Pacific whiting is 301,731 mt. This amount was determined by deducting from the total U.S. TAC of 367,553 mt, the 64,322 mt tribal allocation, along with 1,500 mt for scientific research catch and fishing mortality in non-groundfish fisheries.

Regulations at § 660.55(i)(2) allocate the fishery HG among the non-tribal C/P Coop Program, Mothership Coop Program, and Shorebased IFQ Program sectors of the Pacific whiting fishery. The C/P Coop Program is allocated 34 percent (102,589 mt for 2016), the Mothership Coop Program is allocated 24 percent (72,415 mt for 2016), and the Shorebased IFQ Program is allocated 42 percent (126,727 mt for 2016). The fishery south of 42° N. lat. may not take more than 6,336 mt (5 percent of the Shorebased IFQ Program allocation) prior to May 15, the start of the primary Pacific whiting season north of 42° N. lat.

The 2016 allocations of canary rockfish, darkblotched rockfish, Pacific ocean perch and widow rockfish to the Pacific whiting fishery were published in a final rule on March 10, 2015 (80 FR 12567). The allocations to the Pacific whiting fishery for these species are described in the footnotes to Table 2.b to part 660, subpart C and are not changed via this rulemaking.

#### **Comments and Responses**

On March 10, 2016, NMFS issued a proposed rule for the allocation and management of the 2016 tribal Pacific whiting fishery. The comment period on the proposed rule closed on April 11, 2016. No comment letters were received.

#### **Classification**

The Annual Specifications and Management Measures for the 2016 Tribal and non-Tribal Fisheries for Pacific Whiting are issued under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and the Pacific Whiting Act of 2006, and are in accordance with 50 CFR part 660, subparts C through G, the regulations implementing the FMP. NMFS has determined that this rule is consistent with the national standards of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable laws.

NMFS has determined that the Pacific whiting fishery, both tribal and non-tribal, is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with approved coastal zone management programs for the States of Washington and Oregon. NMFS sent letters to the State of Washington and the State of Oregon describing its determination of consistency dated February 5, 2016. Both the State of Oregon and the State of Washington responded indicating agreement with the determination.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), the NMFS Assistant Administrator finds good cause to waive prior public notice and comment and delay in effectiveness for those provisions in this final rule

that were not included in 80 FR 12676, e.g., the U.S. TAC, as delaying this rule would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest. The annual harvest specifications for Pacific whiting must be implemented by the start of the primary Pacific whiting season, which begins on May 15, 2016, or the primary Pacific whiting season will effectively remain closed.

Every year, NMFS conducts a Pacific whiting stock assessment in which U.S. and Canadian scientists cooperate. The 2016 stock assessment for Pacific whiting was prepared in early 2016, and included updated total catch, length and age data from the U.S. and Canadian fisheries from 2015, and biomass indices from the 2015 Joint U.S.-Canadian acoustic/midwater trawl surveys. Because of this late availability of the most recent data for the assessment, and the need for time to conduct the treaty process for determining the TAC using the most recent assessment, it would not be possible to allow for notice and comment before the start of the primary Pacific whiting season on May 15.

A delay in implementing the Pacific whiting harvest specifications to allow for notice and comment would be contrary to the public interest because it would require either a shorter primary whiting season or development of a TAC without the most recent data. A shorter season could prevent the tribal and non-tribal fisheries from attaining their 2016 allocations, which would result in unnecessary short-term adverse economic effects for the Pacific whiting fishing vessels and the associated fishing communities. A TAC determined without the most recent data could fail to account for significant fluctuations in the biomass of this relatively short-lived species. To prevent these adverse effects and to allow the Pacific whiting season to commence, it is in the best interest of the public to waive prior notice and comment.

In addition, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), the NMFS Assistant Administrator finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in effectiveness. Waiving the 30-day delay in effectiveness will not have a negative impact on any entities, as there are no new compliance requirements or other burdens placed on the fishing community with this rule. Failure to make this final rule effective at the start of the fishing year will undermine the intent of the rule, which is to promote the optimal utilization and conservation of Pacific whiting. Making this rule effective immediately would also serve the best interests of the public because

it will allow for the longest possible Pacific whiting fishing season and therefore the best possible economic outcome for those whose livelihoods depend on this fishery. Because the 30-day delay in effectiveness would potentially cause significant financial harm without providing any corresponding benefits, this final rule is effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**.

The preamble to the proposed rule and this final rule serve as the small entity compliance guide required by Section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996. This action does not require any additional compliance from small entities that is not described in the preamble. Copies of this final rule are available from NMFS at the following Web site: [http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/management/whiting/pacific\\_whiting.html](http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/management/whiting/pacific_whiting.html).

The Office of Management and Budget has determined that this final rule is not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

When an agency proposes regulations, the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) requires the agency to prepare and make available for public comment an Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (IRFA) document that describes the impact on small businesses, non-profit enterprises, local governments, and other small entities. The IRFA is to aid the agency in considering all reasonable regulatory alternatives that would minimize the economic impact on affected small entities. After the public comment period, the agency prepares a Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (FRFA) that takes into consideration any new information and public comments. This FRFA incorporates the IRFA and a summary of the analyses completed to support the action.

NMFS published a proposed rule on March 10, 2016 (81 FR 12676) for the allocation of the 2016 tribal Pacific whiting fishery. The comment period on the proposed rule closed on April 11, 2016, and no comments were received on the proposed rule, the IRFA, or the economic impacts of this action generally. An IRFA was prepared and summarized in the Classification section of the preamble to the proposed rule. The description of this action, its purpose, and its legal basis are described in the preamble to the proposed rule and are not repeated here. The FRFA describes the impacts on small entities, which are defined in the IRFA for this action and not repeated here. Analytical requirements for the FRFA are described in Regulatory

Flexibility Act, section 604(a)(1) through (5), and summarized below. The FRFA must contain: (1) A succinct statement of the need for, and objectives of, the rule; (2) A summary of the significant issues raised by the public comments in response to the initial regulatory flexibility analysis, a summary of the assessment of the agency of such issues, and a statement of any changes made in the proposed rule as a result of such comments; (3) A description and an estimate of the number of small entities to which the rule will apply, or an explanation of why no such estimate is available; (4) A description of the projected reporting, recordkeeping and other compliance requirements of the rule, including an estimate of the classes of small entities which will be subject to the requirement and the type of professional skills necessary for preparation of the report or record; and (5) A description of the steps the agency has taken to minimize the significant economic impact on small entities consistent with the stated objectives of applicable statutes, including a statement of the factual, policy, and legal reasons for selecting the alternative adopted in the final rule and why each one of the other significant alternatives to the rule considered by the agency which affect the impact on small entities was rejected.

This final rule establishes the initial 2016 Pacific whiting allocations for the tribal fishery, the fishery HG, the allocations for the non-tribal sectors (C/P, mothership, and shoreside), and the amount of Pacific whiting deducted from the TAC for scientific research and fishing mortality in non-groundfish fisheries. The amount of whiting allocated to these sectors is based on the U.S. TAC. From the U.S. TAC, small amounts of whiting that account for research catch and for bycatch in other fisheries are deducted. The amount of the tribal allocation is also deducted directly from the TAC. After accounting for these deductions, the remainder is the commercial harvest guideline. This guideline is then allocated among the other three sectors as follows: 34 percent for the C/P Coop Program; 24 percent for the MS Coop Program; and 42 percent for the Shorebased IFQ Program.

There are four tribes that can participate in the tribal whiting fishery: The Hoh, Makah, Quileute, and Quinault. The current tribal fleet is composed of 5 trawlers but in recent years, there have been fewer vessels actually fishing. Based on groundfish ex-vessel revenues and on tribal enrollments (the population size of each

tribe), the four tribes and their fleets are considered "small" entities. We expect one tribal entity, the Makah Tribe, to fish in 2016.

This rule would also impact vessels in the non-tribal fishery that fish for Pacific whiting. Currently, there are three non-tribal sectors in the Pacific whiting fishery: Shorebased IFQ Program—Trawl Fishery; Mothership Coop Program—Whiting At-sea Trawl Fishery; and C/P Coop Program—Whiting At-sea Trawl Fishery.

Currently, the Shorebased IFQ Program is composed of 172 Quota Share permits/accounts, 152 vessel accounts, and 44 first receivers. The Mothership fishery is currently composed of a single coop, with six mothership processor permits, and 34 Mothership/Catcher-Vessel endorsed permits, with three permits each having two catch history assignments. The C/P Program is composed of 10 C/P permits owned by three companies that have formed a single coop. These regulations directly affect IFQ Quota shareholders whose vessel accounts receive Quota Pounds (QP), holders of mothership catcher-vessel-endorsed permits who determine how many co-ops will participate in the fishery and how much fish each co-op is to receive, and the C/P Coop which is made up of three companies that own the catcher-processor permits.

As part of the permit application processes for the non-tribal fisheries, based on a review of the SBA size criteria, applicants are asked if they consider themselves a "small" business, and they are asked to provide detailed ownership information. Although there are three non-tribal sectors, many companies participate in two sectors and some participate in all three sectors. All of the 34 mothership catch history assignments are associated with a single mothership co-op and all ten of the C/P permits are associated with a co-op. These co-ops are considered large entities from several perspectives; they have participants that are large entities, whiting co-op revenues exceed or have exceeded \$20.5 million, or co-op members are connected to American Fishing Act permits or co-ops where the NMFS Alaska Region has determined they are all large entities (79 FR 54597; September 12, 2014). After accounting for cross participation, multiple Quota Share account holders, and affiliation through ownership, NMFS estimates that there are 103 non-tribal entities directly affected by these regulations, 89 of which are considered "small" businesses.

In total in 2015, non-tribal sectors harvested 52 percent of the final non-

tribal allocation of 296,685 mt. The revised Pacific whiting allocations for 2015 were: Tribal 26,888 mt, C/P Coop 100,873 mt; Mothership Coop 71,204 mt; and Shorebased IFQ Program 124,607.45 mt. Sector allocations in 2016 are higher than sector catches in 2015, and the initial 2016 allocations to these non-tribal sectors are thirteen percent higher than their 2015 initial allocations. NMFS concludes that this rule will be beneficial to both large and small entities.

For the years 2011 to 2015, the total whiting fishery (tribal and non-tribal) averaged harvests of approximately 205,000 mt annually, worth an average estimated \$52 million in ex-vessel revenues. As the U.S. whiting TAC has been highly variable during this time, so have harvests. In the past five years, harvests have ranged from 151,000 mt (2015) to 264,000 mt (2014). Ex-vessel revenues have also varied. Annual ex-vessel revenues have ranged from \$25 million (2015) to \$65 million (2013 and 2014). Revenues are estimated for the mothership and catcher/processor harvest using the average annual shoreside ex-vessel price. Total whiting harvest in 2015 was approximately 151,000 mt, worth \$25 million, at a shoreside ex-vessel price of \$167 per mt. Ex-vessel revenues in 2014 were over \$64 million with a harvest of 264,000 mt and an average shoreside ex-vessel price of \$240 per mt. The prices for whiting are largely determined by the world market for groundfish, because most of the whiting harvested is exported. Poor world market conditions led to a decrease in prices in 2015. A confluence of biological factors precluded the tribal fishery in 2015, and resulted in a much lower harvest percentage of the annual commercial TAC than in prior years. In 2015 NMFS reapportioned 30,000 mt of the original 56,888 mt tribal allocation. This reapportionment was based on conversations with the tribes and the best information available at the time, which indicated that this amount would not limit tribal harvest opportunities for the remainder of the year.

NMFS believes this rule will not adversely affect small entities. There are no significant alternatives to the action in this final rule that accomplish the stated objectives of applicable statutes and the treaties with the affected tribes that minimize any of the significant economic impact of the final rule on small entities.

The RFA can be found at <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/laws/regulatory-flexibility/>. The NMFS Economic Guidelines that describe the RFA and EO 12866 can be found at

[http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/domes\\_fish/EconomicGuidelines.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/domes_fish/EconomicGuidelines.pdf).

There are no reporting or recordkeeping requirements associated with this final rule. No Federal rules have been identified that duplicate, overlap, or conflict with this action.

NMFS issued Biological Opinions under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) on August 10, 1990, November 26, 1991, August 28, 1992, September 27, 1993, May 14, 1996, and December 15, 1999, pertaining to the effects of the Groundfish FMP fisheries on Chinook salmon (Puget Sound, Snake River spring/summer, Snake River fall, upper Columbia River spring, lower Columbia River, upper Willamette River, Sacramento River winter, Central Valley spring, California coastal), coho salmon (Central California coastal, southern Oregon/northern California coastal), chum salmon (Hood Canal summer, Columbia River), sockeye salmon (Snake River, Ozette Lake), and steelhead (upper, middle and lower Columbia River, Snake River Basin, upper Willamette River, central California coast, California Central Valley, south/central California, northern California, southern California). These biological opinions have concluded that implementation of the FMP is not expected to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species under the jurisdiction of NMFS, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.

NMFS issued a Supplemental Biological Opinion on March 11, 2006, concluding that neither the higher observed bycatch of Chinook in the 2005 whiting fishery nor new data regarding salmon bycatch in the groundfish bottom trawl fishery required a reconsideration of its prior "no jeopardy" conclusion. NMFS also reaffirmed its prior determination that implementation of the FMP is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any of the affected Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESUs). Lower Columbia River coho (70 FR 37160, June 28, 2005) and Oregon Coastal coho (73 FR 7816, February 11, 2008) were relisted as threatened under the ESA. The 1999 biological opinion concluded that the bycatch of salmonids in the Pacific whiting fishery were almost entirely Chinook salmon, with little or no bycatch of coho, chum, sockeye, and steelhead.

NMFS has reinitiated section 7 consultation on the Pacific Coast Groundfish FMP with respect to its effects on listed salmonids. In the event the consultation identifies either reasonable and prudent alternatives to

address jeopardy concerns, or reasonable and prudent measures to minimize incidental take, NMFS would coordinate with the Council to put additional alternatives or measures into place, as required. After reviewing the available information, NMFS has concluded that, consistent with sections 7(a)(2) and 7(d) of the ESA, this action will not jeopardize any listed salmonid species, would not adversely modify any designated critical habitat, and will not result in any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources that would have the effect of foreclosing the formulation or implementation of any reasonable and prudent alternative measures.

On December 7, 2012, NMFS completed a biological opinion concluding that the groundfish fishery is not likely to jeopardize non-salmonid marine species, including listed eulachon, the southern distinct population segment (DPS) of green sturgeon, humpback whales, the eastern DPS of Steller sea lions, and leatherback sea turtles. The opinion also concluded that the fishery is not likely to adversely modify critical habitat for green sturgeon and leatherback sea turtles. An analysis included in the same document as the opinion concludes that the fishery is not likely to adversely affect green sea turtles, olive ridley sea turtles, loggerhead sea turtles, sei whales, North Pacific right whales, blue whales, fin whales, sperm whales, Southern Resident killer whales, Guadalupe fur seals, or the critical habitat for Steller sea lions. Since that biological opinion, the eastern DPS of Steller sea lions was delisted on November 4, 2013 (78 FR 66140); however, this delisting did not change the designation of the codified critical habitat for the eastern DPS of Steller sea lions. On January 21, 2013, NMFS evaluated the fishery's effects on eulachon to consider whether the 2012 opinion should be reconsidered in light of new information from the 2011 fishery and the proposed chafing gear modifications. NMFS determined that information about bycatch of eulachon in 2011 and chafing gear regulations did not change the effects that were analyzed in the December 7, 2012, biological opinion, or provide any other basis to reinitiate consultation. At the Pacific Fishery Management Council's June 2015 meeting, new estimates of eulachon take from fishing activity under the FMP indicated that the incidental take threshold in the 2012 biological opinion was exceeded again in 2013. The increased bycatch may be due to increased eulachon abundance. In light of the new fishery and

abundance information, NMFS has reinitiated consultation on eulachon. In the event the consultation identifies either reasonable and prudent alternatives to address jeopardy concerns, or reasonable and prudent measures to minimize incidental take, NMFS would coordinate with the Council to put additional alternatives or measures into place, as required. After reviewing the available information, NMFS concluded that, consistent with sections 7(a)(2) and 7(d) of the ESA, this action will not jeopardize any listed species, would not adversely modify any designated critical habitat, and will not result in any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources that would have the effect of foreclosing the formulation or implementation of any reasonable and prudent alternative measures.

On November 21, 2012, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued a biological opinion concluding that the groundfish fishery will not jeopardize the continued existence of the short-tailed albatross. The FWS also concurred that the fishery is not likely to adversely affect the marbled murrelet, California least tern, southern sea otter, bull trout, nor bull trout critical habitat. The 2012–2013 two-year average of short-tailed albatross take in the groundfish fishery, using expanded annual estimates of black-footed albatross as a proxy, ranged from 1.35 to 2.0 for the lower short-tailed albatross population estimate to 1.45 to 2.15 for the higher population estimates, which exceeded the 2 per 2-year period identified in the incidental take statement in the biological opinion. This

led NMFS to reinitiate ESA Section 7 consultation on take of this species in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery. Take of short-tailed albatross has not been observed in the whiting fishery, which is a midwater trawl fishery. After reviewing the available information, NMFS has concluded that, consistent with sections 7(a)(2) and 7(d) of the ESA, this action will not jeopardize listed short-tailed albatross, would not adversely modify any designated critical habitat, and will not result in any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources that would have the effect of foreclosing the formulation or implementation of any reasonable and prudent alternative measures. In the event the consultation identifies either reasonable and prudent alternatives to address jeopardy concerns, or reasonable and prudent measures to minimize incidental take, NMFS would coordinate with the Council to put additional alternatives or measures into place, as required.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), NMFS prepared a final environmental impact statement (FEIS) regarding Harvest Specifications and Management Measures for 2015–2016 and Biennial Periods Thereafter in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery. In that FEIS, the effects of the Pacific whiting fishery were considered using a range of potential harvest levels, the highest of which considered was 408,260 mt, above the harvest level set in this rule.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13175, this final rule was developed after meaningful collaboration with tribal officials from the area covered by the

FMP. Consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act at 16 U.S.C. 1852(b)(5), one of the voting members of the Pacific Council is a representative of an Indian tribe with federally recognized fishing rights from the area of the Council's jurisdiction. In addition, NMFS has coordinated specifically with the tribes interested in the whiting fishery regarding the issues addressed by this final rule.

#### List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 660

Fisheries, Fishing, Indian Fisheries.

Dated: May 9, 2016.

**Samuel D. Rauch III,**

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

For the reasons set out in the preamble, 50 CFR part 660 is amended as follows:

#### PART 660—FISHERIES OFF WEST COAST STATES

- 1. The authority citation for part 660 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, 16 U.S.C. 773 *et seq.*, and 16 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.*

- 2. In § 660.50, revise paragraph (f)(4) to read as follows:

#### § 660.50 Pacific Coast treaty Indian fisheries.

\* \* \* \* \*

(f) \* \* \*

(4) *Pacific whiting.* The tribal allocation for 2016 is 64,322 mt.

\* \* \* \* \*

- 3. Tables 2a and 2b to part 660, subpart C, are revised to read as follows:

**Table 2a to Part 660, Subpart C – 2016, and Beyond, Specifications of OFL, ABC, ACL, ACT and Fishery Harvest Guidelines (weights in metric tons)**

	OFL	ABC	ACL a/	Fishery HG b/
BOCACCIO S. of 40°10' N. lat. c/	1,351	1,291	362	354
CANARY ROCKFISH d/	729	697	125	110
COWCOD S. of 40°10' N. lat. e/	68	62	10	8
DARKBLOTCHED ROCKFISH f/	580	554	346	325
PACIFIC OCEAN PERCH g/	850	813	164	149
PETRALE SOLE h/	3,044	2,910	2,910	2,673
YELLOWEYE ROCKFISH i/	52	43	19	13
Arrowtooth flounder j/	6,396	5,328	5,328	3,241
Black rockfish (OR-CA) k/	1,183	1,131	1,000	999
Black rockfish (WA) l/	423	404	404	390
Cabezon (CA) m/	158	151	151	151
Cabezon (OR) n/	49	47	47	47
California scorpionfish o/	117	111	111	109
Chilipepper S. of 40°10' N. lat. p/	1,694	1,619	1,619	1,595
Dover sole q/	59,221	56,615	50,000	48,406
English sole r/	7,890	7,204	7,204	6,991
Lingcod N. of 40°10' N. lat. s/	2,891	2,719	2,719	2,441
Lingcod S. of 40°10' N. lat. t/	1,136	946	946	937
Longnose skate u/	2,405	2,299	2,000	1,927
Longspine thornyhead (coastwide) v/	4,763	3,968	NA	NA
Longspine thornyhead N. of 34°27' N. lat.	NA	NA	3,015	2,969
Longspine thornyhead S. of 34°27' N. lat.	NA	NA	952	949
Pacific Cod w/	3,200	2,221	1,600	1,091
Pacific whiting x/	830,124	x/	x/	301,731
Sablefish (coastwide)	8,526	7,784	NA	NA
Sablefish N. of 36° N. lat. y/	NA	NA	5,241	See Table 2c
Sablefish S. of 36° N. lat. z/	NA	NA	1,880	1,875
Shortbelly aa/	6,950	5,789	500	498
Shortspine thornyhead (coastwide) bb/	3,169	2,640	NA	NA
Shortspine thornyhead N. of 34°27' N. lat.	NA	NA	1,726	1,667
Shortspine thornyhead S. of 34°27' N. lat.	NA	NA	913	871
Spiny dogfish cc/	2,503	2,085	2,085	1,747
Splitnose S. of 40°10' N. lat. dd/	1,826	1,746	1,746	1,736
Starry flounder ee/	1,847	1,539	1,539	1,529
Widow rockfish ff/	3,990	3,790	2,000	1,880
Yellowtail N. of 40°10' N. lat. gg/	6,949	6,344	6,344	5,314
Minor Nearshore Rockfish N. of 40°10' N. lat. hh/	88	77	69	69
Minor Shelf Rockfish N. of 40°10' N. lat. ii/	2,218	1,953	1,952	1,880
Minor Slope Rockfish N. of 40°10' N. lat. jj/	1,844	1,706	1,706	1,642
Minor Nearshore Rockfish S. of 40°10' N. lat. kk/	1,288	1,148	1,006	1,002
Minor Shelf Rockfish S. of 40°10' N. lat. ll/	1,919	1,626	1,625	1,576
Minor Slope Rockfish S. of 40°10' N. lat. mm/	814	705	695	675
Other Flatfish nn/	9,645	7,243	7,243	7,039
Other Fish oo/	291	243	243	243

a/ Annual catch limits (ACLs), annual catch targets (ACTs) and harvest guidelines (HG) are specified as total catch values.

b/ Fishery harvest guidelines means the harvest guideline or quota after subtracting Pacific Coast treaty Indian tribes allocations and projected catch, projected research catch, deductions for fishing mortality in non-groundfish fisheries, and deductions for EFPs from the ACL or ACT.

c/ Bocaccio. A bocaccio stock assessment update was conducted in 2013 for the bocaccio stock between the U.S.-Mexico border and Cape Blanco. The stock is managed with stock-specific harvest specifications south of 40°10' N. lat. and within the Minor Shelf Rockfish complex north of 40°10' N. lat. A historical catch distribution of approximately 6 percent was used to apportion the assessed stock to the area north of 40°10' N. lat. The bocaccio stock was estimated to be at 31.4 percent of its unfished biomass in 2013. The OFL of 1,351 mt is projected in the 2013 stock assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The ABC of 1,291 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The 362 mt ACL is based on the current rebuilding plan with a target year to rebuild of 2022 and an SPR harvest rate of 77.7 percent. 8.3 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (0.7 mt), EFP catch (3.0 mt) and research catch (4.6 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 353.7 mt. The California recreational fishery has an HG of 185.6 mt.

d/ Canary rockfish. A canary rockfish stock assessment update was conducted in 2011 and the stock was estimated to be at 23.2 percent of its unfished biomass coastwide in 2011. The coastwide OFL of 729 mt is projected in the 2011 rebuilding analysis using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The ABC of 697 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL of 125 mt is based on the current rebuilding plan with a target year to rebuild of 2030 and an SPR harvest rate of 88.7 percent. 15.2 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (7.7 mt), the incidental open access fishery (2 mt), EFP catch (1.0 mt) and research catch (4.5 mt) resulting in a fishery HG of 109.8 mt. Recreational HGs are: 3.5 mt (Washington); 12.0 mt (Oregon); and 25.0 mt (California).

e/ Cowcod. A stock assessment for the Conception Area was conducted in 2013 and the stock was estimated to be 33.9 percent of its unfished biomass in 2013. The Conception Area OFL of 56.4 mt is projected in the 2013 rebuilding analysis using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The OFL of 12.0 mt for the unassessed portion of the stock in the Monterey area is based on depletion-based stock reduction analysis. The OFLs for the Monterey and Conception areas were summed to derive the south of 40°10' N. lat. OFL of 68.4 mt. The ABC for the area south of 40°10' N. lat. is 61.5 mt. The assessed portion of the stock in the Conception Area is considered category 2, with a Conception Area contribution to the ABC of 51.5 mt, which is an 8.7 percent reduction from the Conception area OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.45$ ). The unassessed portion of the stock in the Monterey area is considered a category 3

stock, with a contribution to the ABC of 10.0 mt, which is a 17 percent reduction from the Monterey area OFL ( $\sigma=1.44/P^*=0.45$ ). A single ACL of 10.0 mt is being set for both areas combined. The ACL of 10.0 mt is based on the rebuilding plan with a target year to rebuild of 2020 and an SPR harvest rate of 82.7 percent, which is equivalent to an exploitation rate (catch over age 11+ biomass) of 0.007. 2.0 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate EFP fishing (less than 0.02 mt) and research activity (2.0 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 8.0 mt. Any additional mortality in research activities will be deducted from the ACL. A single ACT of 4.0 mt is being set for both areas combined.

f/ Darkblotched rockfish. A 2013 stock assessment estimated the stock to be at 36 percent of its unfished biomass in 2013. The OFL of 580 mt is projected in the 2013 stock assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The ABC of 554 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL of 346 mt is based on the current rebuilding plan with a target year to rebuild of 2025 and an SPR harvest rate of 64.9 percent. 20.8 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (0.2 mt), the incidental open access fishery (18.4 mt), EFP catch (0.1 mt) and research catch (2.1 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 325.2 mt.

g/ Pacific Ocean Perch. A stock assessment was conducted in 2011 and the stock was estimated to be at 19.1 percent of its unfished biomass in 2011. The OFL of 850 mt for the area north of 40°10' N. lat. is projected in the 2011 rebuilding analysis using an  $F_{50\%}$   $F_{MSY}$  proxy. The ABC of 813 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL of 164 mt is based on the current rebuilding plan with a target year to rebuild of 2051 and an SPR harvest rate of 86.4 percent. 15 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (9.2 mt), the incidental open access fishery (0.6 mt), and research catch (5.2 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 149.0 mt.

h/ Petrale sole. A 2013 stock assessment estimated the stock to be at 22.3 percent of its unfished biomass in 2013. The OFL of 3,044 mt is projected in the 2013 assessment using an  $F_{30\%}$   $F_{MSY}$  proxy. The ABC of 2,910 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL is based on the 25–5 harvest control rule specified in the current rebuilding plan; since the stock is projected to be rebuilt at the start of 2014, the ACL is set equal to the ABC. 236.6 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (220 mt), the incidental open access fishery (2.4 mt), and research catch (14.2 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 2,673.4 mt.

i/ Yelloweye rockfish. A stock assessment update was conducted in 2011. The stock was estimated to be at 21.4 percent of its unfished biomass in 2011. The 52 mt coastwide OFL was projected in the 2011 rebuilding analysis using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The ABC of 43 mt is a 16.77 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 2 stock. The 19 mt ACL is based on the current rebuilding plan with a target year to rebuild of 2074 and an SPR

harvest rate of 76.0 percent. 5.8 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (2.3 mt), the incidental open access fishery (0.2 mt), EFP catch (0.03 mt) and research catch (3.3 mt) resulting in a fishery HG of 13.2 mt. Recreational HGs are being established: 3.1 mt (Washington); 2.8 mt (Oregon); and 3.7 mt (California).

j/ Arrowtooth flounder. The arrowtooth flounder stock was last assessed in 2007 and was estimated to be at 79 percent of its unfished biomass in 2007. The OFL of 6,396 mt is derived from the 2007 assessment using an  $F_{30\%}$   $F_{MSY}$  proxy. The ABC of 5,328 mt is a 16.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 2 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{25\%}$ . 2,087 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (2,041 mt), the incidental open access fishery (30 mt), and research catch (16.4 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 3,241 mt.

k/ Black rockfish south (Oregon and California). A stock assessment was conducted for black rockfish south of 45°46' N. lat. (Cape Falcon, Oregon) to Central California (*i.e.*, the southern-most extent of black rockfish, Love et al. 2002) in 2007. The biomass in the south was estimated to be at 70 percent of its unfished biomass in 2007. The OFL from the assessed area is derived from the 2007 assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  harvest rate proxy of  $F_{50\%}$  plus 3 percent of the OFL from the stock assessment conducted for black rockfish north of 45°46' N. lat., to cover the portion of the stock occurring off Oregon north of Cape Falcon (the 3% adjustment is based on historical catch distribution). The resulting OFL for the area south of 46°16' N. lat. is 1,183 mt. The ABC of 1,131 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The 2016 ACL is 1,000 mt, which maintains the constant catch strategy designed to keep the stock above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 1 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate EFP catch, resulting in a fishery HG of 999 mt. The black rockfish ACL, in the area south of 46°16' N. lat. (Columbia River), is subdivided with separate HGs for waters off Oregon (579 mt/58 percent) and for waters off California (420 mt/42 percent).

l/ Black rockfish north (Washington). A stock assessment was conducted for black rockfish north of 45°46' N. lat. (Cape Falcon, Oregon) in 2007. The biomass in the north was estimated to be at 53 percent of its unfished biomass in 2007. The OFL from the assessed area is derived from the 2007 assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  harvest rate proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The resulting OFL for the area north of 46°16' N. lat. is 423 mt and is 97 percent of the OFL from the assessed area based on the area distribution of historical catch. The ABC of 404 mt for the north is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC since the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 14 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery, resulting in a fishery HG of 390 mt.

m/ Cabezon (California). A cabezon stock assessment was conducted in 2009. The cabezon spawning biomass in waters off



California was estimated to be at 48.3 percent of its unfished biomass in 2009. The OFL of 158 mt is calculated using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{45\%}$ . The ABC of 151 mt is based on a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . There are no deductions from the ACL so the fishery HG is equal to the ACL of 151 mt.

n/ Cabezon (Oregon). A cabezon stock assessment was conducted in 2009. The cabezon spawning biomass in waters off Oregon was estimated to be at 52 percent of its unfished biomass in 2009. The OFL of 49 mt is calculated using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{45\%}$ . The ABC of 47 mt is based on a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 species. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . There are no deductions from the ACL so the fishery HG is also equal to the ACL of 47 mt.

o/ California scorpionfish was assessed in 2005 and was estimated to be at 79.8 percent of its unfished biomass in 2005. The OFL of 117 mt is projected in the 2005 assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  harvest rate proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The ABC of 111 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 2 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery, resulting in a fishery HG of 109 mt.

p/ Chilipepper. The coastwide chilipepper stock was assessed in 2007 and estimated to be at 70 percent of its unfished biomass in 2006. Chilipepper are managed with stock-specific harvest specifications south of 40°10' N. lat. and within the Minor Shelf Rockfish complex north of 40°10' N. lat. Projected OFLs are stratified north and south of 40°10' N. lat. based on the average 1998–2008 assessed area catch, which is 93 percent for the area south of 40°10' N. lat. and 7 percent for the area north of 40°10' N. lat. The OFL of 1,694 mt for the area south of 40°10' N. lat. is projected in the 2007 assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The ABC of 1,619 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 24 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (5 mt), EFP fishing (10 mt), and research catch (9 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,595 mt.

q/ Dover sole. A 2011 Dover sole assessment estimated the stock to be at 83.7 percent of its unfished biomass in 2011. The OFL of 59,221 mt is projected in the 2011 stock assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{30\%}$ . The ABC of 56,615 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL could be set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{25\%}$ . However, the ACL of 50,000 mt is set at a level below the ABC and higher than the maximum historical landed catch. 1,594 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (1,497 mt), the incidental open access fishery (55 mt), and research catch (41.9 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 48,406 mt.

r/ English sole. A 2013 stock assessment was conducted, which estimated the stock to be at 88 percent of its unfished biomass in 2013. The OFL of 7,890 mt is projected in the 2013 assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{30\%}$ . The ABC of 7,204 mt is an 8.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.45$ ) as it is a category 2 stock. The ACL could be set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{25\%}$ . 213 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (200 mt), the incidental open access fishery (7 mt) and research catch (5.8 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 6,991 mt.

s/ Lingcod north. A lingcod stock assessment was conducted in 2009. The lingcod spawning biomass off Washington and Oregon was estimated to be at 62 percent of its unfished biomass in 2009. The OFL for Washington and Oregon of 1,842 mt is calculated using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{45\%}$ . The OFL is re-apportioned by adding 48% of the OFL from California, resulting in an OFL of 2,891 mt for the area north of 40°10' N. lat. The ABC of 2,719 mt is based on a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) for the area north of 42° N. lat. as it's a category 1 stock, and an 8.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.45$ ) for the area between 42° N. lat. and 40°10' N. lat., as it's a category 2 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC since the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 278 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (250 mt), the incidental open access fishery (16 mt), EFP catch (0.5 mt) and research catch (11.7 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 2,441 mt.

t/ Lingcod south. A lingcod stock assessment was conducted in 2009. The lingcod spawning biomass off California was estimated to be at 74 percent of its unfished biomass in 2009. The OFL for California of 2,185 mt is projected in the assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{45\%}$ . The OFL is re-apportioned by subtracting 48% of the OFL, resulting in an OFL of 1,136 mt for the area south of 40°10' N. lat. The ABC of 946 mt is based on a 16.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 2 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC since the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 9 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (7 mt), EFP fishing (1 mt), and research catch (1.1 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 937 mt.

u/ Longnose skate. A stock assessment was conducted in 2007 and the stock was estimated to be at 66 percent of its unfished biomass. The OFL of 2,405 mt is derived from the 2007 stock assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The ABC of 2,299 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL of 2,000 mt is a fixed harvest level that provides greater access to the stock and is less than the ABC. 73 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (56 mt), incidental open access fishery (3.8 mt), and research catch (13.2 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,927 mt.

v/ Longspine thornyhead. A 2013 longspine thornyhead coastwide stock assessment estimated the stock to be at 75 percent of its unfished biomass in 2013. A

coastwide OFL of 4,763 mt is projected in the 2013 stock assessment using an  $F_{50\%}$   $F_{MSY}$  proxy. The ABC of 3,968 mt is a 16.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 2 stock. For the portion of the stock that is north of 34°27' N. lat., the ACL is 3,015 mt, and is 76 percent of the coastwide ABC based on the average swept-area biomass estimates (2003–2012) from the NMFS NWFSC trawl survey. 46 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (30 mt), the incidental open access fishery (3 mt), and research catch (13.5 mt) resulting in a fishery HG of 2,969 mt. For that portion of the stock south of 34°27' N. lat. the ACL is 952 mt and is 24 percent of the coastwide ABC based on the average swept-area biomass estimates (2003–2012) from the NMFS NWFSC trawl survey. 3 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (2 mt), and research catch (1 mt) resulting in a fishery HG of 949 mt.

w/ Pacific cod. The 3,200 mt OFL is based on the maximum level of historic landings. The ABC of 2,221 mt is a 30.6 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=1.44/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 3 stock. The 1,600 mt ACL is the OFL reduced by 50 percent as a precautionary adjustment. 509 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (500 mt), research catch (7 mt), and the incidental open access fishery (2.0 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,091 mt.

x/ Pacific whiting. The coastwide stock assessment was published in 2016 and estimated the spawning stock to be at 76 percent of its unfished biomass. The 2016 OFL of 830,124 mt is based on the 2016 assessment with an  $F_{40\%}$   $F_{MSY}$  proxy. The 2016 coastwide, unadjusted Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 439,995 mt is based on the 2016 stock assessment. The U.S. TAC is 73.88 percent of the coastwide unadjusted TAC. Up to 15 percent of each party's unadjusted 2015 TAC (42,485 mt for the U.S. and 15,020 mt for Canada) is added to each party's 2016 unadjusted TAC, resulting in a U.S. adjusted 2016 TAC of 367,553 mt. From the adjusted U.S. TAC, 64,322 mt is deducted to accommodate the Tribal fishery, and 1,500 mt is deducted to accommodate research and bycatch in other fisheries, resulting in a fishery HG of 301,731 mt. The TAC for Pacific whiting is established under the provisions of the Agreement with Canada on Pacific Hake/Whiting and the Pacific Whiting Act of 2006, 16 U.S.C. 7001–7010, and the international exception applies. Therefore, no ABC or ACL values are provided for Pacific whiting.

y/ Sablefish north. A coastwide sablefish stock assessment was conducted in 2011. The coastwide sablefish biomass was estimated to be at 33 percent of its unfished biomass in 2011. The coastwide OFL of 8,526 mt is projected in the 2011 stock assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{45\%}$ . The ABC of 7,784 mt is an 8.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.40$ ). The 40–10 adjustment was applied to the ABC to derive a coastwide ACL value because the stock is in the precautionary zone. This coastwide ACL value is not specified in regulations. The coastwide ACL value is apportioned north and south of 36° N. lat., using the 2003–2010

average estimated swept area biomass from the NMFS NWFSC trawl survey, with 73.6 percent apportioned north of 36° N. lat. and 26.4 percent apportioned south of 36° N. lat. The northern ACL is 5,241 mt and is reduced by 524 mt for the tribal allocation (10 percent of the ACL north of 36° N. lat.). The 524 mt Tribal allocation is reduced by 1.6 percent to account for discard mortality. Detailed sablefish allocations are shown in Table 2c.

z/ Sablefish south. The ACL for the area south of 36° N. lat. is 1,880 mt (26.4 percent of the calculated coastwide ACL value). 5 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (2 mt) and research catch (3 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,875 mt.

aa/ Shortbelly rockfish. A non-quantitative shortbelly rockfish assessment was conducted in 2007. The spawning stock biomass of shortbelly rockfish was estimated to be 67 percent of its unfished biomass in 2005. The OFL of 6,950 mt is based on the estimated MSY in the 2007 stock assessment. The ABC of 5,789 mt is a 16.7 percent reduction of the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 2 stock. The 500 mt ACL is set to accommodate for incidental catch when fishing for co-occurring healthy stocks and in recognition of the stock's importance as a forage species in the California Current ecosystem. 2 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate research catch, resulting in a fishery HG of 498 mt.

bb/ Shortspine thornyhead. A 2013 coastwide shortspine thornyhead stock assessment estimated the stock to be at 74.2 percent of its unfished biomass in 2013. A coastwide OFL of 3,169 mt is projected in the 2013 stock assessment using an  $F_{50\%}$   $F_{MSY}$  proxy. The coastwide ABC of 2,640 mt is a 16.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 2 stock. For the portion of the stock that is north of 34°27' N. lat., the ACL is 1,726 mt. The northern ACL is 65.4 percent of the coastwide ABC based on the average swept-area biomass estimates (2003–2012) from the NMFS NWFSC trawl survey. 59 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (50 mt), the incidental open access fishery (2 mt), and research catch (7 mt) resulting in a fishery HG of 1,667 mt for the area north of 34°27' N. lat. For that portion of the stock south of 34°27' N. lat. the ACL is 913 mt. The southern ACL is 35.6 percent of the coastwide ABC based on the average swept-area biomass estimates (2003–2012) from the NMFS NWFSC trawl survey. 42 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (41 mt) and research catch (1 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 871 mt for the area south of 34°27' N. lat.

cc/ Spiny dogfish. A coastwide spiny dogfish stock assessment was conducted in 2011. The coastwide spiny dogfish biomass was estimated to be at 63 percent of its unfished biomass in 2011. The coastwide OFL of 2,503 mt is derived from the 2011 assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The coastwide ABC of 2,085 mt is a 16.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 2 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 338 mt is deducted

from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (275 mt), the incidental open access fishery (49.5 mt), EFP catch (1 mt), and research catch (12.5 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,747 mt.

dd/ Splitnose rockfish. A splitnose rockfish coastwide assessment was conducted in 2009 that estimated the stock to be at 66 percent of its unfished biomass in 2009. Splitnose rockfish in the north is managed in the Minor Slope Rockfish complex and with species-specific harvest specifications south of 40°10' N. lat. The coastwide OFL is projected in the 2009 assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The coastwide OFL is apportioned north and south of 40°10' N. lat. based on the average 1916–2008 assessed area catch resulting in 64.2 percent of the coastwide OFL apportioned south of 40°10' N. lat., and 35.8 percent apportioned for the contribution of splitnose rockfish to the northern Minor Slope Rockfish complex. The southern OFL of 1,826 mt results from the apportionment described above. The southern ABC of 1,746 mt is a 4.4 percent reduction from the southern OFL ( $\sigma=0.36/P^*=0.45$ ) as it's a category 1 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is estimated to be above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 110.5 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate research catch (9 mt) and EFP catch (1.5 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,736 mt.

ee/ Starry flounder. The stock was assessed in 2005 and was estimated to be above 40 percent of its unfished biomass in 2005 (44 percent in Washington and Oregon, and 62 percent in California). The coastwide OFL of 1,847 mt is derived from the 2005 assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{30\%}$ . The ABC of 1,539 mt is a 16.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.40$ ) as it's a category 2 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is estimated to be above its target biomass of  $B_{25\%}$ . 10.3 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (2 mt), and the incidental open access fishery (8.3 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,529 mt.

ff/ Widow rockfish. The widow rockfish stock was assessed in 2011 and was estimated to be at 51.1 percent of its unfished biomass in 2011. The OFL of 3,990 mt is projected in the 2011 stock assessment using an  $F_{50\%}$   $F_{MSY}$  proxy. The ABC of 3,790 mt is a 5 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.41/P^*=0.45$ ). A unique sigma of 0.41 was calculated for widow rockfish since the variance in estimated biomass was greater than the 0.36 used as a proxy for other category 1 stocks. The ACL could be set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . However, the ACL of 2,000 mt is less than the ABC due to high uncertainty in estimated biomass, yet this level of allowable harvest will allow access to healthy co-occurring species, such as yellowtail rockfish. 120.2 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (100 mt), the incidental open access fishery (3.3 mt), EFP catch (9 mt), and research catch (7.9 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,880 mt.

gg/ Yellowtail rockfish. A 2013 yellowtail rockfish stock assessment was conducted for the portion of the population north of 40°10' N. lat. The estimated stock depletion is 69

percent of its unfished biomass in 2013. The OFL of 6,949 mt is projected in the 2013 stock assessment using an  $F_{MSY}$  proxy of  $F_{50\%}$ . The ABC of 6,344 mt is an 8.7 percent reduction from the OFL ( $\sigma=0.72/P^*=0.45$ ) as it is a category 2 stock. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because the stock is above its target biomass of  $B_{40\%}$ . 1,029.6 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (1,000 mt), the incidental open access fishery (3 mt), EFP catch (10 mt) and research catch (16.6 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 5,314 mt.

hh/ Minor Nearshore Rockfish north. The OFL for Minor Nearshore Rockfish north of 40°10' N. lat. of 88 mt is the sum of the OFL contributions for the component species managed in the complex. The ABCs for the minor rockfish complexes are based on a sigma value of 0.72 for category 2 stocks (*i.e.*, blue rockfish in California, brown rockfish, China rockfish, and copper rockfish) and a sigma value of 1.44 for category 3 stocks (all others) with a  $P^*$  of 0.45. The resulting ABC of 77 mt is the summed contribution of the ABCs for the component species. The ACL of 69 mt is the sum of contributing ABCs of healthy assessed stocks and unassessed stocks, plus the ACL contributions for blue rockfish in California and China rockfish where the 40–10 adjustment was applied to the ABC contributions for these two stocks because they are in the precautionary zone. No deductions are made to the ACL, thus the fishery HG is equal to the ACL, which is 69 mt. Between 40°10' N. lat. and 42° N. lat. the Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex north has a harvest guideline of 23.7 mt. Blue rockfish south of 42° N. lat. has a species-specific HG, described in footnote kk/.

ii/ Minor Shelf Rockfish north. The OFL for Minor Shelf Rockfish north of 40°10' N. lat. of 2,218 mt is the sum of the OFL contributions for the component species within the complex. The ABCs for the minor rockfish complexes are based on a sigma value of 0.72 for category 2 stocks (*i.e.*, greenspotted rockfish between 40°10' and 42° N. lat. and greenstriped rockfish) and a sigma value of 1.44 for category 3 stocks (all others) with a  $P^*$  of 0.45. The resulting ABC of 1,953 mt is the summed contribution of the ABCs for the component species. The ACL of 1,952 mt is the sum of contributing ABCs of healthy assessed stocks and unassessed stocks, plus the ACL contribution of greenspotted rockfish in California where the 40–10 adjustment was applied to the ABC contribution for this stock because it is in the precautionary zone. 72 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (30 mt), the incidental open access fishery (26 mt), EFP catch (3 mt), and research catch (13.4 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,880 mt.

jj/ Minor Slope Rockfish north. The OFL for Minor Slope Rockfish north of 40°10' N. lat. of 1,844 mt is the sum of the OFL contributions for the component species within the complex. The ABCs for the Minor Slope Rockfish complexes are based on a sigma value of 0.39 for aurora rockfish, a sigma value of 0.36 for other category 1 stocks (*i.e.*, splitnose rockfish), a sigma value of 0.72 for category 2 stocks (*i.e.*, rougheye rockfish, blackspotted rockfish and sharpchin

rockfish), and a sigma value of 1.44 for category 3 stocks (all others) with a P\* of 0.45. A unique sigma of 0.39 was calculated for aurora rockfish since the variance in estimated spawning biomass was greater than the 0.36 used as a proxy for other category 1 stocks. The resulting ABC of 1,706 mt is the summed contribution of the ABCs for the component species. The ACL is set equal to the ABC because all the assessed component stocks are above the target biomass of B<sub>40%</sub>. 64 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (36 mt), the incidental open access fishery (19 mt), EFP catch (1 mt), and research catch (8.1 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,642 mt.

kk/Minor Nearshore Rockfish south. The OFL for the Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat. of 1,288 mt is the sum of the OFL contributions for the component species within the complex. The ABC for the southern Minor Nearshore Rockfish complex is based on a sigma value of 0.36 for category 1 stocks (*i.e.*, gopher rockfish north of 34°27' N. lat.), a sigma value of 0.72 for category 2 stocks (*i.e.*, blue rockfish north of 34°27' N. lat., brown rockfish, China rockfish and copper rockfish) and a sigma value of 1.44 for category 3 stocks (all others) with a P\* of 0.45. The resulting ABC of 1,148 mt is the summed contribution of the ABCs for the component species. The ACL of 1,006 mt is the sum of the contributing ABCs of healthy assessed stocks and unassessed stocks, plus the ACL contribution for blue rockfish north of 34°27' N. lat. where the 40–10 adjustment was applied to the ABC contribution for this stock because it is in the precautionary zone. 4 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (1.4 mt) and research catch (2.6 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,002 mt. Blue rockfish south of 42° N. lat. has a species-specific HG set equal to the 40–10-adjusted ACL for the portion of the stock north of 34°27' N. lat. (137.5) plus the ABC contribution for the unassessed portion of the stock south of 34°27' N. lat. (60.8 mt). The California (*i.e.* south of 42° N. lat.) blue rockfish HG is 198.3 mt.

ll/Minor Shelf Rockfish south. The OFL for the Minor Shelf Rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat. of 1,919 mt is the sum of the OFL contributions for the component species within the complex. The ABCs for the southern Minor Shelf Rockfish complex is based on a sigma value of 0.72 for category 2 stocks (*i.e.*, greenspotted and greenstriped rockfish) and a sigma value of 1.44 for category 3 stocks (all others) with a P\* of 0.45. The resulting ABC of 1,626 mt is the summed contribution of the ABCs for the component species. The ACL of 1,625 mt is the sum of contributing ABCs of healthy assessed stocks and unassessed stocks, plus the ACL contribution of greenspotted rockfish in California where the 40–10 adjustment was applied to the ABC contribution for this stock because it is in the precautionary zone. 49 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (9 mt), EFP catch (30 mt), and research catch (9.6 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 1,576 mt.

mm/Minor Slope Rockfish south. The OFL of 814 mt is the sum of the OFL contributions for the component species within the complex. The ABC for the southern Minor Slope Rockfish complex is based on a sigma value of 0.39 for aurora rockfish, a sigma value of 0.72 for category 2 stocks (*i.e.*, blackgill rockfish, roughey rockfish, blackspotted rockfish, sharpchin rockfish) and a sigma value of 1.44 for category 3 stocks (all others) with a P\* of 0.45. A unique sigma of 0.39 was calculated for aurora rockfish since the variance in estimated biomass was greater than the 0.36 used as a proxy for other category 1 stocks. The resulting ABC of 705 mt is the summed contribution of the ABCs for the component species. The ACL of 695 mt is the sum of the contributing ABCs of healthy assessed stocks and unassessed stocks, plus the ACL contribution of blackgill rockfish where the 40–10 adjustment was applied to the ABC contribution for this stock because it is in the precautionary zone. 20 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the incidental open access fishery (17 mt), EFP catch (1 mt), and research catch (2 mt), resulting in a fishery

HG of 675 mt. Blackgill rockfish has a species-specific HG set equal to the species' contribution to the 40–10-adjusted ACL. The blackgill rockfish HG is 117 mt.

nn/Other Flatfish. The Other Flatfish complex is comprised of flatfish species managed in the PCGFMP that are not managed with species-specific OFLs/ABCs/ACLs. Most of the species in the Other Flatfish complex are unassessed, and include: butter sole, curlfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab (assessed in 2013, but the assessment results were too uncertain to inform harvest specifications), rock sole, sand sole, and rex sole (assessed in 2013). The Other Flatfish OFL of 9,645 mt is based on the sum of the OFL contributions of the component stocks. The ABC of 7,243 mt is based on a sigma value of 0.72 for category 2 stocks (*i.e.*, rex sole) and a sigma value of 1.44 for category 3 stocks (all others) with a P\* of 0.40. The ACL is set equal to the ABC. The ACL is set equal to the ABC since all of the assessed stocks (*i.e.*, Pacific sanddabs and rex sole) were above their target biomass of B<sub>25%</sub>. 204 mt is deducted from the ACL to accommodate the Tribal fishery (60 mt), the incidental open access fishery (125 mt), and research catch (19 mt), resulting in a fishery HG of 7,039 mt.

oo/Other Fish. The Other Fish complex is comprised of kelp greenling coastwide, cabezon off Washington, and leopard shark coastwide. These species are unassessed. The OFL of 291 mt is the sum of the OFL contributions for kelp greenling off California (the SSC has not approved methods for calculating the OFL contributions for kelp greenling off Oregon and Washington), cabezon off Washington, and leopard shark coastwide. The ABC of 243 mt is the sum of ABC contributions for kelp greenling off California, cabezon off Washington and leopard shark coastwide calculated by applying a P\* of 0.45 and a sigma of 1.44 to the OFL contributions for those stocks. The ACL is set equal to the ABC. There are no deductions from the ACL so the fishery HG is equal to the ACL of 243 mt.

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**Table 2b. to Part 660, Subpart C – 2016, and Beyond, Allocations by Species or Species Group (weight in metric tons)**

Species	Area	Fishery HG or ACT	Trawl		Non-trawl	
			%	Mt	%	Mt
BOCACCIO a/	S of 40°10' N. lat.	353.7	N/A	85.0	N/A	268.7
CANARY ROCKFISH a/ b/	Coastwide	109.8	N/A	58.5	N/A	51.3
COWCOD a/ c/	S of 40°10' N. lat.	4.0	N/A	1.4	N/A	2.6
DARKBLOTCHED ROCKFISH d/	Coastwide	325.2	95%	308.9	5%	16.3
PETRALE SOLE a/	Coastwide	2,673.4	N/A	2,638.4	N/A	35.0
PACIFIC OCEAN PERCH e/	N of 40°10' N. lat.	149.0	95%	141.6	5%	7.5
YELLOWWEYE ROCKFISH a/	Coastwide	13.2	N/A	1.1	N/A	12.1
Arrowtooth flounder	Coastwide	3,241	95%	3,079	5%	162
Chilipepper	S of 40°10' N. lat.	1,595	75%	1,196	25%	399
Dover sole	Coastwide	48,406	95%	45,986	5%	2,420
English sole	Coastwide	6,991	95%	6,642	5%	350
Lingcod	N of 40°10' N. lat.	2,441	45%	1,098	55%	1,342
Lingcod	S of 40°10' N. lat.	937	45%	422	55%	515
Longnose skate a/	Coastwide	1,927	90%	1,734	10%	193
Longspine thornyhead	N of 34°27' N. lat.	2,969	95%	2,820	5%	148
Pacific cod	Coastwide	1,091	95%	1,036	5%	55
Pacific whiting	Coastwide	301,731	100%	301,731	0%	0
Sablefish	N of 36° N. lat.	0	See Table 1 c			
Sablefish	S of 36° N. lat.	1,875	42%	788	58%	1,088
Shortspine thornyhead	N of 34°27' N. lat.	1,667	95%	1,583	5%	83
Shortspine thornyhead	S of 34°27' N. lat.	871	NA	50	NA	821
Splitnose	S of 40°10' N. lat.	1,736	95%	1,649	5%	87
Starry flounder	Coastwide	1,529	50%	764	50%	764
Widow rockfish f/	Coastwide	1,880	91%	1,711	9%	169
Yellowtail rockfish	N of 40°10' N. lat.	5,314	88%	4,677	12%	638
Minor Shelf Rockfish complex a/	N of 40°10' N. lat.	1,880	60.2%	1,132	39.8%	748
Minor Shelf Rockfish complex a/	S of 40°10' N. lat.	1,576	12.2%	192	87.8%	1,384
Minor Slope Rockfish complex	N of 40°10' N. lat.	1,642	81%	1,330	19%	312
Minor Slope Rockfish complex	S of 40°10' N. lat.	675	63%	425	37%	250
Other Flatfish complex	Coastwide	7,039	90%	6,335	10%	704

a/ Allocations decided through the biennial specification process.

b/ 14.0 mt of the total trawl allocation of canary rockfish is allocated to the at-sea whiting fisheries, as follows: 5.8 mt for the mothership fishery, and 8.2 mt for the catcher/processor fishery.

c/ The cowcod fishery harvest guideline is further reduced to an ACT of 4.0 mt.

d/ Consistent with regulations at §660.55(c), 9 percent (27.8 mt) of the total trawl allocation for darkblotched rockfish is allocated to the whiting fisheries, as follows: 11.7 mt for the shorebased IFQ fishery, 6.7 mt for the mothership fishery, and 9.4 mt for the catcher/processor fishery. The tonnage calculated here for the whiting portion of the shorebased IFQ fishery contributes to the total shorebased trawl allocation, which is found at 660.140(d)(1)(ii)(D).

e/ Consistent with regulations at §660.55(c), 30 mt of the total trawl allocation for POP is allocated to the whiting fisheries, as follows: 12.6 mt for the shorebased IFQ fishery, 7.2 mt for the mothership fishery, and 10.2 mt for the catcher/processor fishery. The tonnage calculated here for the whiting portion of the shorebased IFQ fishery contributes to the total shorebased trawl allocation, which is found at 660.140(d)(1)(ii)(D).

f/ Consistent with regulations at §660.55(c), 500 mt of the total trawl allocation for widow rockfish is allocated to the whiting fisheries, as follows: 210 mt for the shorebased IFQ fishery, 120 mt for the mothership fishery, and 170 mt for the catcher/processor fishery. The tonnage calculated here for the whiting portion of the shorebased IFQ fishery contributes to the total shorebased trawl allocation, which is found at 660.140(d)(1)(ii)(D).

- (d) \* \* \*
- (1) \* \* \*
- (ii) \* \* \*

(D) For the trawl fishery, NMFS will issue QP based on the following shorebased trawl allocations:

IFQ Species	Management area	2015 Shorebased trawl allocation (mt)	2016 Shorebased trawl allocation (mt)
Arrowtooth flounder		3,193.93	3,033.38
BOCACIO	South of 40°10' N. lat	81.89	85.02
CANARY ROCKFISH		43.26	44.48
Chilipepper	South of 40°10' N. lat	1,203.00	1,196.25
COWCOD	South of 40°10' N. lat	1.44	1.44
DARKBLOTCHED ROCKFISH		285.61	292.81
Dover sole		45,980.80	45,980.80
English sole		9,153.19	6,636.64
Lingcod	North of 40°10' N. lat	1,133.32	1,083.37
Lingcod	South of 40°10' N. lat	447.71	421.61
Longspine thornyhead	North of 34°27' N. lat	2,962.33	2,815.08
Minor Shelf Rockfish complex	North of 40°10' N. lat	1,091.70	1,096.52
Minor Shelf Rockfish complex	South of 40°10' N. lat	192.20	192.32
Minor Slope Rockfish complex	North of 40°10' N. lat	1,219.41	1,229.94
Minor Slope Rockfish complex	South of 40°10' N. lat	423.99	425.25
Other Flatfish complex		7,670.50	6,315.10
Pacific cod		1,031.41	1,031.41
PACIFIC OCEAN PERCH	North of 40°10' N. lat	118.45	124.15
Pacific Whiting		112,007.45	126,727.11
PETRALE SOLE		2,539.40	2,633.40
Sablefish	North of 36° N. lat	2,199.37	2,411.24
Sablefish	South of 36° N. lat	719.88	787.50
Shortspine thornyhead	North of 34°27' N. lat	1,581.49	1,563.44
Shortspine thornyhead	South of 34°27' N. lat	50.00	50.00
Splitnose rockfish	South of 40°10' N. lat	1,619.28	1,648.73
Starry flounder		756.85	759.35
Widow rockfish		1,420.62	1,420.62
YELLOWEYE ROCKFISH		1.00	1.08
Yellowtail rockfish	North of 40°10' N. lat	4,593.15	4,376.67

\* \* \* \* \*

[FR Doc. 2016-11329 Filed 5-12-16; 11:15 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**50 CFR Part 679**

[Docket No. 150818742-6210-02]

RIN 0648-XE623

**Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Deep-Water Species Fishery by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in the of the Gulf of Alaska**

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

**ACTION:** Temporary rule; opening.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is opening directed fishing for species that comprise the deep-water species fishery by vessels using trawl gear in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully use the 2016 groundfish total allowable catch specified for the species

comprising the deep-water species category in the GOA.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), May 15, 2016, through 1200 hours, A.l.t., July 1, 2016.

Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., May 31, 2016.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on this document, identified by FDMS Docket Number NOAA-NMFS-2015-0110, by any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to [www.regulations.gov/](http://www.regulations.gov/)

#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2015-0110, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- *Mail:* Address written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Mail comments to P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668.

*Instructions:* Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record

and will generally be posted for public viewing on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. 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, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Obren Davis, 907-586-7228.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (FMP) prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Regulations governing fishing by U.S. vessels in accordance with the FMP appear at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

NMFS prohibited directed fishing for species that comprise the deep-water species fishery by vessels using trawl