

NMFS PROPOSED CHANGES TO FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND
2015 PACIFIC HALIBUT CATCH SHARING PLAN FOR AREA 2A

NMFS submitted proposed changes to the 2015 Pacific halibut Catch Sharing Plan and codified regulations at the September 2014 Council meeting. NMFS is submitting those same changes for final action.

The proposed changes to the catch sharing plan are as follows:

1. Amend language for the directed commercial fishery to allow earlier transfer of unused quota to the salmon troll fishery. Current language refers to the “fall salmon troll fisheries”. However, salmon regulations do not have a defined “fall” fishery. The goal of this change is to allow flexibility for inseason transfer of the unused portion of the directed commercial halibut allocation.
2. Update all references to Northwest Region and Northwest Administrator to West Coast Region and West Coast Administrator due to the recent merger and name change for the Region.

The proposed changes to the codified regulations at 50 CFR 300.63 are as follows:

1. Update all references to Northwest Region and Administrator to West Coast Region and West Coast Administrator due to recent merger and name change for the Region.

Finally, NMFS received a request from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to add California Department of Fish and Wildlife to the definition of “authorized officer” in the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) regulations to allow CDFW staff to enforce Pacific halibut regulations. This request was forwarded to the IPHC and will be included in the 2015 regulation changes but does not require changes to the CSP or to Federal Regulations because the CSP and Federal Regulations rely on the IPHC regulation definition of “authorized officer”.