

Rulemaking Plan for 2015

Groundfish and Halibut

In addition to a list of groundfish and halibut actions that have already published over 2015, NMFS is providing a list of rulemakings that are in progress over the remainder of 2015.

Published

1. Trawl Chafing Gear, Final Rule (79 FR 71340, 12/2/2014, effective 1/1/2015)
2. AMP Pass-thru & Start of 2015 Fisheries, Final Rule (79 FR 75070, 12/17/2014)
3. 2015-2016 Harvest Specifications & Amendment 24, Proposed Rule (80 FR 687, 1/6/2015)
4. Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan, Proposed Rule (80 FR 5719, 2/3/2015)
5. Midwater Season Date Change, Proposed Rule (80 FR 8280, 2/17/2015)
6. Notice of EFP Applications (80 FR 11398, 3/3/2015)
7. 2015-2016 Harvest Specifications & Amendment 24, Final Rule (80 FR 12567, 3/10/2015)
8. Whiting Fishery Tribal Allocations, Proposed Rule (80 FR 12611, 3/10/2015)
9. Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan, Final Rule (pending)

In Progress

	<i>Rule</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Sectors Affected</i>
1	Observer/Catch Monitor Rule Includes: permitting for new observer providers, observer safety, minor revisions	Final rule – ~ Apr 2015 Effective – ~ May 2015	LE trawl (IFQ/MS/CP), LE fixed gear, OA
2	Whiting Fishery Allocations Includes: whiting fishery TAC and sector allocations (tribal, IFQ, MS, CP)	Final rule – Apr 2015 Effective – May 2015	Tribal, LE trawl (IFQ/MS/CP)
3	Whiting Season Date Rule Includes: IFQ whiting season starts May 15	Final rule – Apr 2015 Effective – May 2015	LE trawl (IFQ/MS/CP)
4	Whiting Clean-up Rule Includes: whiting IFQ >50% whiting by weight, disposition of maximized retention catch, only midwater in RCA north of 40°10'	Proposed Rule – spring 2015 Final rule – summer 2015 Effective – summer 2015	LE trawl (IFQ/MS/CP)
5	Seabird Rule Includes: mandatory streamer lines	Final rule – 2015 Effective – 2015	LE and OA fixed gear
6	Sablefish Rule Includes: Registering a LE trawl and fixed gear permit to a vessel at same time (joint registration), sablefish-endorsed LE fixed gear ownership issues, electronic fish tickets	Proposed Rule – fall 2015 Final rule – winter 2015 Effective – April 1, 2016	LE trawl (IFQ), LE fixed gear, OA

NMFS Near-Term Priorities

As stated in November 2014 ([Agenda Item J.1.b, Supplemental NMFS Report 2](#)) and consistent with the groundfish workload priorities from March 2015 ([Agenda Item I.5.a, Attachment 3](#)), NMFS maintains attention to routine actions (e.g. groundfish, whiting, and halibut specifications & inseason actions) and several actions already at various stages of implementation (e.g., electronic monitoring, whiting clean-up, whiting season date change, ecosystem/Am 25, sablefish, and Essential Fish Habitat phase 3/regulations). In addition, NMFS has the following near-term priorities:

- Salmon ESA Section 7 Consultation for Groundfish FMP
- Widow QS Reallocation & Divestiture