

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. Cost Recovery Fee Percentage, Notice (79 FR 78400, 12/30/2014, effective 1/1/2016)
3. AMP Pass-thru & Start of 2015 Fisheries, Final Rule (79 FR 75070, 12/17/2014)
4. 2015-2016 Harvest Specifications & Amendment 24, Proposed Rule (80 FR 687, 1/6/2015)
5. Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan, Proposed Rule (80 FR 5719, 2/3/2015)
6. Midwater Season Date Change, Proposed Rule (80 FR 8280, 2/17/2015)
7. Notice of EFP Applications (80 FR 11398, 3/3/2015)
8. 2015-2016 Harvest Specifications & Amendment 24, Final Rule (80 FR 12567, 3/10/2015)
9. Whiting Fishery Tribal Allocations, Proposed Rule (80 FR 12611, 3/10/2015)
10. Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan, Final Rule (80 FR 17344, 4/1/2015)
11. Midwater Season Date Change, Final Rule (80 FR 19034, 4/9/2015, effective 5/15/2015)
12. Observer/Catch Monitor Program, Final rule (80 FR 22270, 4/21/2015, effective 5/21/2015)
13. Whiting Fishery Allocations, Final Rule (80 FR 27588, effective 5/14/2015)
14. Inseason adjustments, Final Rule (80 FR 31858, effective 6/1/2015)
15. Change in VMS transceiver units, Notice (80 FR 32095, 9/30/2015)
16. Call for AP and JMC Nominations, Notice (80 FR 32363)
17. Notice of salmon bycatch meeting, Notice (80 FR 42087)

In Progress

	<i>Rule</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Sectors Affected</i>
1	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 – summer 2015 Final rule – fall 2015 Effective – fall 2015	LE trawl (IFQ/MS/CP)
2	Widow Quota Share (QS) Rule Includes: abandonment of excess QS and NMFS proportional reduction of QS	Proposed Rule – 2015 Final rule – fall 2015 Effective – fall 2015	LE trawl (IFQ)
3	Seabird Rule Includes: mandatory streamer lines	Final rule – 2015 Effective – 2015	LE and OA fixed gear
4	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 priority:

- Salmon ESA Section 7 Consultation for Groundfish FMP.