



National Marine Fisheries Service, Northwest Region  
7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115  
www.nwr.noaa.gov



## PUBLIC NOTICE

For Information Contact:  
The Groundfish Branch (206) 526-6140  
Toll-free trawl program hotline (888) 522-0267

NMFS-SEA-10-23  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 31, 2010

### PACIFIC COAST GROUND FISH FISHERY

#### **Trawl Rationalization Program: Fishery to Open January 11, 2011 and Clarifications**

The National Marine fisheries Service (NMFS) announces that fishing may begin under the Shorebased IFQ Program beginning January 11, 2011. In addition, this public notice is intended to clarify the public notice released December 27, 2010 (NMFS-SEA-10-22), which announced, in part, that fishing in the limited entry trawl fishery will be prohibited beginning January 1, 2011.

#### **No Trawl Fishing between January 1-11**

To clarify, after January 1, 2011 and until January 11, 2011, there should be no fishing by any vessel registered to a limited entry trawl permit (i.e., the trawl fishery is closed). That means that there is no fishing under quotas or trip limits.

The Shorebased IFQ Program is effective January 1, 2011, and replaces the previous trawl fishery management measures, including trip limits for most groundfish species. While the Shorebased IFQ Program regulations are effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, there is some required program infrastructure that is not operational yet. Thus, the fishery is closed until this infrastructure is operational.

#### **How Long will the Delay be?**

There has been some confusion over whether the delay might last until as late as April or June. The answer is no. The Shorebased IFQ Program will

open on January 11, 2011. NMFS will send a separate public notice next week with further details.

#### **Some Clarifications**

There has been some confusion about the trip limit tables (Tables 1 (North) and (South)) from the December 27<sup>th</sup> notice. Those tables are part of the Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program and generally cover species that do not have quota (i.e., incidentally-caught or bycatch species). There has also been confusion about whether 2010 trawl trip limit tables continue to be effective January 1<sup>st</sup> until the Shorebased IFQ Program is implemented. The answer is no. Any fishing would cause a further delay in starting the IFQ fishery due to data lag and would be subtracted from the yearly totals, resulting in less quota pounds available for each QS permit owner for the year.

Any updates, including interim 2011 allocations for the trawl Shorebased IFQ Program, will be posted on the **NMFS Trawl Program website** at:  
<http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Groundfish-Halibut/Groundfish-Fishery-Management/Trawl-Program/index.cfm>

**Groundfish E-mail Group**  
Subscribe to "wcgroundfish" by visiting the following website: <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Groundfish-Halibut/Groundfish-Fishery-Management/Public-Notices/Index.cfm> and clicking "sign up"

Any discrepancies between this public notice and the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

## **QS Account vs. Vessel Account**

NMFS has received questions about the distinction between a quota share (QS) account and a vessel account. Both accounts are online accounting systems much like an online banking account. A QS account is associated with a QS permit and reflects the QS percentage and resulting quota pounds (QP) for IFQ species. QP must be transferred to a vessel account in order to be fished. QS permit owners do not need to sign up for a QS account – they will automatically be sent a user ID and password to access their QS account. A vessel account is registered to a specific vessel and a specific vessel owner. A vessel must have QP (or, as applicable, individual bycatch quota (IBQ) pounds) to cover all catch of IFQ species. The vessel account allows a vessel owner to obtain QP from either a QS account or from another vessel account through electronic transfers. A vessel owner must request a vessel account through NMFS. (See the [compliance guide](#) for more details)

## **Once the Fishery Opens**

Once fishing under the Shorebased IFQ Program opens, there are several things to be aware of:

1. QP will have to be moved (transferred) from a QS account to a vessel account to cover catch (landings + discards) of IFQ species, even if the owner of both the QS account and the vessel account is the same person.
2. Vessels must carry an observer.
3. Vessel operators must make a fishery declaration by calling 888-585-5518.
4. Vessels participating in the Shorebased IFQ Program must land at a shorebased IFQ first receiver that has a first receiver site license. A list of first receivers who have been issued an interim first receiver site license will be available on the [NMFS trawl website](#).

Additional details on the Shorebased IFQ Program are available in the [compliance guide](#), which will be sent with each permit and endorsement, and is available on [NMFS trawl website](#).

## **How Can I get Ready?**

Here are a couple of things you can be doing to get ready for the IFQ fishery:

1. [Request a vessel account](#) – Vessels owners with a limited entry trawl permit that expect to

participate in the IFQ fishery can request a vessel account with the NMFS Permit's Office.

2. [Request a first receiver site license](#) – Facilities that intend to accept landings of groundfish from vessels in the IFQ fishery must have a first receiver site license from NMFS.
3. [Contact observer and catch monitor providers](#) – Vessels should contact observer providers for an observer. First receivers should contact catch monitor providers for a catch monitor. These contacts should be made well in advance of needing an observer or catch monitor. For 2011, the same companies will provide observer and catch monitor services.

## **Fishing Options during the Delay**

While fishing under the Shorebased IFQ Program will be allowed beginning January 11, 2011, some fishermen have asked what their options are to begin fishing January 1<sup>st</sup>. An option available is to switch to the open access groundfish fisheries. To do this, the permit owner would need to change the vessel registration with NMFS Permit's Office, either moving the limited entry trawl permit to "unidentified" (i.e., not registered to a vessel) or to another vessel. Then the vessel owner can change their vessel declaration to one of the open access fishery declarations.

However, there are limitations on how many times a vessel registration on a limited entry permit may change and when the change is effective. For details, call the NMFS Permit's Office (206-526-4353) to explore your options (and restrictions) fully.

### **EXAMPLE**

For example, Bob owns a vessel with his limited entry trawl permit registered to his vessel and decides on January 2<sup>nd</sup> that he wants to switch to the open access groundfish fishery. He must remove his permit from his vessel, changing his permit status to "inactive" or "unidentified." He must also change his vessel declaration through the phone-in system to one of the open access fishery declarations. When fishing opens under the Shorebased IFQ Program in early January, Bob decides on January 22<sup>nd</sup> to re-register his permit to his vessel. However, the permit would not be effective on his vessel until the start of the next 2-month cumulative trip limit period, on March 1. Bob would still be able to remove his permit from his vessel again later in the year (i.e., change his permit status to "unidentified"). However, he may NOT register his permit again within the year either to his vessel or to another vessel.

Below is a table to guide folks that are interested in moving between the Shorebased IFQ Program and other fisheries.

*Excerpt from p.44 of the [Compliance Guide](#) for the Pacific Coast Groundfish Trawl Rationalization Program - Covering Program Details (available on the [NMFS trawl website](#))*

**If I fish in the Shorebased IFQ Program, can I fish in other fisheries during the same year?**

Vessels participating in the Shorebased IFQ Program may find they want to fish in other fisheries during the year, either because their vessel account is in deficit or because they want to pursue other fishing opportunities. The status of the vessel’s registration to a limited entry trawl permit may have to be changed in order to be eligible to participate in some West Coast fisheries. The matrix below provides information on various options fishermen may want to consider. Prior to making a decision on changing any fishing strategy, call the NMFS Northwest Region Permit Office (206-526-4353) to explore your options (and restrictions) fully.

Vessel’s Current Fishery-Gear/Permit Registration	Which Fishery do I want to declare into	Permit Action Required of permit owner/vessel owner	OLE Declaration Action
<b>Shorebased IFQ Program / Registered to trawl LEP</b>	Open Access (any gear)	Permit Owner/Vessel owner <i>must</i> make a change in vessel registration removing LEP before making OA declaration to OLE.	Vessel Owner declares into OA fishery, OLE will check to see that vessel is not registered to any LEP and issue confirmation.
<b>Open Access (any gear)/ Vessel is not registered to LEP</b>	Shorebased IFQ Program (any gear)	Vessel Owner <i>must</i> register vessel to trawl LEP (effective at beginning of next cumulative limited period). By rule this is a change in vessel registration. For the IFQ fishery and LEP without MS/CV endorsements, only one LEP change in vessel registration allowed in a calendar year.	Vessel Owner declares into Shorebased IFQ Program (any gear). OLE will check to see that vessel is registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code (1).
<b>Limited entry fixed gear fishery/ Registered to fixed gear LEP</b>	Shorebased IFQ Program	Permit Owner/Vessel Owner <i>must</i> make a change in vessel registration removing fixed gear LEP, and register trawl LEP to vessel	Vessel Owner declares into Shorebased IFQ Program (any gear). OLE will check to see that vessel is registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code.
<b>Shorebased IFQ Program/ Registered to trawl LEP</b>	Limited entry midwater trawl Pacific whiting mothership sector	No permit action required	Declares into midwater trawl / MS Sector, OLE will check to see that vessel is registered to trawl LEP prior to issuing confirmation code.

(1) If a vessel starts in the Shorebased IFQ Program and then goes to OA, it can return to the Shorebased IFQ Program in the same year. Only one change in vessel registration (to a new vessel) is allowed after January 1 on an LEP permit. Placing a LEP permit in an inactive status (permit is registered as “unidentified”) is not considered a change in vessel registration for purpose of this restriction.

## Need Help?

### Websites:

NMFS, Pacific Coast Groundfish Management, Trawl Rationalization Program:

<http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Groundfish-Halibut/Groundfish-Fishery-Management/Trawl-Program/index.cfm>

Pacific Fishery Management Council, Groundfish Management:

<http://www.pcouncil.org/groundfish/fishery-management-plan/>

### Question regarding the program?

Contact the Groundfish Policy and Regulations Branch at:

Phone: 206-526-6140 Fax: 206-526-6736

Toll-free trawl rationalization hotline: 888-522-0267

### Question regarding permits/licenses?

Contact the NMFS, Northwest Region Permits Office at:

Phone: 206-526-4353

Toll-free trawl rationalization hotline: 888-522-0267

### Question regarding the observer program?

Contact the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program at:

Phone: 206--302-1777

### Question regarding the catch monitor program?

Contact the catch monitor program coordinator at:

Phone: 503-595-3282

### Need to contact NMFS law enforcement?

Find an enforcement office nearest you at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/index.html>

### Need to report violations?

Hotline: 800-853-1964