

Rule Making is issued until the matter is no longer subject to Commission consideration or court review, all *ex parte* contacts are prohibited in Commission proceedings, such as this one, which involve channel allotments. See 47 CFR 1.1204(b) for rules governing permissible *ex parte* contacts.

For information regarding proper filing procedures for comments, see 47 CFR 1.415 and 1.420.

#### List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 73

Radio broadcasting.

Federal Communications Commission.

John A. Karousos,

Chief, Allocations Branch, Policy and Rules Division, Mass Media Bureau.

[FR Doc. 96-30582 Filed 11-29-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P

#### 47 CFR Part 73

[MM Docket No. 96-229, RM-8919]

#### Radio Broadcasting Services; Boonville, Missouri

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

**SUMMARY:** This document requests comments on a petition filed by Big Country of Missouri proposing the allotment of Channel 226A to Boonville, Missouri, as that community's second local FM broadcast service. The coordinates for Channel 226A are 38-58-00 and 92-35-54. There is a site restriction 11.9 kilometers (7.4 miles) east of the community.

**DATES:** Comments must be filed on or before January 6, 1997, and reply comments on or before January 21, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554 In addition to filing comments with the FCC, interested parties should serve the petitioner, as follows: Richard L. Billings, Big Country of Missouri, Inc., 1600 Radio Hill Road, Boonville, Missouri 65333.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kathleen Scheuerle, Mass Media Bureau, (202) 418-2180.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This is a summary of the Commission's Notice of Proposed Rule Making, MM Docket No.96-229, adopted November 8, 1996 and released November 15, 1996. The full text of this Commission decision is available for inspection and copying during normal business hours in the Commission's Reference Center (Room 239), 1919 M Street, NW, Washington, D.C. The complete text of this decision

may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractors, International Transcription Services, Inc., 2100 M Street, N.W., Suite 140, Washington, D.C. 20037, (202) 857-3800.

Provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 do not apply to this proceeding.

Members of the public should note that from the time a Notice of Proposed Rule Making is issued until the matter is no longer subject to Commission consideration or court review, all *ex parte* contacts are prohibited in Commission proceedings, such as this one, which involve channel allotments. See 47 CFR 1.1204(b) for rules governing permissible *ex parte* contact.

For information regarding proper filing procedures for comments, see 47 CFR 1.415 and 1.420.

#### List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 73

Radio broadcasting.

Federal Communications Commission.

John A. Karousos,

Chief, Allocations Branch Policy and Rules Division, Mass Media Bureau.

[FR Doc. 96-30581 Filed 11-29-96; 8:45 am]

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#### 47 CFR Part 73

[MM Docket No. 87-268; FCC DA96-1929]

#### Advanced Television Systems and Their Impact on the Existing Television Service

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; extension of time.

**SUMMARY:** The Commission is extending the time for filing reply comments relating to the *Sixth Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making* in this proceeding until January 10, 1997. The Commission also indicates that it will accept late-filed comments for a reasonable period of time after the November 22, 1996, due date for comments. This action will allow the development of a complete record on the matter of channel allotments for operation of digital TV service.

**DATES:** Comments received after the original November 22, 1996, due date will be accepted for a reasonable period of time; reply comments must be received on or before January 10, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Bruce Franca (202-418-2470), Alan

Stillwell (202-418-2470) or Robert Eckert (202-418-2470), Office of Engineering and Technology.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. On July 25, 1996, the Commission adopted a *Sixth Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making (Sixth FNPRM)* in MM Docket No. 87-268, 61 FR 43209, August 21, 1996, that proposed policies for developing the initial channel allotments for digital TV (DTV) service, proposed procedures for assigning DTV allotments, and plans for spectrum recovery. The *Sixth FNPRM* also contains a draft DTV Table of Allotments. Comments and reply comments responding to the *Sixth FNPRM* were due November 22, 1996, and December 23, 1996, respectively.

2. On November 13, 1996, Cohen, Dippell and Everist (CDE), a consulting engineering firm, submitted a request seeking to extend the dates for filing comments and reply comments in response to the *Sixth FNPRM*. It asks that the comment and reply dates be extended 60 days. CDE argues that this additional time is needed to study the multiple technical issues related to DTV operation, including propagation, protection ratios to and from other radio services, out-of-band emissions, use of channel 6, alternative allotment possibilities, etc. that are addressed in the *Sixth FNPRM*.

3. A number of parties representing broadcast interests, including ABC, ALTV, APTS, CBS, Chris Craft, MSTV, NAB, NBC PBS, and Tribune (Broadcasters) submitted a joint opposition to CDE's request for an extension of time. Broadcasters submit that it is important that the Commission adopt a DTV Table as soon as possible. They argue this is the only way to ensure that the long-awaited DTV service is licensed in the very near future. They observe that the DTV transmission standard and planning factors used to allot and assign DTV channels have been under study for nine years. Broadcasters further state, however, that they recognize the importance of providing an opportunity to fully study and to comment meaningfully on the *Sixth FNPRM*. They therefore urge that instead of extending the time in which to file all comments, the Commission should: (1) accept late filed comments for a reasonable period time, and (2) extend the time for filing reply comments to January 10, 1997. Broadcasters submit that, with the approach of the holiday season, this approach should give all parties an

opportunity to prepare fully developed comments.

4. In a letter of November 19, 1996, CDE stated that after reviewing the Broadcasters opposition filing, it now intends to offer comments that advance an alternative procedure that would provide flexibility in resolving the numerous technical issues that impact DTV allotments. CDE therefore amended its earlier request to support the comment date plan suggested by the Broadcasters.

5. We agree with the Broadcasters that it is desirable to complete our action adopting an initial DTV Table of Allotments as soon as possible. We find that the alternative plan for filing comments and reply comments suggested by the Broadcasters, rather than that originally suggested by CDE, is appropriate in the interests of developing a complete record on the DTV channel allotment matter and of accommodating the demands of the holiday season. We therefore are extending the date for filing reply comments to January 10, 1997. In addition, we will accept late-filed comments that are filed within a reasonable period of time after the November 22, 1996, due date for comments.

6. Accordingly, *It is ordered* that Broadcasters' request that we accept late-filed comments for a reasonable period of time and that we provide additional time for the filing of reply comments, as supported by CDE in its supplemental filing, *Is granted* as indicated herein. *It is further ordered* the time for filing reply comments relating to the *Sixth FNPRM is extended* to January 10, 1997. This action is taken pursuant to authority found in Sections 4(i) and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i) and 303(r), and Sections 0.202(b), 0.283 and 1.45 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.204(b), 0.283 and 1.45.

Federal Communications Commission.

William F. Caton,

*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 96-30542 Filed 11-29-96; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Parts 285, 630, 644, and 678

[I.D. 112296A]

#### Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fisheries; Consolidation of Regulations

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

**ACTION:** Public hearings; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS will hold six public hearings to receive comments from fishery participants and other members of the public on the proposed consolidation of existing Highly Migratory Species (HMS) regulations. The proposed rule would provide the public with a single reference source for the regulations applying to Atlantic tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks, which is clearer and easier to use than the existing regulations. The proposed rule is part of the President's Regulatory Reinvention Initiative.

**DATES:** See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times of hearings. Written comments and suggestions on the consolidation must be received on or before December 23, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for locations of the hearings. Written comments should be sent to Christopher Rogers, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, (F/SF1), National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Copies of the proposed rule are available from the same address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Christopher Rogers, (301) 713-2347.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A complete description of the measures, and the purpose and need for the proposed action, are contained in the proposed rule published November 6, 1996 (61 FR 57361) and are not repeated here.

NMFS requests comments or suggestions for further consolidation or elimination of obsolete or duplicative provisions contained in the proposed revision to Atlantic HMS regulations. Comments concerning the impacts of identified and or other substantive changes are also requested.

The public hearings are scheduled as follows:

1. Monday, December 9, 1996, 1 to 3 p.m.—NOAA Building 2, Room 14316,

1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910;

2. Monday, December 9, 1996, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.—Virgin Islands Gamefish Association, Red Hook, St. Thomas, USVI 00802;

3. Tuesday, December 10, 1996, 6 to 9 p.m.—NMFS Southeast Regional Office, 9721 Executive Center Drive, North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702;

4. Tuesday, December 10, 1996, 7 to 10 p.m.—Ponce Hilton, Malecon Avenue, Playa de Ponce, Ponce, PR 00732;

5. Wednesday, December 11, 1996, 6 to 10 p.m.—Kings Grant Quality Inn, Route 128 at Trask Lane, Danvers, MA 01923;

6. Friday, December 13, 1996, 7:00 to 9:30 p.m.—North Carolina Aquarium, Airport Road, Manteo, NC 27954.

The meeting locations are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Christopher Rogers at (301) 713-2347 at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

To accommodate people unable to attend a hearing or wishing to provide additional comments, NMFS also solicits written comments on the proposed rule.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*; 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: November 25, 1996.

George Darcy,

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

[FR Doc. 96-30570 Filed 11-29-96; 8:45 am]

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#### 50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 961121323-6323-01; I.D. 111396C]

RIN 0648-AJ05

#### Fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area; Increase Halibut Quota Share Use Limits in Area 4

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

**ACTION:** Proposed rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS proposes to implement a regulatory amendment to the Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program for fixed gear Pacific halibut fisheries in and off Alaska. This action would increase halibut quota share (QS) use limits for QS holders in IFQ regulatory