

subarea would likely be reached by the end of May. If the 1997 TAC is greater than 1996, the Plan stipulates that the second priority (after a 5-days-per-week season in May) is to reopen the fishery on July 1 and continue through at least July 4. The next priority in the Plan, if the TAC is sufficient, is to increase the May season to 7 days per week and continue into June.

#### *Washington South Coast Subarea*

The proposed sport regulations for this subarea are the same as 1996 with a May 1 opening and continuing 7 days per week until 1,000 lb (0.45 mt) remain in the quota, and then would reopen as a nearshore fishery until the remaining quota is taken, or September 30, whichever occurs first. The Plan does not stipulate any change in the structuring of this season if the 1997 TAC is greater than 1996.

#### *Columbia River Subarea*

The proposed sport regulations for this subarea are the same as 1996 with a May 1 opening and continuing 7-days per week until the quota is reached or September 30, whichever occurs first. The Plan does not stipulate any change in the structuring of this season if the 1997 TAC is greater than 1996.

#### *Oregon Central Coast Subarea*

The proposed changes to the Plan would change the structuring for the May and August seasons in this area to fixed-seasons. With an Area 2A TAC of 520,000 lb (235.9 mt), the May opening would be a 5-day fishery with a 3-day season from May 8 through May 10, and a 2-day season on May 16 and 17. If sufficient quota remains after this season for additional days fishing, the open dates would be May 31, then May 30, then May 29. The 30-fathom fishery would open on May 18 and continue until July 31 or attainment of quota for this season. The August coastwide unrestricted-depth fishery (Cape Falcon to Oregon/California border) would be a 2-day season on August 1 and 2. If sufficient quota remains after this season for additional days fishing, the open dates would be August 16, then August 15, then August 14. If the 1997 TAC is greater than 1996, the May season may be more than 5 days, and the fishery would be open 3 days per week as described in the above proposed changes to the Plan. The final determination of the season dates will be based on the allowable harvest level, estimated catch rates, and recommendations developed in a public workshop sponsored by ODFW after the 1997 TAC is set by the IPHC.

#### *Oregon South Coast Subarea*

The proposed sport regulations for the first and second seasons are the same as 1996 with the first season opening May 16 and continuing 3 days per week until 80 percent of the quota is taken, then switching to a nearshore water fishery until the subarea quota is taken or July 31, whichever is earlier. The third coastwide (Cape Falcon to OR/CA border) unrestricted depth season would be a 2-day season on August 1 and 2. If sufficient quota remains after this season for additional days fishing, the open dates would be August 16, then August 15, then August 14. The Plan, as proposed to be changed (described above), does not stipulate any change in the structuring of the seasons if the 1997 TAC is greater than 1996. The final determination of the season opening dates will be based on recommendations developed in a public workshop sponsored by ODFW after the 1997 TAC is set by the IPHC.

#### *California Subarea*

The proposed sport regulations for this subarea are the same as 1996 with a May 1 opening and continuing 7-days per week until September 30. The Plan does not stipulate any change in the structuring of this season if the 1997 TAC is greater than 1996.

NMFS requests public comments on the Council's recommended modifications to the Plan and the proposed sport fishing regulations. The Area 2A TAC will be set by the IPHC at its annual meeting on January 27–30, 1997. Comments on the proposed changes to the Plan are requested by January 19, 1997 so that final changes to the Plan can be approved before the IPHC meeting. Comments on the proposed sport regulations are requested by February 15, 1997, after the IPHC annual meeting, so that the public will have the opportunity to consider the final Area 2A TAC before submitting comments on the proposed sport fishing regulations. The States of Washington and Oregon will conduct public workshops shortly after the IPHC meeting to obtain input on the sport season dates. After the Area 2A TAC is known, and after NMFS reviews public comments and comments from the States, NMFS will issue final rules for the Area 2A Pacific halibut sport fishery concurrent with the IPHC regulations for the 1997 Pacific halibut fisheries.

Copies of the Plan are available from NMFS (see **ADDRESSES**).

#### *Classification*

The proposed revisions to the Plan and sport regulations are not significant

and fall within the scope of the 1995 Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review prepared by the Council, which also applies to this action.

The Assistant General Counsel for Legislation and Regulation of the Department of Commerce certified to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration that this proposed action, if adopted, would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities as follows:

The proposed revisions to the Catch Sharing Plan would not change the allocation of the total allowable catch of Pacific halibut between treaty and non-Indian fisheries, and among non-Indian commercial and sport fisheries in International Pacific Commission Statistical Area 2A (off Washington, Oregon, and California). The proposed revisions, recommended by the Pacific Fishery Management Council, would affect only the non-Indian sports fishery and are intended to allow users to better utilize allocations in the sport fisheries off Oregon.

Many of the proposed sport fishing regulations are similar to those implemented in 1996 and are based on the Area 2A 1996 total allowable catch of 520,000 pounds (235.9 metric tons) of Pacific halibut. If the International Pacific Halibut Commission determines that the 1997 total allowable catch for Area 2A is greater than the 1996 amount, the fishing seasons and open fishing dates could be adjusted to provide for an increased sport fishery harvest. Any increase in the 1997 total allowable catch would have a positive economic impact on the sport fisheries.

Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis was not prepared.

This action has been determined to be not significant for purposes of E.O. 12866.

Dated: December 27, 1996.

Nancy Foster,

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-6 Filed 1-2-96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-F**

## **50 CFR Part 622**

[I.D. 120696E]

### **South Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Public Hearings; Correction**

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

**ACTION:** Public hearings; correction.

**SUMMARY:** This document corrects the notice announcing hearings on Draft Amendment 8 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic

(FMP), published on December 20, 1996, at 61 FR 67294.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Susan Buchanan, 803-571-4366.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The document that is the subject of these corrections announced that the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene 10 public hearings on Draft Amendment 8 to the FMP.

#### Need for Correction

As published, the summary paragraph is incomplete and the Council is adding some additional information regarding the availability of staff members to

answer questions about the document before each public hearing.

#### Correction of Publication

Accordingly, the publication on December 20, 1996, of the public hearing document (I.D. 120696E), which was the subject of FR DOC 96-29500, is corrected as follows:

On page 67294, in the third column, the **SUMMARY** paragraph is corrected to read: "The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene 10 public hearings on Draft Amendment 8 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (FMP) and its associated analyses of regulatory and

environmental impacts, including a draft supplemental environmental impact statement (DSEIS). Due to the complexity of the public hearing document, Council staff members will be available at the respective hearing locations from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. (one hour before the start of the public hearings) to answer questions the public may have about the document".

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

Dated: December 27, 1996.

George H. Darcy,

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
[FR Doc. 97-29 Filed 1-2-97; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-F**