

Exploitable biomass estimate (mt)	Adjusted trips (full-time, part- time, occa- sional)	Adjusted trips (general cat- egory)	Adjusted 2009 research set- aside TAC	Adjusted 2009 observer set- aside TAC
Less than 10,000	0, 0, 0	491	0.08	0.04

* Part-time vessels may take one trip in the Elephant Trunk Access Area at a reduced possession limit of 3,600 lb (1,633 kg) and one trip in the NLCA with a possession limit of 18,000 lb (8,165 kg).

* * Occasional vessels may take 1 trip in the Nantucket Lightship Access Area or one trip in the Elephant Trunk Access Area.

(3) *Table of Delmarva Access Area TAC and trip allocation adjustments based on exploitable biomass estimates and revised target TAC levels.* The

following table specifies the adjustments that shall be made through the procedure specified in paragraph (a)(3)(i)(F)(1) of this section under

various biomass estimates and adjusted 2009 target TAC estimates:

Exploitable biomass estimate (mt)	Adjusted trips (full-time, part- time, occa- sional)	Adjusted trips (general cat- egory)	Adjusted 2009 research set- aside TAC	Adjusted 2009 observer set- aside TAC
10,000 or greater	No adjustment	No adjustment	No adjustment	No adjustment
Less than 10,000	0,0,0	0	0	0

* * * * *

(5) *Possession and landing limits—(i) Scallop possession limits.* Unless authorized by the Regional Administrator, as specified in paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section, after declaring a trip into a Sea Scallop Access Area, a vessel owner or operator of a limited access scallop vessel may fish for, possess, and land, per trip, scallops, up to the maximum amounts specified in the table in this paragraph (a)(5). No vessel fishing in the Sea Scallop Access Area may possess shoreward of the VMS demarcation line, or land, more than 50 bu (17.6 hl) of in-shell scallops.

Fishing Year	Permit Category Possession Limit		
	Full-time	Part-time	Occa- sional
2008	18,000 lb (8,165 kg)	18,000 lb (8,165 kg)	7,500 lb (3,402 kg)
2009	18,000 lb (8,165 kg)	18,000 lb ¹ (8,165 kg)	7,500 lb (3,402 kg)

¹ Unless reduced per § 648.60(a)(3)(i)(E)(2)

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(d) *Possession limit to defray costs of observers—(1) Observer set-aside limits by area—(i) Nantucket Lightship Access Area.* For the 2008 fishing year, the observer set-asides for the Nantucket Lightship Access Area is 55,000 lb (25 mt).

(ii) *Closed Area II Access Area.* For the 2009 fishing year, the observer set-aside for the Closed Area II Access Area is 58,000 lb (26 mt).

(iii) *Elephant Trunk Access Area.* For the 2008 and 2009 fishing years, the

observer set-aside for the Elephant Trunk Access Area is 222,000 lb (101 mt), and 162,000 lb (73 mt), respectively, unless the 2009 set-aside is adjusted as specified in paragraph (a)(3)(i)(E) of this section.

(iv) *Delmarva Access Area.* For the 2009 fishing year, the observer set-aside for the Delmarva Access Area is 60,000 lb (27 mt), unless the 2009 set-aside is adjusted as specified in paragraph (a)(3)(i)(E) of this section.

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(e) * * *

(1) *Research set-aside limits and number of trips by area—(i) Nantucket Lightship Access Area.* For the 2008 fishing year, the research set-aside for the Nantucket Lightship Access Area is 110,000 lb (50 mt).

(ii) *Closed Area II Access Area.* For the 2009 fishing year, the research set-aside for the Closed Area II Access Area is 116,000 lb (53 mt).

(iii) *Elephant Trunk Access Area.* For the 2008 and 2009 fishing years, the research set-aside for the Elephant Trunk Access Area is 440,000 lb (200 mt), and 324,000 lb (147 mt), respectively, unless the 2009 set-aside is adjusted as specified in paragraph (a)(3)(i)(E) of this section.

(iv) *Delmarva Access Area.* For the 2009 fishing year, the research set-aside for the Delmarva Access Area is 120,000 lb (54 mt), unless the 2009 set-aside is adjusted as specified in paragraph (a)(3)(i)(E) of this section.

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10. The following revision to § 648.62 is based on the proposed rule for Amendment 11 (72 FR 71315, December 17, 2007). In § 648.62, paragraph (b)(1) is revised to read as follows.

§ 648.62 Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) scallop management area.

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(b) * * *

(1) *NGOM TAC.* The TAC for the NGOM shall be 70,000 lb (31.8 mt) for both the 2008 and 2009 fishing years.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

RIN 0648–AW08

A Vessel License Limitation Program for the Pacific Whiting Fishery; Amendment 15 to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan

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

ACTION: Availability of an amendment to a fishery management plan; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) has submitted Amendment 15 to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for review by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary). Amendment 15 would modify the FMP to implement a limited entry program for the non-tribal Pacific whiting fishery. Amendment 15 is intended to limit participation in the Pacific whiting fishery within the U.S. West Coast

Exclusive Economic Zone until the implementing of a trawl rationalization program in the Pacific whiting fishery.

DATES: Comments on Amendment 15 must be received on or before May 19, 2008.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by RIN 0648-AW08 by any of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal <http://www.regulations.gov>.

- Fax: 206-526-6736, Attn: Becky Renko.

- Mail: D. Robert Lohn, Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS, Attn: Becky Renko, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115-0070.

Instructions: All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

NMFS will accept anonymous comments. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Becky Renko (Northwest Region, NMFS), phone: 206-526-6129; fax: 206-526-6736; and e-mail: becky.renko@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

Amendment 15 is available on the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council's or Pacific Council's) website at: <http://www.pcouncil.org/groundfish/gffmp.html>.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires that each regional fishery management council submit any FMP or plan amendment it prepares to NMFS for review and approval, disapproval, or partial approval. The Magnuson-Stevens Act also requires that NMFS, upon receiving an FMP or amendment, immediately publish a notice that the FMP or amendment is available for public review and comment. NMFS will consider the public comments received during the comment period described above in determining whether to approve Amendment 15 to the FMP.

Amendment 15 would implement a limited entry program for the Pacific whiting fishery, which occurs within

the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. The whiting fishery is currently managed with separate allocations for the tribal and non-tribal whiting fisheries, and with sector-specific whiting allocations for the three non-tribal sectors: mothership, catcher/processor, and shore-based. Vessels that participate in the mothership sector include both the motherships themselves and the catcher vessels that deliver to the at-sea mothership processors. Vessels that participate in the catcher/processor sector are self-contained at-sea processors that both catch and process fish. Vessels that participate in the shore-based sector are catcher vessels that deliver their catch to land-based processing plants. This action would limit participation in each of the three non-tribal sectors of the Pacific whiting fishery to those vessels, both catcher vessels and at-sea processing vessels, with historic participation in those particular sectors.

NMFS welcomes comments on the proposed FMP amendment through the end of the comment period. A proposed rule to implement Amendment 15 has been submitted for Secretarial review and approval. NMFS expects to publish and request public review and comment on proposed regulations to implement Amendment 15 in the near future. Public comments on the proposed rule must be received by the end of the comment period on the amendment to be considered in the approval/disapproval decision on the amendment. All comments received by the end of the comment period for the amendment, whether specifically directed to the amendment or the proposed rule, will be considered in the approval/disapproval decision.

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

Dated: March 13, 2008.

Emily H. Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 680

RIN 0648-AW37

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs

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

ACTION: Notice of availability of an amendment to a fishery management plan; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes Amendment 24 the Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs (FMP) to: specify a five-tier system for determining the status of the crab stocks managed under the FMP, establish a process for annually assigning each crab stock to a tier and for setting the overfishing and overfished levels, and reduce the number of crab stocks managed under the FMP. Amendment 24 is necessary to establish new overfishing definitions that contain objective and measurable criteria for determining whether each managed stock is overfished or whether overfishing is occurring and to remove several crab stocks managed by the State of Alaska from FMP management. This action is intended to promote the goals and objectives of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the FMP, and other applicable laws.

DATES: Comments on Amendment 24 must be submitted on or before May 19, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Sue Salvesson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. You may submit comments, identified by RIN 0648-AW37, by any one of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal website at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

- Mail: P. O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802.

- Fax: (907) 586-7557.

- Hand delivery to the Federal Building: 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK.

All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be