than one regular season cumulative limit may be landed on each limited entry permit with a sablefish endorsement. No vessel may land more than one cumulative limit. Each vessel is subject to the following per-trip limit for small sablefish: Sablefish smaller than 56 cm (22 in) total length may comprise no more than 1,500 lb (680 kg) or 3 percent of all legal sablefish 56 cm (22 in) (total length) or larger, whichever is greater. There will be no daily trip limit fishery during the regular season.

(B) Permit holders whose applications for sablefish endorsements are under administrative appeal at the time the regular season begins will not be allowed to participate in the regular season. There will be a 9-day auxiliary regular season for permit holders whose sablefish endorsements are granted after August 25. The season will be held following the end of the appeal process. The auxiliary regular season start date will be announced by the NMFS Regional Administrator and published in the **Federal Register**. Each vessel participating in this season will have a cumulative trip limit of 34,100 lb. No more than one regular season cumulative limit may be landed on each limited entry permit with a sablefish endorsement. No vessel may land more than one cumulative limit. Each vessel is subject to the following per-trip limit for small sablefish: Sablefish smaller than 56 cm (22 in) total length may comprise no more than 1,500 lb (680 kg) or 3 percent of all legal sablefish 56 cm (22 in) (total length) or larger, whichever is greater.

(viii) *Other announcements; from August 21, 1997 through December 31, 1997.* The number of days in the mop-up season, dates and times that the auxiliary regular, and mop-up seasons start and end (and trip limits on sablefish of all sizes are resumed), dates of the pre- and post-season closures for the auxiliary regular season, and the size of the trip limit for the mop-up season will be announced in the **Federal Register** and may be modified. Unless otherwise announced, these seasons will begin and end at 1200 l.t. on the specified date.

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[FR Doc. 97–22709 Filed 8–21–97; 5:04 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 961227373–6373–01; I.D. 082097C]

Fisheries Off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; End of the Primary Season and Resumption of Trip Limits for the Shore-based Whiting Sector

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

ACTION: Fishing restrictions; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the end of the 1997 regular season for the shore-based fishery for Pacific whiting (whiting), and resumption of a 10,000 lb (4,534 kg) trip limit, at 12 noon local time (l.t.), Friday, August 22, 1997, because the allocation for the shore-based sector will be reached by that time. This action is intended to keep the harvest of whiting at levels announced by NMFS on January 6, 1997, and May 20, 1997.

DATES: Effective from 12 noon l.t, August 22, 1997, until the effective date of the 1998 annual specifications and management measures for the Pacific Coast groundfish fishery, which will be published in the **Federal Register**, unless modified, superseded, or rescinded. Comments will be accepted through September 11, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments to William Stelle, Jr., Administrator, Northwest Region (Regional Administrator), National Marine Fisheries Service, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Seattle, WA 98115–0070; or William Hogarth, Acting Regional Administrator, Southwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802–4213.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William L. Robinson at 206–526–6140 or Rodney McInnis at 562–980–4040.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action is authorized by regulations implementing the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), which governs the groundfish fishery off Washington, Oregon, and California. On January 6, 1997 (62 FR 700), regulations were published announcing the annual management measures for Pacific coast whiting. The regulations at 50 CFR 660.23(a)(4) (62 FR 27519, May 20, 1997) established separate allocations for the catcher/processor, mothership, and shore-based (also called ''shoreside'') sectors of the whiting fishery. Each allocation is a harvest guideline, which when reached, results in the end of the primary season for that sector. The catcher/processor sector is composed of catcher/processors, which are vessels that harvest and process whiting. The mothership sector is composed of motherships and catcher vessels that harvest whiting for delivery to motherships. Motherships are vessels that process, but do not harvest, whiting. The shoreside sector is composed of vessels that harvest whiting for delivery to shore-based processors. The allocations, which are based on the 1997 commercial harvest guideline for whiting of 207,000 mt, are: 70,400 mt (34 percent) for the catcher/processor sector; 49,700 mt (24 percent) for the mothership sector; and 86,900 mt (42 percent) for the shoreside sector.

The best available information on August 19, 1997, indicated that 80,792 mt of whiting had been taken by the shore-based sector through August 16, 1997, and that the 86,900–mt shore-based allocation would be reached by 12 noon l.t., August 22, 1997. Accordingly, the primary season for the shore-based sector ends at 12 noon l.t., August 22, 1997, at which time no more than 10,000 lb (4,534 kg) of whiting may be taken and retained, possessed or landed by a catcher boat in the shore-based sector per fishing trip. The regulations at 50 CFR 600.323(a)(3)(i) describe the primary season for the shore-based sector as the period(s) when the large-scale target fishery is conducted (when routine trip limits accommodating small fresh fish and bait fisheries and bycatch in other fisheries under § 600.323(b) are neither needed nor in effect). The 10,000 lb (4,534 kg) trip limit, which also had been in effect before the primary season, is intended to accommodate small bait and fresh fish markets, and bycatch in other fisheries.

NMFS Action

For the reasons stated above, and in accordance with the regulations at 50 CFR 660.323(a)(4)(iii)(C) NMFS herein announces:

Effective 12 noon l.t., August 22, 1997—No more than 10,000 lb (4,534 kg) of whiting may be taken and retained, possessed, or landed by a catcher vessel participating in the shoreside sector per fishing trip.

Classification

This action is authorized by the regulations implementing the FMP. The

determination to take this action is based on the most recent data available. The aggregate data upon which the determination is based are available for public inspection at the Office of the Regional Administrator (see **ADDRESSES**) during business hours. This action is taken under the authority of 50 CFR 660.323(a)(4)(iii)(C) and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: August 21, 1997.

George H. Darcy

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

[FR Doc. 97–22707 Filed 8–21–97; 5:04 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–F