

**§ 660.372 Fixed gear sablefish fishery management.**

This section applies to the primary season for the fixed gear limited entry sablefish fishery north of 36° N. lat., except for paragraph (c), of this section, which also applies to the open access fishery north of 36° N. lat. and to both the limited entry and open access fisheries south of 36° N. lat. Limited entry and open access fixed gear sablefish fishing outside of the primary sablefish season north of 36° N. lat. is governed by routine management measures imposed under § 660.370.

(a) *Sablefish endorsement.* A vessel may not participate in the primary season for the fixed gear limited entry fishery, unless at least one limited entry permit with both a gear endorsement for longline or trap (or pot) gear and a sablefish endorsement is registered for use with that vessel. Permits with sablefish endorsements are assigned to one of three tiers, as described at § 660.334(d).

(b) *Primary season limited entry, fixed gear sablefish fishery*—(1) *Season dates.* North of 36° N. lat., the primary sablefish season for the limited entry, fixed gear, sablefish-endorsed vessels begins at 12 noon l.t. on April 1 and ends at 12 noon l.t. on October 31, unless otherwise announced by the Regional Administrator through the routine management measures process described at § 660.370(c).

(2) *Gear type.* During the primary season and when fishing against primary season cumulative limits, each vessel authorized to participate in that season under paragraph (a) of this section may fish for sablefish with any of the gear types, except trawl gear, endorsed on at least one of the permits registered for use with that vessel.

(3) *Cumulative limits.* (i) A vessel participating in the primary season will be constrained by the sablefish cumulative limit associated with each of the permits registered for use with that vessel. During the primary season, each vessel authorized to participate in that season under paragraph (a) of this section may take, retain, possess, and land sablefish, up to the cumulative limits for each of the permits registered for use with that vessel. If multiple limited entry permits with sable-

fish endorsements are registered for use with a single vessel, that vessel may land up to the total of all cumulative limits announced in this paragraph for the tiers for those permits, except as limited by paragraph (b)(3)(ii) of this section. Up to 3 permits may be registered for use with a single vessel during the primary season; thus, a single vessel may not take and retain, possess or land more than 3 primary season sablefish cumulative limits in any one year. A vessel registered for use with multiple limited entry permits is subject to per vessel limits for species other than sablefish, and to per vessel limits when participating in the daily trip limit fishery for sablefish under paragraph (c) of this section. The following annual limits are in effect: Tier 1 at 48,500 lb (21,999 kg), Tier 2 at 22,000 lb (9,979 kg), and Tier 3 at 12,500 lb (5,670 kg).

(ii) If a permit is registered to more than one vessel during the primary season in a single year, the second vessel may only take the portion of the cumulative limit for that permit that has not been harvested by the first vessel to which the permit was registered. The combined primary season sablefish landings for all vessels registered to that permit may not exceed the cumulative limit for the tier associated with that permit.

(iii) A cumulative trip limit is the maximum amount of sablefish that may be taken and retained, possessed, or landed per vessel in a specified period of time, with no limit on the number of landings or trips.

(iv) *Incidental halibut retention north of Pt. Chehalis, WA (46°53.30' N. lat.).* From May 1 through October 31, vessels authorized to participate in the primary sablefish fishery, licensed by the International Pacific Halibut Commission for commercial fishing in Area 2A (waters off Washington, Oregon, California), and fishing with longline gear north of Pt. Chehalis, WA (46°53.30' N. lat.) may land up to the following cumulative limits: 100 lb (45 kg) dressed weight, head-on of halibut per 1,000 lb (454 kg) dressed weight of sablefish, plus up to two additional halibut per fishing trip in excess of this ratio. "Dressed" halibut in this area means halibut landed eviscerated with their

heads on. Halibut taken and retained in the primary sablefish fishery north of Pt. Chehalis may only be landed north of Pt. Chehalis and may not be possessed or landed south of Pt. Chehalis.

(4) *Owner-on-board Requirement.* Beginning January 1, 2007, any person who owns or has ownership interest in a limited entry permit with a sablefish endorsement, as described at § 660.334(d), must be on board the vessel registered for use with that permit at any time that the vessel has sablefish on board the vessel that count toward that permit's cumulative sablefish landing limit. This person must carry government issued photo identification while aboard the vessel. A permit owner is not obligated to be on board the vessel registered for use with the sablefish-endorsed limited entry permit during the primary sablefish season if:

(i) The person, partnership or corporation had ownership interest in a limited entry permit with a sablefish endorsement prior to November 1, 2000. A person who has ownership interest in a partnership or corporation that owned a sablefish-endorsed permit as of November 1, 2000, but who did not individually own a sablefish-endorsed limited entry permit as of November 1, 2000, is not exempt from the owner-on-board requirement when he/she leaves the partnership or corporation and purchases another permit individually. A person, partnership, or corporation that is exempt from the owner-on-board requirement may sell all of their permits, buy another sablefish-endorsed permit within up to a year from the date the last permit was approved for transfer, and retain their exemption from the owner-on-board requirements. Additionally, a person, partnership, or corporation that qualified for the owner-on-board exemption, but later divested their interest in a permit or permits, may retain rights to an owner-on-board exemption as long as that person, partnership, or corporation purchases another permit by March 2, 2007. A person, partnership or corporation could only purchase a permit if it has not added or changed individuals since November 1, 2000, excluding individuals that have left the part-

nership or corporation, or that have died.

(ii) The person who owns or who has ownership interest in a sablefish-endorsed limited entry permit is prevented from being on board a fishing vessel because the person died, is ill, or is injured. The person requesting the exemption must send a letter to NMFS requesting an exemption from the owner-on-board requirements, with appropriate evidence as described at § 660.372(b)(4)(ii)(A) or (B). All emergency exemptions for death, injury, or illness will be evaluated by NMFS and a decision will be made in writing to the permit owner within 60 calendar days of receipt of the original exemption request.

(A) Evidence of death of the permit owner shall be provided to NMFS in the form of a copy of a death certificate. In the interim before the estate is settled, if the deceased permit owner was subject to the owner-on-board requirements, the estate of the deceased permit owner may send a letter to NMFS with a copy of the death certificate, requesting an exemption from the owner-on-board requirements. An exemption due to death of the permit owner will be effective only until such time that the estate of the deceased permit owner has transferred the deceased permit owner's permit to a beneficiary or up to three years after the date of death as proven by a death certificate, whichever is earlier. An exemption from the owner-on-board requirements will be conveyed in a letter from NMFS to the estate of the permit owner and is required to be on the vessel during fishing operations.

(B) Evidence of illness or injury that prevents the permit owner from participating in the fishery shall be provided to NMFS in the form of a letter from a certified medical practitioner. This letter must detail the relevant medical conditions of the permit owner and how those conditions prevent the permit owner from being onboard a fishing vessel during the primary season. An exemption due to injury or illness will be effective only for the calendar year of the request for exemption, and will not be granted for more than three consecutive or total years. NMFS will consider any exemption

granted for less than 12 months in a year to count as one year against the 3-year cap. In order to extend an emergency medical exemption for a succeeding year, the permit owner must submit a new request and provide documentation from a certified medical practitioner detailing why the permit owner is still unable to be onboard a fishing vessel. An emergency exemption will be conveyed in a letter from NMFS to the permit owner and is required to be on the vessel during fishing operations.

(c) *Limited entry and open access daily trip limit fisheries both north and south of 36° N. lat.* (1) Before the start of the primary season, all sablefish landings made by a vessel authorized under paragraph (a) of this section to participate in the primary season will be subject to the restrictions and limits of the limited entry daily and/or weekly trip limit fishery for sablefish, which is governed by routine management measures imposed under § 660.370(c).

(2) Following the start of the primary season, all landings made by a vessel authorized under paragraph (a) of this section to participate in the primary season will count against the primary season cumulative limit(s) associated with the permit(s) registered for use with that vessel. A vessel that is eligible to participate in the primary sablefish season may participate in the daily trip limit fishery for sablefish once that vessels' primary season sablefish limit(s) have been taken, or after the end of the primary season, whichever occurs earlier. Any subsequent sablefish landings by that vessel will be subject to the restrictions and limits of the limited entry daily and/or trip limit fishery for sablefish for the remainder of the calendar year.

(3) No vessel may land sablefish against both its primary season cumulative sablefish limits and against the daily and/or weekly trip limit fishery limits within the same 24 hour period of 0001 hours l.t. to 2400 hours l.t. If a vessel has taken all of its tier limit except for an amount that is smaller than the daily trip limit amount, that vessel's subsequent sablefish landings are automatically subject to daily and/or weekly trip limits.

(4) Vessels registered for use with a limited entry, fixed gear permit that does not have a sablefish endorsement may participate in the limited entry, daily and/or weekly trip limit fishery for as long as that fishery is open during the year, subject to routine management measures imposed under § 660.370(c). Daily and/or weekly trip limits for the limited entry fishery north and south of 36° N. lat. are provided in Tables 4 (North) and 4 (South) of this subpart.

(5) Open access vessels may participate in the open access, daily trip limit fishery for as long as that fishery is open during the year, subject to the routine management measures imposed under § 660.370(c). Daily and/or weekly trip limits for the open access fishery north and south of 36° N. lat. are provided in Tables 5 (North) and 5 (South) of this subpart.

(d) *Trip limits.* Trip and/or frequency limits may be imposed in the limited entry fishery on vessels that are not participating in the primary season under § 660.370(c). Trip and/or size limits to protect juvenile sablefish in the limited entry or open-access fisheries also may be imposed at any time under § 660.370(c). Trip limits may be imposed in the open-access fishery at any time under § 660.370(c).

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**§ 660.373 Pacific whiting (whiting) fishery management.**

(a) *Sectors.* The catcher/processor sector is composed of catcher/processors, which are vessels that harvest and process whiting during a calendar year. 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 during a calendar year. The shore-based sector is composed of vessels that harvest whiting for delivery to shore-based processors.

(b) *Seasons.* The primary seasons for the whiting fishery are: For the shore-based sector, the period(s) when the large-scale target fishery is conducted