

active in the bluefish fishery and/or have caught bluefish.

Description of Projected Reporting, Recordkeeping, and Other Compliance Requirements

No additional reporting, recordkeeping, or other compliance requirements are included in this final rule.

Description of the Steps Taken To Minimize Economic Impact on Small Entities

Specification of commercial quota, recreational harvest levels, and possession limits is constrained by the conservation objectives of the FMP, under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The commercial quota contained in this final rule is 10 percent higher than the 2011 quota and 113 percent higher than actual 2011 bluefish landings. All affected states will receive increases in their individual commercial quota allocation in comparison to their respective 2011 individual state allocations. However, the magnitude of the increase varies depending on the state's relative percent share in the total commercial quota, as specified in the FMP.

The RHL contained in this final rule is approximately 2 percent lower than the RHL in 2011. The small reduction in RHL is a reflection of a declining trend in recreational bluefish harvest in recent years. Because the 2012 RHL is greater than the total estimated recreational bluefish harvest for 2011, it does not constrain recreational bluefish harvest below a level that the fishery is anticipated to achieve. The possession limit for bluefish will remain at 15 fish per person, so there should be no impact on demand for party/charter vessel fishing and, therefore, no impact on revenues earned by party/charter vessels. No negative economic impacts on the recreational fishery are anticipated.

The impacts on revenues associated with the proposed RSA quota were analyzed and are expected to be minimal. Assuming that the full RSA quota 491,672 lb (223 mt) is landed and sold to support the proposed research projects, then all of the participants in the fishery would benefit from the improved fisheries data yielded from each project.

Small Entity Compliance Guide

Section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 states that, for each rule or group of related rules for which an agency is required to prepare a FRFA, the agency shall publish one or more guides to assist small entities in complying with the rule, and shall designate such publications as "small entity compliance guides." The agency shall explain the actions a small entity is required to take to comply with a rule or group of rules. As part of this rulemaking process, a small entity compliance guide will be sent to all holders of Federal permits issued for the Atlantic bluefish fishery.

In addition, copies of this final rule and guide (i.e., permit holder letter) are available upon request, and posted on the Northeast Regional Office's Web site at www.nero.noaa.gov.

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

Dated: April 24, 2012.

Alan D. Risenhoover,
Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 111220786-1781-01]

RIN 0648-XC002

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; quota transfer.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the State of North Carolina is transferring a portion of its 2012 commercial summer flounder quota to the Commonwealth of Virginia. NMFS is adjusting the quotas and announcing the revised commercial quota for each state involved.

DATES: Effective April 26, 2012, through December 31, 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery are in 50 CFR part 648, and require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned among the coastal states from North Carolina through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state are described in § 648.100.

The final rule implementing Amendment 5 to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan, which was published on December 17, 1993 (58 FR 65936), provided a mechanism for summer flounder quota to be transferred from one state to another. Two or more states, under mutual agreement and with the concurrence of the Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), can transfer or combine summer flounder commercial quota under § 648.102(c)(2). The Regional Administrator is required to consider the criteria in § 648.102(c)(2)(i) to evaluate requests for quota transfers or combinations.

North Carolina has agreed to transfer 180,061 lb (81,674 kg) of its 2012 commercial quota to Virginia. This transfer was prompted by summer flounder landings of 12 North Carolina vessels that were granted safe harbor in Virginia due to mechanical failures, between March 2, 2012, and March 31, 2012, thereby requiring a quota transfer to account for an increase in Virginia's landings that would have otherwise accrued against the North Carolina quota. The Regional Administrator has determined that the criteria set forth in § 648.102(c)(2)(i) have been met. The revised summer flounder quotas for calendar year 2012 are: North Carolina, 1,603,359 lb (727,271 kg); and Virginia, 4,603,985 lb (2,088,332 kg).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: April 24, 2012.

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

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