

operator maximum flexibility in the commercial employment of the vessel. There are costs associated with load line assignment, however: Higher construction cost for the vessel, and the cost of the annual surveys.

Because river barges are not exposed to any sea conditions, they are not typically constructed to meet the load line standards for coastwise or offshore service. Although this makes them less expensive to build and operate, they do not qualify for load line assignment and therefore are not normally permitted to operate outside the Boundary Line.

(More information on load lines and the Boundary Line can be found on the Coast Guard's load line Web site at: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg5212/loadlines.asp>)

Boundary Line in the Gulf of Mexico. Most commercial vessels become subject to load line requirements when they cross outside the U.S. Boundary Line (which is delineated in 46 CFR Part 7). In the Gulf of Mexico between the Marquesas Keys, FL, and the mouth of the Rio Grande River, TX, the Boundary Line is located 12 nautical miles offshore. This effectively creates a nearshore marine corridor where non-load line vessels, including river barges, may proceed between ports along the Gulf coast. The premise behind this is that weather conditions in the Gulf are generally benign enough, and places of refuge are close enough at hand, that non-load line vessels can safely operate along the coast, and readily evade bad weather if necessary.

However, there is a stretch of shallow water—as denoted by the 12-foot water depth contour—extending ten to twelve miles offshore along the western coast of Florida between Crystal River and Tarpon Springs. These water depths are relatively shallow for commercial shipping, and severely constrict the non-load line corridor. To stay within sufficient depth of water along this shallow stretch, a vessel may need to transit outside the Boundary Line, thereby necessitating a load line assignment.

Petition for a special load line exemption. In order to extend the existing non-load line nearshore corridor all the way to Tampa Bay, Parker Towing Company, Inc. (Parker Towing), has submitted to the Coast Guard a rulemaking petition to create a load line-exempted route outside the Boundary Line along the western coast of Florida. The Parker Towing petition can be viewed in the docket, but to summarize: The proposed exempted route extends for approximately 32 nautical miles, between Crystal River and Tarpon Springs, FL. At its furthest

point, the exempted route would be three nautical miles outside the 12-mile Boundary Line. In addition to the route, the petition also proposes to limit the exemption to unmanned barges, carrying non-hazardous and non-liquid cargoes, under restricted weather conditions. The benefit of the exemption is that it would allow non-hazardous cargoes to be loaded onto ordinary, non-load line river barges at upriver terminals in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, for direct delivery to Tampa Bay, FL terminals.

The petition also discusses the “M–10 Marine Highway Corridor.” This pertains to a transportation study by the U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration (MarAd) of coastal shipping routes that could be utilized to alleviate trucking congestion on overland highways (in this case, the I–10 interstate corridor through the Gulf coast states). More information on America's Marine Highway Program is posted on the MarAd AMH Web site at: http://www.marad.dot.gov/ships_shipping_landing_page/mhi_home/mhi_home.htm.

Other Similar Load Line Exemption Regimes

Although river barges are not normally permitted to operate outside the U.S. Boundary Line, there are a few limited routes where they are permitted to operate under restricted conditions. The exemption proposed in the Parker Towing petition is similar to a load line exemption regime established for river barges operating on Lake Michigan (per 46 CFR 45.171, *et seq.*, a copy of which is included in the docket).

Request for Comments

In deciding whether or not to move forward with the requested rulemaking, the Coast Guard must consider several issues: the safety of the operation, protection of the marine environment, resource demands on the Coast Guard (particularly compliance verification and enforcement), and the potential economic costs and benefits.

Public comments on these issues, as well as other points that are pertinent to this petition, are encouraged. Upon review, the Coast Guard will decide whether or not to proceed with a rulemaking to establish the proposed exempted route.

This notice is issued under authority of 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 46 U.S.C. 5108.

Dated: September 10, 2012.

J.G. Lantz,

Director of Commercial Regulations and Standards.

[FR Doc. 2012–23883 Filed 9–28–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 9110–04–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

47 CFR Part 73

[MB Docket No. 12–237; RM–11672; DA 12–1421]

Radio Broadcasting Services; Tignall, GA

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: This document sets forth a proposal to amend the FM Table of Allotments, Section 73.202(b) of the Commission's rules. The Commission requests comment on a petition filed by Georgia-Carolina Radiocasting Company, LLC, proposing to amend the Table of Allotments by substituting Channel 287A for vacant Channel 244A, at Tignall, Georgia. The proposal is part of a contingently filed “hybrid” application and rule making petition. Channel 287A can be allotted at Tignall, Georgia, in compliance with the Commission's minimum distance separation requirements with a site restriction 12.6 km (7.8 miles) south of Tignall, at reference coordinates 33–45–22 North Latitude and 82–42–56 West Longitude. **See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** *infra*.

DATES: The deadline for filing comments is October 22, 2012. Reply comments must be filed on or before November 6, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street SW., Washington, DC 20554. In addition to filing comments with the FCC, interested parties should serve counsel for petitioner as follows: Dan J. Alpert, Esq., Law Offices of Dan J. Alpert, 2120 21st Road N., Arlington, Virginia 22201.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Deborah A. Dupont, Media Bureau (202) 418–7072.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a synopsis of the Commission's *Notice of Proposed Rule Making*, MB Docket No. 12–237, adopted August 29, 2012, and released August 31, 2012. The full text of this Commission decision is available for inspection and copying during normal business hours in the FCC Reference Information Center (Room CY–A257), 445 12th Street SW.,

Washington, DC 20554. The complete text of this decision may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractor, Best Copy and Printing, Inc., 445 12th Street SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, DC 20554, (800) 378-3160, or via the company's Web site, www.bcpweb.com. This document does not contain proposed information collection requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. In addition, therefore, it does not contain any proposed information collection burden "for small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees," pursuant to the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act of 2002, Public Law 107-198, *see* 44 U.S.C. 3506 (c)(4).

The Provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 do not apply to this proceeding. Members of the public should note that from the time a Notice of Proposed Rule Making is issued until the matter is no longer subject to Commission consideration or court review, all *ex parte* contacts are prohibited in Commission proceedings, such as this one, which involve channel allotments. *See* 47 CFR 1.1204(b) for rules governing permissible *ex parte* contacts.

For information regarding proper filing procedures for comments, *see* 47 CFR 1.415 and 1.420.

List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 73

Radio, Radio broadcasting.

Federal Communications Commission.

Nazifa Sawez,

Assistant Chief, Audio Division, Media Bureau.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Federal Communications Commission proposes to amend 47 CFR part 73 as follows:

PART 73—RADIO BROADCAST SERVICES

1. The authority citation for part 73 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 47 U.S.C. 154, 303, 334, 336 and 339.

§ 73.202 [Amended]

2. Section 73.202(b), the Table of FM Allotments under Georgia, is amended by removing Channel 244A and adding Channel 287A at Tignall.

[FR Doc. 2012-24139 Filed 9-28-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 120710231-2473-01]

RIN 0648-BC33

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery; Proposed Emergency Action

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes to partially exempt the scallop fishery from fishing year 2012-related Georges Bank yellowtail flounder accountability measures. This action is being proposed to respond to a request for emergency rulemaking from the New England Fishery Management Council (Council). This proposed action is intended to provide an explanation of how the partial exemption would function; outline how the proposed action satisfies Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) emergency rulemaking criteria; and to solicit public input on the proposed exemption.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before October 31, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by "NOAA-NMFS-2012-0179," by any of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal www.regulations.gov. To submit comments via the e-Rulemaking Portal, first click the "submit a comment" icon, then enter NOAA-NMFS-2012-0179 in the keyword search. Locate the document you wish to comment on from the resulting list and click on the "Submit a Comment" icon on the right of that line.

- **Mail:** Submit written comments to John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930.

- **Fax:** (978) 281-9135.

Instructions: Comments must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure that the comments are received, documented, and considered

by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.) submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

Copies of the draft environmental assessment (EA) prepared for this action by NMFS are available from John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. The EA is accessible via the Internet at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Ruccio, Fishery Policy Analyst, phone: 978-281-9104.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

In New England fisheries, catch limits are developed by the Council and recommended for implementation through rulemaking by NMFS. When established catch limits are exceeded, various accountability measures (AMs) are triggered. These AMs modify subsequent years' fishing opportunities to prevent future overages so that overfishing does not occur. Catch limits and AMs are both requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Georges Bank (GB) yellowtail flounder is found on both sides of the international maritime border between the United States and Canada, the Hague Line, and is a U.S./Canada shared stock. The Council's process for developing the catch limit for GB yellowtail flounder is done in conjunction with Canada through a formal understanding between both countries (i.e., the U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding, commonly referred to as "the Understanding"). This Understanding provides a process for collaborative scientific stock assessments, as well as a management allocation framework for distributing catch allowances to both countries.

The 2012 fishing year total catch limit for GB yellowtail flounder, recommended by the Council and