

of trawl gear on board. It is prohibited to have more than one type of limited entry trawl gear on board and it is prohibited to have both limited entry trawl gear and exempted trawl gear on board. It is also prohibited to have both trawl gear and non-trawl (limited entry or open access) gear on board at the same time.

(c) *State landing receipts.*

Washington, Oregon, and California will require the type of trawl gear on board to be recorded on the State landing receipt(s) for each trip or on an attachment to the State landing receipt.

(d) *Gear inspection.* All trawl gear and trawl gear components, including unattached rollers or bobbins, must be readily accessible and made available for inspection at the request of an authorized officer. No trawl gear may be removed from the vessel prior to offloading. All footropes shall be uncovered and clearly visible except when in use for fishing.

(15) *Platooning—limited entry trawl vessels.* Limited entry trawl vessels are automatically in the “A” platoon, unless the “B” platoon is indicated on the limited entry permit. If a vessel is in the “A” platoon, its cumulative trip limit periods begin and end on the beginning and end of a calendar month as in the past. No more than one trawl permit may be registered to a vessel unless a permit is endorsed for both trawl and either longline or pot gear and is being stacked under § 660.335(c) for use in the limited entry fixed gear primary sablefish fishery. If a vessel is registered for use with more than one permit with a trawl endorsement through the fixed gear permit stacking program, then the vessel owner must designate one trawl-endorsed permit as his base trawl permit and may only fish in the platoon associated with that base trawl permit. If a limited entry trawl permit is authorized for the “B” platoon, then cumulative trip limit periods will begin on the 16th of the month (generally 2 weeks later than for the “A” platoon), unless otherwise specified.

(a) For a vessel in the “B” platoon, cumulative trip limit periods begin on the 16th of the month at 0001 hours, l.t., and end at 2400 hours, l.t., on the 15th of the month. Therefore, the management measures announced herein that are effective on January 1, 2003, for the “A” platoon will be effective on January 16, 2003, for the “B” platoon. The effective date of any inseason changes to the cumulative trip limits also will be delayed for 2 weeks for the “B” platoon, unless otherwise specified.

(b) A vessel authorized to operate in the “B” platoon may take and retain, but

may not land, groundfish from January 1, 2003, through January 15, 2003.

(c) A vessel authorized to operate in the “B” platoon will have the same cumulative trip limits for the November 16, 2003, through December 31, 2003, period as a vessel operating in the “A” platoon has for the November 1, 2002, through December 31, 2002 period.

(16) *Permit transfers.* Limited entry permit transfers are to take effect no earlier than the first day of a major cumulative limit period following the day NMFS receives the transfer form and original permit (50 CFR 660.335(e)(3)). Those days in 2003 are January 1, March 1, May 1, July 1, September 1, and November 1, and are delayed by 15 days (starting on the 16th of a month) for the “B” platoon.

(17) *Exempted fisheries.* U.S. vessels operating under an exempted fishing permit (EFP) issued under 50 CFR part 600 are also subject to these restrictions, unless otherwise provided in the permit. EFPs may include the collecting of scientific samples of groundfish species that would otherwise be prohibited for retention.

(18) *Application of requirements.* Paragraphs B. and C. pertain to the commercial groundfish fishery, but not to Washington coastal tribal fisheries, which are described in Section V. The provisions in paragraphs B. and C. that are not covered under the headings “limited entry” or “open access” apply to all vessels in the commercial fishery that take and retain groundfish, unless otherwise stated. Paragraph D. pertains to the recreational fishery.

(19) *Rockfish Conservation Areas.* For 2003, the Council has introduced several RCAs and a Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (YRCA) and has retained the Cowcod Conservation Area (CCAs) used in 2001 and 2002. Collectively, any geographically defined area where specific fishing activities are prohibited (closed) or otherwise restricted intended to protect a particular groundfish species or species group or intended to protect a complex of species is referred to as a Groundfish Conservation Area. The YRCA, the CCAs, and the larger depth-based RCAs are Groundfish Conservation Areas. Larger RCAs intended to protect a complex of species, such as overfished shelf rockfish species, have boundaries defined by a series of coordinates intended to approximate particular depth contours, such as 100 fm (183 m), 150 fm (274 m), 250 fm (457,) etc. Different gear types or fishing sectors may have RCAs with differing boundaries.

(a) *Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area.* Recreational fishing for

groundfish is prohibited within the YRCA. It is unlawful for recreational fishing vessels to take, retain, possess, or land groundfish inside the YRCA. The YRCA is a C-shaped area off the northern Washington coast that is bound by straight lines connecting all of the following points in the order listed:

48°00′ N. lat.; 124°59′ W. long.;
48°00′ N. lat.; 125°18′ W. long.;
48°04′ N. lat.; 124°59′ W. long.;
48°04′ N. lat.; 125°18′ W. long.;
48°04′ N. lat.; 125°11′ W. long.;
48°04′ N. lat.; 125°18′ W. long.;
48°18′ N. lat.; 125°11′ W. long.;
48°18′ N. lat.; 125°18′ W. long.;
and connecting back to 48°00′ N. lat.;
124°59′ W. long.

(b) *Cowcod Conservation Areas.* The coordinates of the Cowcod Conservation Areas (CCAs) are defined at § 660.304(c). Recreational and commercial fishing for groundfish is prohibited within the CCAs, except that recreational and commercial fishing for rockfish and lingcod is permitted in waters inside 20 fathoms (36.9 m). It is unlawful to take and retain, possess, or land groundfish inside the CCAs, except for rockfish and lingcod taken in waters inside the 20-fathom (36.9 m) depth contour, when those waters are open to fishing. Commercial fishing vessels may transit through the Western CCA with their gear stowed and groundfish on board only in a corridor through the Western CCA bounded on the north by the latitude line at 33°00′30″ N. lat., and bounded on the south by the latitude line at 32°59′30″ N. lat.

(c) *Limited entry trawl groundfish coastwide and open access exempted trawl south of 40°10′ N. lat.*
Conservation Area.

(i) The trawl RCA is closed to limited entry groundfish trawl fishing coastwide and to open access exempted trawl fishing (except for pink shrimp trawling) south of 40°10′ N. lat. Fishing with limited entry groundfish trawl gear is prohibited within the trawl RCA north of 40°10′ N. lat. and fishing with any trawl gear is prohibited within the trawl RCA south of 40°10′ N. lat., unless that vessel is trawling for pink shrimp. Coastwide, it is unlawful to take and retain, possess, or land groundfish taken with limited entry groundfish trawl gear in the trawl RCA. South of 40°10′ N. lat., it is unlawful to take and retain, possess, or land any species of fish taken with any type of trawl gear in the trawl RCA. Trawl vessels may transit through the trawl RCA, with or without groundfish on board, provided all groundfish trawl gear is stowed either: (1) below deck; or (2) if the gear cannot readily be moved, in a secured and covered manner, detached from all