

WSR 25-08-087
EMERGENCY RULES
DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE

[Order 25-48—Filed April 2, 2025, 8:03 a.m., effective April 3, 2025]

Effective Date of Rule: April 3, 2025.

Purpose: The purpose of this emergency rule is to set 2025 recreational halibut seasons.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Amending WAC 220-315-030.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.12.045, and 77.12.047.

Under RCW 34.05.350 the agency for good cause finds that immediate adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest.

Reasons for this Finding: This emergency rule revises state rules to conform to proposed federal regulations. Halibut catch will continue to be closely monitored by Washington department of fish and wildlife staff; seasons may close earlier if quotas are achieved. Halibut seasons are open only by emergency rule (see WAC 220-314-040(1)).

Additionally, this rule is necessary to allow halibut legally retained in Catch Record Card Area 5, to be landed into port within Catch Record Card Area 4, on days when halibut fishing is closed in Area 4. This will support in prosecution of an orderly fishery by avoiding unnecessary enforcement action.

There is insufficient time to adopt permanent rules.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 1, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: April 2, 2025.

Kelly Susewind
Director

NEW SECTION

WAC 220-314-03000U Halibut—Seasons—Daily and possession limits.

Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-314-030, and 220-314-010, effective immediately, until further notice, it is unlawful to fish for or possess halibut taken for personal use, except as provided in this section. All other provisions of WAC 220-314-030, and WAC

220-314-010, including Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Areas (YRCA), not addressed in this section, remain in effect unless otherwise amended by emergency rule:

(1) Marine Area 1 All Depth Fishery, including Southern Near Shore Fishery area described in section (2):

Open May 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 15, 16, 18, 22, 23, 25, 29, 30; June 1, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 22, 26, 27, and 29, 2025,.

(2) Marine Area 1 Southern Near Shore Fishery; Those waters shoreward of a lined from 46°38.17'N. lat., 124°15.88'W. long., to the WA/OR border at 46°16.00'N. lat., 24°15.88'W. long. (then connecting to the 40-fathom depth contour in Oregon):

(a) Open during dates listed for Marine Area 1 All Depth Fishery in section (1), and open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, each week, beginning May 5, 2025, until further notice.

(b) Bottomfish, otherwise legal to retain, may be retained and landed when a vessel has landed or brought halibut into port on days when only the Southern Near Shore Fishery is open for halibut retention, but not on days when the All Depth halibut fishery is open as listed in section (1).

(3) Marine Area 2 All Depth Fishery, including Northern Near Shore Fishery area:

Open May 1, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27, and 29; June 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, and 29, 2025.

(4) Marine Areas 3 and 4:

(a) Open May 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, and 31; June 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, and 29, 2025.

(b) It is lawful to retain Sablefish caught while in angling in MA 4 east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line in waters seaward of the Bottomfish closure as defined in WAC 220-314-010 (2)(a) on days open for halibut.

(5) Marine Areas 5 through 10:

(a) Open April 3 through June 30, 2025.

(b) It is lawful to retain Pacific cod in Marine Area 5 in waters seaward of the Bottomfish closure as defined in WAC 220-314-010 (2)(a) on days open for halibut.

(c) It is lawful to retain Lingcod May 1 through June 15, 2025 caught while angling in Marine Area 5 in waters seaward of the Bottomfish closure as defined in WAC 220-314-010 (2)(a) on days open for halibut. It is unlawful to retain lingcod in Marine Area 5 prior to May 1 and after June 15, 2025.

(d) It is lawful to retain Sablefish caught while angling in Marine Area 5 in waters seaward of the Bottomfish closure as defined in WAC 220-313-101 (2)(a) on days open for halibut. The Sablefish daily limit in Marine Area 5 is 2.

(e) It is lawful to retain Pacific cod in Catch Record Card area 6 in waters seaward of the Bottomfish closure as defined in WAC 220-314-010 (2)(a) and waters deeper than 120 feet in the remaining portion of Catch Record Card Area 6 on days open for halibut.

(f) It is lawful to retain Pacific cod in waters deeper than 120 feet in Catch Record Card areas 7, 8-1, 8-2, 9, and 10 on days open for halibut.

(6) Marine Areas 11, 12 and 13: Closed.

(7) It is unlawful to fish for, retain, possess, or land halibut into a port located within an area that is closed to halibut fishing, except it is lawful to land halibut into a port within Marine Area 4 that were lawfully retained in Marine Area 5.

(8) Halibut caught in Canadian waters may be landed into a port located within a marine area that is closed to halibut fishing. See WAC 220-310-210 for rules on Canadian-origin halibut possession.

(9) The annual limit is six halibut taken from state or offshore waters. This does not include Canadian waters; see WAC 220-310-210 for limits on Canadian-origin halibut.

(10) A violation of this section is punishable under RCW 77.15.370 or RCW 77.15.380, depending on the violation.

Reviser's note: The typographical errors in the above section occurred in the copy filed by the agency and appear in the Register pursuant to the requirements of RCW 34.08.040.