



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF667]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Prohibited Species Donation Program

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

ACTION: Notice; selection of an authorized distributor.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the renewal of two prohibited species donation (PSD) permits to SeaShare, a non-profit and tax-exempt organization, authorizing this organization to distribute Pacific salmon (salmon) and Pacific halibut (halibut) to hunger relief agencies, food bank networks, or food bank distributors under the PSD program. Salmon and halibut are caught incidentally during directed fishing in the exclusive economic zone off Alaska for groundfish with trawl gear. This action is necessary to comply with provisions of the PSD program.

DATES: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**] through May 21, 2029.

ADDRESSES: Electronic copies of the PSD permits for salmon and halibut prepared for this action may be obtained from the NMFS Alaska Region website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/commercial-fishing/permits-and-licenses-issued-alaska>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Maggie Chan, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Fishing for groundfish by U.S. vessels in the exclusive economic zone of the

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area and Gulf of Alaska is managed by NMFS in accordance with the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI FMP) and the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA FMP). These fishery management plans (FMPs) were prepared and recommended by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*). Regulations governing the federal groundfish fisheries and implementing the FMPs appear at 50 CFR parts 600 and 679. Fishing for halibut in waters in and off Alaska is governed by the Convention between the United States and Canada for the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea (Convention). The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) promulgates regulations pursuant to the Convention. The IPHC's regulations are subject to approval by the Secretary of State with concurrence from the Secretary of Commerce. After approval by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Commerce, the IPHC regulations are published in the **Federal Register** as annual management measures pursuant to 50 CFR 300.62.

Amendments 26 and 29 to the BSAI and GOA FMPs, respectively, authorize a salmon donation program and were approved by NMFS on July 10, 1996; a final rule implementing this program was published in the **Federal Register** on July 24, 1996 (61 FR 38358). The salmon donation program was expanded to include halibut as part of the PSD program under amendments 50 to both FMPs that were approved by NMFS on May 6, 1998. A final rule implementing these amendments was published in the **Federal Register** on June 12, 1998 (63 FR 32144). Although that final rule contained a sunset provision for the halibut PSD program of December 31, 2000, the halibut PSD program was permanently extended under a final rule published in the **Federal Register** on December 14, 2000 (65 FR 78119). A full description of, and background information

on, the PSD program may be found in the preambles of the associated proposed rules (61 FR 24750, May 16, 1996, and 63 FR 10583, March 4, 1998).

Section 679.26 authorizes the voluntary distribution of salmon and halibut taken incidentally in the groundfish trawl fisheries in the exclusive economic zone off Alaska to hunger relief agencies, food bank networks, or food bank distributors by tax-exempt organizations through an authorized distributor. The NMFS Administrator for the Alaska Region (Regional Administrator) may select one or more tax-exempt organizations to be authorized distributors, as defined at § 679.2, based on the information submitted by applicants under § 679.26. An applicant seeking to become an authorized distributor must submit to the Regional Administrator all of the information required by § 679.26(b)(1) and must submit a separate application for each species (salmon or halibut) that the applicant seeks to distribute. After reviewing qualified applicants, NMFS must announce the selection of each authorized distributor in the **Federal Register** and issue one or more PSD permits to each selected distributor (§ 679.26(b)(3)(i)).

Renewal of Permits to SeaShare

Currently, SeaShare, a tax-exempt organization founded to help the seafood industry donate to U.S. hunger relief efforts, is the sole authorized distributor of salmon and halibut taken incidentally in the groundfish trawl fisheries off Alaska. SeaShare's current salmon and halibut PSD permits became effective May 18, 2023 and authorize SeaShare to participate in the PSD program through May 25, 2026 (88 FR 31701, May 18, 2023).

On March 20, 2026, the Regional Administrator received applications from SeaShare to renew its salmon and halibut PSD permits. The Regional Administrator reviewed the applications and determined that both applications are complete and include all of the information required by § 679.26(b)(1), and that SeaShare continues to meet the requirements for an authorized distributor of salmon and halibut under the PSD program.

Because SeaShare is the only applicant for PSD permits at this time, the Regional Administrator does not need to determine how many total authorized distributors to select using the criteria at § 679.26(b)(2).

These permits may be suspended, modified, or revoked under 15 CFR part 904 for violation of § 679.26 or other regulations in 50 CFR part 679.

This action is taken under § 679.26.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 773 *et seq.*; 1801 *et seq.*; 3631 *et seq.*; Pub. L. 108-447; Pub. L. 111-281.

Dated: May 13, 2026.

David R. Blankinship,

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National Marine Fisheries Service.

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