

Concise Explanatory Statement (CES)

February 18, 2016

Coastal Directed Mackerel Purse Seine Fishery

WAC 220-88F-010, 220-88F-020, 220-88F-030

Reasons for adopting the rule:

The purpose of this proposal is to designate and provide regulations for a trial emerging commercial fishery for the commercial harvest of Pacific mackerel with purse seine gear. This proposal also anticipates advancement of the trial emerging fishery to an experimental emerging fishery. The effect of this rule is to establish a commercial fishery in federal waters for the harvest of Pacific mackerel with purse seine gear. The National Marine Fisheries Service, in coordination with the Pacific Fishery Management Council, regulates and scientifically assesses Pacific mackerel fisheries in offshore waters. No Washington fishery license authorizes landing Pacific mackerel from a directed Pacific mackerel purse seine fishery. Lacking such a license and regulations specific to this species and gear, Washington fishers are precluded from participating in the federal directed mackerel fishery when harvest opportunity exists.

A. Differences between the text of the proposed rule and the text of the rule as adopted:

New language was added to proposed new section, WAC 220-88F-030 (1) (c). Specifically, the phrase “prior to landing” was inserted into to this section. The effect of this change is to more clearly specify when the department-issued logbook is to be completed.

B. Summary of comments and WDFW response and consideration for the comments:

A public hearing was held February 11, 2016 at the WDFW Region 6 office. Notification of the hearing was sent to recent holders of Washington purse seine licenses for sardine and baitfish, and dealers that had purchased sardine, mackerel or anchovy. Chairs and members of the Pacific Fishery Management Council Coastal Pelagic Species management and advisory (industry) teams were also provided notification. Several environmental organizations received the hearing notification via electronic mail.

Public testimony received at the hearing supported the rule action as proposed, including the amended language introduced to WAC 220-88F-030. One written comment was received via electronic mail and it too supported the rule action as proposed.