

NMFS Updates to the IFQ Committee September 23, 2021¹

1	IFQ Temporary Transfers in 2021 Emergency Rule	1
2	IFQ Cost Recovery - End of Year Process.....	1
3	Rulemaking update - Remove GOA Sablefish pot gear tags and Notary requirements.....	3
4	Staffing Highlights	3
	4.1 Restricted Access Management	3
	4.2 Sustainable Fisheries.....	3

1 IFQ Temporary Transfers in 2021 Emergency Rule

The emergency rule published on March 30, 2021 which authorizes NMFS to approve temporary transfers of IFQ in 2021 is effective through September 27, 2021([86 FR 16542](#)). Applications for temporary transfer authorized under this emergency rule received after September 27, 2021 will not be approved.

The expiration of this emergency rule does not affect or alter other IFQ Program transfer provisions. Other IFQ Program transfer provisions authorize temporary transfers of CV IFQ under six special circumstances: (1) medical transfers; (2) beneficiary (survivorship) transfers; (3) military transfers; (4) transfers through Community Quota Entities; (5) transfers to Guided Angler Fish program; and (6) transfers to Community Development Quota groups in years of low halibut abundance. Additionally, the IFQ Program includes a temporary medical transfer provision at 50 CFR 679.42(d)(2) that allows a QS holder not otherwise qualified to hire a master to temporarily transfer their annual IFQ if the QS holder or their immediate family member has a temporary medical condition that prevents the QS holder from fishing.

NMFS notified IFQ permit holders of the upcoming expiration of this emergency rule on September 2, 2021 via a govDelivery email message. On September 28, 2021, the [IFQ applications and forms web page](#) will be updated to replace the updated Temporary Transfer of Halibut/Sablefish IFQ Application form to remove the option to request a “Temporary IFQ Transfer for the 2021 fishing year only”.

2 IFQ Cost Recovery - End of Year Process

NMFS has two announcements and requests for assistance with the 2021 Halibut and Sablefish IFQ annual process.

First, IFQ fishing will end later this year than in past years. Due to the late end of the IFQ fishing season, the halibut and sablefish Cost Recovery annual process will be affected. NMFS will strive to minimize impacts on the timing of issuing individual invoices to IFQ permit holders, but permit holders should not expect invoices earlier than December 31, 2021.

¹ Prepared by: Alicia M Miller, NMFS Sustainable Fisheries Division

Numerous steps in the annual process will need to be completed prior to the issuance of individual bills. Staff will be working hard to make sure the following tasks are completed between December 7 (end of the IFQ season) and December 31, 2021:

- Total fishery volumes and values are accurate and complete;
- IFQ fee percentage is accurately calculated;
- *Federal Register* notice announcing the IFQ cost recovery fee percentage and standard prices is published;
- Individual IFQ cost recovery fee invoices are accurately calculated; and
- Invoices are mailed.

Since all of this work must be accomplished during the 17 business days after December 7 and before the new year, **NMFS requests that individuals contacting the staff during this time practice patience during this holiday season. Your assistance with this is much appreciated.**

Second, NMFS reminds shoreside processors that receive and purchase halibut and/or sablefish from an IFQ or CDQ halibut permit holder between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2021 to submit the IFQ Registered Buyer Ex-vessel Value and Volume Report. For the past several years, there have been substantial delays and non-compliance with this reporting deadline and this substantially impacts staff workload and delays the calculation of standard prices. **NMFS requests on time submission of this report, no later than October 15, 2021.**

Please note that the information reported in this form is for the previous fiscal year and does not align with the calendar year or the current fishing year. For these reasons, this report is REQUIRED to be submitted prior to the end of the fishing season. Timely compliance with this reporting deadline will assist staff in completing the annual process in a timely manner after the fishing season ends.

Instructions to submit Registered Buyer Value and Volume report:

You can submit the IFQ Registered Buyer Ex-vessel Value and Volume Report by:

Online through eFish: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/webapps/efish/login>

Paper form submitted to:

Mail: Restricted Access Management
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Fax: (907) 586-7354

The downloadable form is available on this webpage:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/alaska-ifq-halibut-sablefish-and-cdq-halibut-program-fishery-applications-and-reporting>

For questions regarding the IFQ Registered Buyer Ex-vessel Value and Volume Report, please contact Restricted Access Management (RAM) at 1-800-304-4846 (select option #2) or send an email to RAM.alaska@noaa.gov.

3 Rulemaking update to remove GOA sablefish IFQ pot gear tags and notary requirements

In June 2021, the Council received a draft RIR under agenda item B-2. NMFS AKR submitted a draft proposed rule package to NMFS headquarters on September 17, 2021 and hopes to publish the proposed rule in the *Federal Register* shortly thereafter. NMFS intends a final rule to remove pot gear tags and notary certification requirements to be effective prior to the start of the 2022 halibut and sablefish IFQ fishing season.

4 Staffing Highlights

4.1 Restricted Access Management

Brian L. Brown is the new Restricted Access Management (RAM) Supervisory Program Analyst. Brian has previous work experience at the Alaska Region with RAM, as the eLandings Coordinator, and with the Information Services Division. He looks forward to continuing RAM program improvements, facilitating new technologies and processes, and working with stakeholders.

Suja Hall has moved into a Project Manager/Business Analyst role on the Integrated Fisheries Application (IFA) project. The IFA will utilize digital technologies to improve upon existing RAM business processes, permitting workflows, and customer experiences so that it meets expanding regulatory changes, creates organizational efficiencies, and effectively supports Alaska's fisheries management throughout their seasonal lifecycles. The IFA requirements team is already working with internal stakeholders such as Sustainable Fisheries, In-season Management, the regional Fee Coordinator, and NOAA Law Enforcement so that we can gather their business needs for the new system. The IFA team will also be reaching out to fishing industry stakeholders so that we can gather feedback on how to improve the user interface for the public facing permit portal. This will enable NMFS to provide necessary tools for permit holders to easily access and manage their accounts.

Samantha (Sam) Irsik joined RAM as a Permit Assistant in August 2021. Sam graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and subsequently served in the Navy until 2019. She has also worked as both an Office Assistant and Natural Resource Assistant with the State of Alaska. Sam is a great addition to RAM, and we're happy to have her on the team.

4.2 Sustainable Fisheries

Mason Smith joined the Catch Shares Branch led by Alicia M. Miller. Mason has worked for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission since 2011 after completing his M.S. in Biology at the University of North Florida. Mason brings a diverse set of skills and knowledge of marine and freshwater fisheries management. Mason's most recent work focused on coordinating the development of an agency habitat management plan for Lake Okeechobee. Mason is also completing his Ph.D. in geosciences at Florida Atlantic University.