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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**50 CFR Part 648**

**[Docket No. 140117052-4402-02]**

**RIN 0648-XE321**

**Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Bluefish Fishery; Quota Transfer**

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

**ACTION:** Temporary rule; quota transfer.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces that the State of North Carolina is transferring a portion of its 2015 commercial Atlantic bluefish quota to the State of New York. These quota adjustments are necessary to comply with the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan quota transfer provision. This announcement is intended to inform the public of the revised commercial quota for each state involved.

**DATES:** Effective [*Insert date of filing for public inspection at the Office of the Federal Register*], through December 31, 2015.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Reid Lichwell, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9112.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Regulations governing the bluefish fishery are found at 50 CFR part 648. The regulations require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned among the coastal states from

Florida through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state are described in § 648.162.

The final rule implementing Amendment 1 to the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan, which was published in the **Federal Register** on July 26, 2000 (65 FR 45844), provided a mechanism for bluefish quota to be transferred from one state to another. Two or more states, under mutual agreement and with the concurrence of the Administrator, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), can transfer or combine bluefish commercial quota under § 648.162(e). The Regional Administrator is required to consider the criteria in § 648.162(e)(1) in the evaluation of requests for quota transfers or combinations.

North Carolina has agreed to transfer 250,000 lb (113,398 kg) of its 2015 commercial quota to New York. This transfer was prompted by state officials in New York to address an overage of its commercial bluefish quota and to provide sufficient quota to allow the fishery to remain open. The Regional Administrator has determined that the criteria set forth in § 648.162(e)(1) have been met. The revised bluefish quotas for calendar year 2015 are: North Carolina, 1,139,371 lb (512,727 kg); and New York, 1,094,304 lb (496,367 kg).

### **Classification**

This action is taken under 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: November 25, 2015

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Emily H. Menashes,  
Acting Director,  
Office of Sustainable Fisheries,  
National Marine Fisheries Service.

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