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PUBLIC NOTICE

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PACIFIC COAST GROUND FISH FISHERY

Trawl Rationalization Program: **Shorebased IFQ Program – Release of Additional Whiting QP**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces the release of additional Pacific whiting quota pounds (QP) to quota share (QS) permits/accounts, based on the equally allocated history of buyback permits.

On January 1, 2013, NMFS issued QP based on the interim Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program allocations as reduced by the amount of QP for whiting trips for whiting and for species caught incidentally in the whiting fishery, as described in the August 1, 2012 Emergency Rule ([77 FR 45508](http://www.federalregister.gov/?date=2012-08-01)) and in subsequent public notices ([NMFS-SEA-12-12](http://www.federalregister.gov/?date=2012-08-01), published 8/1/2012, [NMFS-SEA-12-18](http://www.federalregister.gov/?date=2012-12-13), published 12/13/2012 and [NMFS-SEA-12-19](http://www.federalregister.gov/?date=2012-12-31), published 12/31/2012).

The reduced QP amounts were derived from the non-whiting portion of each QS owner's QS percentages. For example, if a QS owner held 5.000% of whiting on their QS permit and 4.999% was derived from limited entry permit history from whiting directed trips, and 0.001% was derived from limited entry permit history from non-whiting directed trips, NMFS issued the initial allocation on the 0.001% non-whiting portion in accordance with the emergency rule ([77 FR 45508](http://www.federalregister.gov/?date=2012-08-01), August 1, 2012). Because the interim sector allocation is 15,999,373 pounds, this example QS permit/account would have been issued 159 pounds ($15,999,373 \times 0.001\%$) on January 1.

NMFS received numerous calls concerned about the low whiting issuance on January 1, including many comments that non-whiting fishing trips would be prevented if more whiting QPs were not distributed to QS permit owners. NMFS has further reviewed the regulations and has determined that the regulations would also allow NMFS to release additional whiting QP based on the equally allocated history of buyback permits (See Figure 2-1 in this notice, box 2.2.1 is the part of the calculation being released). The regulations and the existing allocation formula treat the equally allocated buyback history as distinct from the QS issued based on the limited entry permit history that qualified for an initial allocation. Therefore, this approach is still consistent with the regulatory requirement to reduce the amount of QP issued in the beginning of the year for whiting trips. This approach also still preserves NMFS' ability to respond to any changes in the QS allocations that might result from the resolution of *Pacific Dawn v. Bryson*. See [78 FR 72](http://www.federalregister.gov/?date=2013-01-02) (January 2, 2013).

By releasing additional whiting QP based on the equally allocated history of buyback permits, the total whiting QP available to the sector at this time is 915,596 pounds. After reviewing the fishery data in 2012, this interim allocation should be sufficient to cover most fishermen's needs. During the period January 1 to March 30, 2012, total harvests (landings plus discards) were 85,296 pounds.

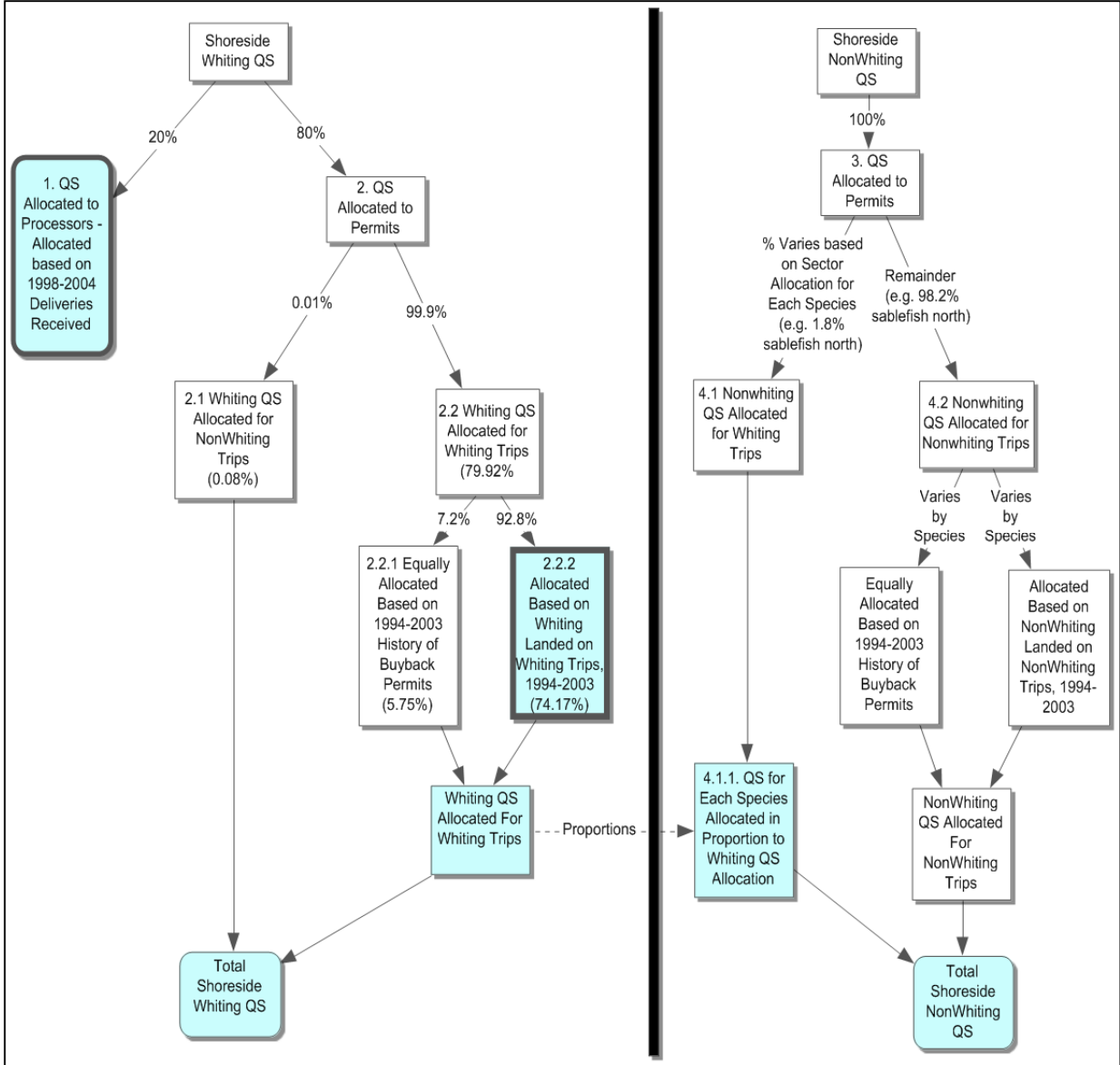


Figure 2-1 from the [Reconsideration of Initial Catch Share Allocations in the Mothership and Shoreside Pacific Whiting Fisheries Draft Environmental Assessment and Magnuson-Stevens Act Analysis](#) (p.28). This figure shows steps in the QS allocation calculations for shoreside whiting QS and nonwhiting QS. Heavy boundary boxes indicate the steps in the calculations directly affected by a change in the allocation period, shaded boxes indicate the steps for which calculation results would be affected, and rounded boxes are the final steps in the allocation calculations.