2. Section 117.167 is revised to read as follows:

§117.167 Little Potato Slough.

The draw of the California Department of Transportation highway bridge, mile 0.1 at Terminous, shall open on signal if at least four hours notice is given to the drawtender at the Rio Vista bridge across the Sacramento River, mile 12.8.

Dated: January 20, 1995.

D.D. Polk,

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, Eleventh Coast Guard District, Acting. [FR Doc. 95–3430 Filed 2–9–95; 8:45 am] BILLING CODE 4910–14–M

33 CFR Part 117

[CGD05-94-116]

RIN 2115-AE47

Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Wicomico River, Salisbury, MD

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT. ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: At the request of the State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation, the Coast Guard is proposing to change the regulations that govern the operation of the Main Street and the US 50 drawbridges across the North Prong of the Wicomico River, mile 22.4, in Salisbury, Maryland. This proposal would extend the current rush hour restrictions by one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon, and require a three hour advance notice for commercial vessels needing a bridge opening during the hours of closure due to emergency situations. The existing 12 noon to 1 p.m. closure period would remain unaffected by this proposed change.

These changes to the drawbridge regulations are intended to reduce motor vehicle delays and congestion, while still providing for the reasonable needs of navigation.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before May 11, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be mailed to Commander (ob), Fifth Coast Guard District, 431 Crawford Street, Portsmouth, Virginia 23704–5004, or may be delivered to Room 109 at the same address between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The telephone number is (804) 398–6222. Comments will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection at Room 109, Fifth Coast Guard District.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ann B. Deaton, Bridge Administrator, Fifth Coast Guard District, at (804) 398– 6222.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Request for Comments

The Coast Guard encourages interested persons to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written data, views, or arguments. Persons submitting comments should include their names and addresses, identify this rulemaking (CGD05-94-116) and the specific section of this proposal to which each comment applies, and give the reason for each comment. The Coast Guard requests that all comments and attachments be submitted in an unbound format suitable for copying and electronic filing. If not practical, a second copy of any bound material is requested. Persons wanting acknowledgment of receipt of comments should enclose a stamped, selfaddressed postcard or envelope.

The Coast Guard will consider all comments received during the comment period. It may change this proposal in view of the comments.

The Coast Guard plans no public hearing. Persons may request a public hearing by writing to the Commander (ob) at the address under ADDRESSES. The request should include reasons why a hearing would be beneficial. If it determines that the opportunity for oral presentations will aid this rulemaking, the Coast Guard will hold a public hearing at a time and place announced by a later notice in the **Federal Register**.

Drafting Information

The principal persons involved in drafting this document are Linda L. Gilliam, Project Manager, Bridge Section, and LCDR C.A. Abel, Project Counsel, Fifth Coast Guard District Legal Office.

Background and Purpose

The State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), has requested that openings of the Main Street and US 50 drawbridges across the North Prong of the Wicomico River, mile 22.4, at Salisbury, Maryland, be further restricted during the morning and evening rush hours. This would help to reduce highway traffic congestion problems and relieve public safety and welfare concerns associated with frequent bridge openings caused by commercial boat traffic. Currently, these drawbridges open on signal except from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m., 12 noon to 1 p.m., and 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. during which time both remain closed to navigation. MDOT's request is to change the hours of bridge closures to 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. in

the morning and to 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the afternoon. The existing 12 noon to 1 p.m. closure would remain the same.

A review of the bridge logs provided by MDOT revealed that the bridge openings during 1992–1993 from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. in the morning and from 4– 4:30 p.m. to 5:30–6 p.m. in the evening were caused by tugs and tugs with tows. These openings are frequent enough to cause highway traffic to back up on each side of the bridge resulting in congestion and delays.

This request is based on an analysis MDOT conducted on highway traffic and marine traffic data, along with a waterway user and property owner survey that was conducted in 1993. Adjacent property owners had no objection to the extended morning and evening rush hours. According to **DELMARVA Water Transport** Committee, Inc., only two commercial businesses are located upstream of the bridge and one of these businesses has expressed concern over extending the periods of closure for these bridges. Based on this concern, DELMARVA has requested that the Coast Guard include in the proposed rule a three hour advance notice requirement for commercial vessels needing passage through the bridge during the hours of restriction. This advance notice requirement would only apply to tugs and barges unable to reach the bridges except during the hours of closure due to severe inclement weather or other emergency or unforeseen circumstances.

DELMARVA also contacted MDOT with this request and MDOT agreed that this provision should be added to the proposed rule, provided commercial vessels adhere to the "emergency only" requirement when taking advantage of the three hour advance notice exception. Based on DELMARVA's request and MDOT's approval of this request, the proposed rule will include a provision requiring commercial vessels to provide a three hour advance notice for a bridge opening during the hours of closure only if their transit is delayed by inclement weather or other emergency or unforeseen circumstances. Other than this, commercial vessels will be required to transit through these bridges during the open-on-demand hours.

The Administrative Director of Wicomico County, Maryland notified the Coast Guard that the county supports MDOT's request because of the increase in highway traffic crossing these bridges as a result of substantial residential growth. The Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce also supports these changes to the operating schedule