for the no-action decision. First, further action to control the source of contamination (installation of a landfill cover, clay liner, leachate collection system, etc.) and to address contaminated ground water would be conducted under the facility's operating permit, such that no further action under CERCLA would be necessary. Second, completion of Operable Unit 1, under which residents in the area were connected to a municipal water supply, reduced the risk posed by contaminated ground water.

U.S. EPA is now proposing to delete PBSL from the NPL for one of the same reasons that it signed a no-action ROD in 1995: work that might otherwise be required under CERCLA will be accomplished under the facility's RCRA permit. The Site is an active Treatment, Storage, and Disposal facility, owned and operated by Browning Ferris Industries (''BFI''). BFI clearly has the resources to conduct the work required. In accordance with the operating permit issued by MPCA, BFI placed a final cover on portions of the landfill that are filled to final elevation, installed a combustible gas collection system, installed a clay liner and leachate collection system in an expansion area, and installed a surface drainage control system. Under the terms of an Amended Order issued by MPCA on October 23, 1990, BFI will monitor ground water in accordance with the Minnesota Solid Waste Landfill Compliance Program.

A five-year review pursuant to OSWER Directive 9355.7–02 ''Structure and Components of Five-Year Reviews'') will be conducted at the Site. The Five-Year review is scheduled for December 1999.

EPA, with concurrence from the State of Minnesota, has determined that all appropriate Fund-financed responses under CERCLA at the Pine Bend Sanitary Site have been completed, and no further CERCLA response actions by responsible parties are appropriate in order to provide protection of human health and environment. Therefore, EPA proposes to delete the Site from the NPL.

Dated: April 7, 1998.

Michelle D. Jordan,

Acting Regional Administrator, U.S. EPA, Region V.

[FR Doc. 98–10978 Filed 4–27–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

47 CFR Part 54

[DA 98–715]

Common Carrier Bureau Seeks Comment on Proposals To Revise the Methodology for Determining Universal Service Support

AGENCY: Federal Communications Commission.

ACTION: Notice; seeking comment on proposals in rulemaking proceeding.

SUMMARY: In this Public Notice, the Common Carrier Bureau (Bureau) describes certain proposals by outside parties to alter the methodology for determining high cost universal service support based on forward-looking economic costs. Some parties have filed petitions for reconsideration or judicial appeals of the methodology announced in the May 8, 1997 *Universal Service Order* and the Commission has committed to complete the reconsideration of its methodology before it is implemented for non-rural carriers. This Public Notice seeks additional proposals to modify the methodology, as well as comment on the existing proposals.

DATES: Comment date for filing additional proposals is April 27, 1998, comments are due May 15, 1998, and reply comments are due May 29, 1998.

ADDRESSES: One original and five copies of all filings must be sent to Magalie Roman Salas, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222, Washington, D.C. 20554. Parties must also send copies to the individuals listed on the attached Service List and to the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Service, Inc., 1231 20th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chuck Keller at (202) 418–7380 or <ckeller@fcc.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the *Universal Service Order*, Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service, *Report & Order*, CC Docket No. 96–45, 12 FCC Rcd 8776 (1997), 62 FR 32862 (June 17, 1997), as corrected by Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service, CC Docket 96–45, *Errata*, FCC 97–157 (released June 4, 1997), *appeal pending*, Texas Office of Public Utility Counsel v. FCC, No. 97–60421 (5th Cir. filed June 25, 1997), the Commission adopted a four-step methodology for determining the appropriate level of federal universal service support that non-rural carriers will receive beginning January 1, 1999. As part of that methodology, the Commission determined that the federal fund will provide at least 25 percent of the total support necessary for non-rural carriers (25/75 decision). The Commission also concluded that rural carriers will receive support based on forward-looking costs no sooner than January 1, 2001. Several parties have set forth proposals to modify the Commission's approach to determining support for non-rural and rural carriers. Some of these proposals were presented in the Commission's proceeding to prepare a Report to Congress on Universal Service, required by statute, Departments of Congress, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1988, Pub. L. 105–119, 111 Stat. 2440, 2521–2522, § 623. Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, *Report to Congress*, CC Docket No. 96–45, FCC 98–67, (released April 10, 1998) (Report to Congress), and, in particular, in the *en banc* hearing on universal service issues held on March 6, 1998. In this Public Notice, we seek to augment the record by encouraging interested parties to submit additional proposals for modifying the Commission's methodology, or updates to those on the record, by April 27, 1998. Comments from interested parties on these proposals are due on May 15, 1998, and reply comments are due on May 29, 1998. In the *Report to Congress*, the Commission states that, prior to implementing the Commission's methodology for determining high cost support for non-rural carriers, the Commission will complete a reconsideration of its 25/75 decision and of the method of distributing high cost support. *Report to Congress* at para. 224. The Commission also states that it will continue to work closely on these issues with the state members of the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service (Joint Board), including holding an *en banc* hearing with participation by the Joint Board Commissioners. *See Report to Congress* at paras. 224, 228, 231.

Background

In the *Universal Service Order* and the accompanying *Access Charge Reform Order*, Access Charge Reform, Price Cap Performance Review for Local Exchange Carriers, Transport Rate Structure and Pricing and End User Common Line Charges, CC Docket Nos. 96–262, 94–1, 91–213, and 95–72, *First Report and Order*, 62 FR 31868 (June 11, 1997), 12 FCC Rcd 15982 (1997) (*Access Charge Reform Order*); *Order on Reconsideration*, 62 FR 40460 (July 29,

1997), 12 FCC Rcd 10119 (1997); *Second Order on Reconsideration*, 62 FR 56121 (October 29, 1997), 12 FCC Rcd 16606 (1997); *Third Order on Reconsideration*, 62 FR 65619 (December 15, 1997), 12 FCC Rcd 22430 (1997); *See also Fourth Report and Order* and *Second Report and Order*, CC Docket Nos. 94–1, 96–262, 62 FR 59340 (June 11, 1997), 12 FCC Rcd 16642 (1997), the Commission set in place rules that will identify and convert existing mechanisms for providing federal universal service support to explicit, competitively-neutral federal universal service support mechanisms. In particular, the Commission adopted a methodology for universal service support for rural and non-rural carriers that will replace the following existing programs: the interstate high cost fund, Long Term Support, and Dial-Equipment-Minute (DEM) weighting programs. *Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 8889, para. 204. The Commission determined that non-rural carriers serving rural, insular, and high cost areas (collectively referred to as ''high cost areas'') would begin to receive support based on forward-looking economic cost beginning January 1, 1999, while rural carriers serving high cost areas would move to a forward-looking methodology no sooner than January 1, 2001. In the meantime, rural carriers will continue to receive support based on their embedded cost. As encouraged by the Commission in the *Universal Service Order*, the Joint Board has sought nominations for a Rural Task Force that will study the establishment of a forward-looking economic cost mechanism for rural carriers. Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, *Public Notice*, FCC 97J–1 (released September 17, 1997). The Commission also determined that it would assess and permit recovery of contributions to high cost support mechanisms based only on interstate revenues because such an approach would continue the historical method for recovering universal service support contributions and promote comity between the federal and state governments. *Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 9198–9203, paras. 824–836. Thus, the Commission concluded that carriers may recover their contributions through interstate access and interexchange revenues. *Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 9199–9200, paras. 829–830. (Price cap LECs may treat their contributions as exogenous changes to their price cap indices. *Access Charge Reform Order*, FCC Rcd at 16147, para. 379.) Finally, the Commission directed that incumbent LECs use high cost support to reduce or satisfy the interstate revenue requirement otherwise collected through interstate access charges. *Access Charge Reform Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 16148, para. 381. That decision was based on the decision in the *Universal Service Order* to fund only the federal share, or 25 percent, of high cost support from the federal mechanism, discussed below.

In the first step of the Commission's four-step methodology for determining support for non-rural carriers, a forward-looking economic cost mechanism selected by the Commission, in consultation with the Joint Board, will be used to calculate the forward-looking economic cost to non-rural carriers for providing the supported services in high cost areas. (Alternatively, states may submit cost studies that, if consistent with the criteria established by the Commission in the *Universal Service Order*, will be used to compute the forward-looking cost. The Commission will select a forward-looking mechanism by August 1998. *Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 8890, 8910, 8912–16, paras. 206, 245, 248–50.) Second, the Commission will establish nationwide revenue benchmarks calculated on the basis of average revenue per line. Without adopting a precise method for calculating the benchmarks, the Commission stated in the *Universal Service Order* that it appears that the benchmarks should be approximately $31 for residential services and approximately $51 for single-line businesses. *Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 8924, para. 267. The Commission intends to make a formal determination on the appropriate revenue benchmark before it implements a high cost support mechanism based on forward-looking costs. Third, the difference between the forward-looking economic cost and the benchmark will be calculated. Fourth, federal support will be 25 percent of that difference, corresponding to the percentage of loop costs allocated to the interstate jurisdiction. In the *Universal Service Order*, the Commission stated that, once states have taken steps to identify the subsidies implicit in intrastate rates, the Commission may reassess the amount of federal support that is necessary to ensure affordable rates. A number of parties have sought reconsideration of the Commission's decision to initially fund only 25 percent of total high cost support. See, *e.g.*, the petitions filed on July 17, 1997 in CC Docket No. 96–45 by the following parties: Alaska Public Utilities Commission at 5–6; Alaska Telephone Association at 1–2; Arkansas Public Service Commission at 1–3; GVNW Inc. at 2, 8; Rural Telephone Coalition at 3–4; Sprint Corporation at 1–3; United Utilities at 3–4; US WEST at 6; Vermont Public Service Board at 2–3; Western Alliance at 18–19; and Wyoming Public Service Commission at 2. Several parties have also appealed that decision. *Texas Office of Public Utility Counsel et al.* v. *FCC*, No. 97–60421 (5th Cir. filed June 25, 1997). Since the period for filing comments on those reconsideration petitions closed, several parties have proposed specific alternatives to the Commission's 25/75 funding decision. All of the proposals described in this Public Notice will be available on the Commission's web page at http://www.fcc.gov under the heading ''Universal Service.'' The proposals that calculate forward-looking cost use a forward-looking economic cost model. For demonstration purposes, fund estimates are based on two industry-proposed models under consideration by the Commission, the Benchmark Cost Proxy Model (BCPM) and the HAI model (HAI), however the versions of the models and the inputs used may vary across proposals. BCPM was submitted by BellSouth Corporation, BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc., U S WEST, Inc., and Sprint Local Telephone Company. Submission to CC Docket Nos. 96–45 and 97–160 by BCPM proponents, dated December 11, 1997. HAI was submitted by AT&T and MCI. Letter from Richard N. Clarke, AT&T, to Magalie Roman Salas, FCC, dated December 11, 1997. Versions of HAI filed before February 3, 1998, were known as the Hatfield Model.

Proposals to Modify the Commission's Methodology. Upon recommendation by the Joint Board, the Commission adopted a nationwide revenue benchmark based on average revenues per line. Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, CC Docket No. 96–45, *Recommended Decision*, 12 FCC Rcd 246 (1996); *Universal Service Order*, 12 FCC Rcd at 8919, para. 259. Subsequent to the Joint Board's recommendation, a majority of state members of that Joint Board endorsed a nationwide benchmark based on the nationwide average cost of service, as determined by a forward-looking cost model. In light of the recommendation of the Joint Board's majority state members and the proposals described in this Public Notice, we seek additional comment regarding the use of a cost-based benchmark.

U S WEST proposes to modify the second step of the Commission's forward-looking methodology for non-rural carriers by creating a second

revenue benchmark (Interstate High Cost Affordability Plan or IHCAP). Exhibit of James D. Smiley, U S WEST, for FCC En Banc Hearing, Universal Service (March 6, 1998) (IHCAP Proposal). U S WEST does not specify different benchmark levels for different types of lines, e.g., residential, single-line business, or multi-line business lines. Under the IHCAP, the federal mechanism would provide support for 25 percent of the costs between a ''Primary Benchmark'' and a ''Super Benchmark,'' and 100 percent of the costs above the Super Benchmark. For demonstration purposes, the IHCAP assumes a Primary Benchmark of $30 and a Super Benchmark of $50.

An Ad Hoc Working Group convened through the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners proposes an alternative approach for determining and distributing high cost support for both rural and non-rural carriers (Ad Hoc Proposal). Letter from Peter Bluhm, Vermont Public Service Board, to Magalie Roman Salas, FCC, dated April 10, 1998, at att. High Cost Support: An Alternative Distribution Proposal (Ad Hoc Proposal); see also Statement of Thomas Welch, Maine Public Utilities Commission, at March 6, 1998 en banc Commission meeting, transcript at 24–25. In lieu of the forward-looking cost methodology established by the Commission, a draft of the Ad Hoc Proposal filed with the Commission on April 10, 1998 calculates federal support for each state in five steps. First, the Ad Hoc Proposal uses a forward-looking economic cost model selected by the Commission to calculate the average forward-looking cost per line for each state, as well as the average forward-looking cost per line for the nation. The difference between these amounts is calculated for each state and multiplied by a composite state separations factor which the proposal assumes to be 75 percent. Second, the above process is repeated using embedded cost. Specifically, the difference between each state's average embedded cost and 105 percent of the national average embedded cost is calculated for each state and multiplied by a composite state separations factor. Third, the lesser amount resulting from the first two steps is determined. Fourth, a ''hold-harmless'' level is calculated for each state equal to federal support received by carriers in that state under existing mechanisms. For those states with above-average embedded costs that also currently make a net contribution to federal support mechanisms, the hold-harmless level is increased to ensure that a state's net contribution does not increase. Finally, the federal support for each state is set at either the hold-harmless amount or the amount determined in step 3, whichever is greater. Federal support below the hold-harmless level is distributed by state commissions to carriers that receive support under the current system. Federal support above the hold-harmless level is distributed to other eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) according to a state distribution plan reviewed by the Commission. The Ad Hoc Working Group and the Telecommunications Industry Analysis Project (TIAP) also examine possible modifications to the Ad Hoc Proposal.

TIAP proposes four alternatives to the federal forward-looking methodology. One proposal increases federal support to 40 percent of the difference between forward-looking cost and the revenue benchmark (40/60 Proposal). In another proposal, the federal fund supports 100 percent of the difference between the forward-looking economic cost and the benchmark only in one or two of the lowest density zones served by non-rural carriers (Density Zone Proposal). Assuming a $30 benchmark, TIAP estimates that federal support for the lowest density zone calculated by the models (0 to 5 lines per square mile) would result in a fund of $3,965 million, based on BCPM, or $2,410 million, based on HAI. TIAP states that federal support for the two lowest density zones (0 to 5 lines per square mile and 5 to 1000 lines per square mile) ''would increase the federal fund by 312% for BCPM and 277% for HAI.'' TIAP Proposals at 24. A third proposal applies one nationwide surcharge to each telephone number per month (Telephone Number Proposal). Based on the assumption that the federal fund will provide 100 percent of the necessary support, the surcharge is calculated by dividing the fund by the number of phone numbers in service, and by twelve months. A fourth proposal applies one nationwide surcharge to each customer's bill based on a percentage of the total (interstate and intrastate) revenues on the bill (Percentage of Retail Revenues Proposal). Based on the assumption that the federal fund will provide 100 percent of the necessary support, the surcharge is calculated by dividing the fund by total annual retail revenues.

We seek comment on the use of a cost-based benchmark and the proposals of U S WEST, the Ad Hoc Working Group, and TIAP. In addition, we seek comment on how to modify our rules in the event such a proposal were adopted. We also seek comment on the appropriate method and revenues to recover contributions for high cost support.

Implementation of High Cost Support Methodology. In the *Universal Service Order,* the Commission established a forward-looking economic cost methodology for non-rural carriers that will calculate support based on forward-looking cost beginning January 1, 1999. AT&T seeks to delay implementation of the high cost support mechanism for ''the Major ILECs * * * at the very least until these companies have opened their markets to robust and widespread local competition.'' Letter from Brian Masterson, AT&T, to Magalie Roman Salas, FCC, dated March 12, 1998, at att. Presentation of Joel Lubin, AT&T, to March 6, 1998 en banc Commission meeting. In contrast, proponents of the Ad Hoc Proposal support the implementation of their proposal for both rural and non-rural carriers on January 1, 1999. Ad Hoc Proposal at 13. U S WEST recommends that non-rural carriers begin receiving support based on the IHCAP on January 1, 1999, and that a forward-looking methodology that will best meet the needs of rural carriers should be determined after several years of experience of calculating support based on IHCAP for the non-rural carriers. IHCAP Proposal at 4. *See also* letter to William E. Kennard, FCC, from Solomon D. Trujillo, U S WEST, dated April 2, 1998. We seek comment on these implementation proposals. With regard to AT&T's petition, we seek comment on the specific criteria that should trigger implementation of the forward-looking methodology for non-rural carriers.

Finally, in its *Report to Congress,* the Commission commits to completing a reconsideration of the issues raised in this Public Notice prior to implementing the new high cost mechanism for non-rural carriers. *Report to Congress* at para. 224. The Commission specifies that, in the course of reconsidering these issues, it will work closely with the state members of the Joint Board. The Commission attests that, in the past two years in particular, the ideas generated by the formal and informal dialogue among state members of the Joint Board and the FCC Commissioners have facilitated the shared objectives of preserving and advancing universal service as competition develops in local markets.

Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

In the *Universal Service Order* we conducted a Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (FRFA), Universal Service Order, 12 FCC Rcd at 9219–9260 paras. 870–983, as required by the Regulatory

Flexibility Act (RFA). *See* 5 U.S.C. 604. The RFA (*see* 5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) has been amended by the Contract With America Advancement Act of 1996, Pub. L. 104–121, 110 Stat. 847 (1996) (CWAAA). Title II of the CWAAA is the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (SBREFA). We received no petitions for reconsideration of that FRFA. In this present Public Notice, the Commission promulgates no additional final rules, and our action does not affect the previous analysis. If commenters believe that the proposals discussed in this Public Notice require additional RFA analysis, they should include a discussion of these issues in their comments.

Deadlines and Instructions for Filing Proposals and Comments. Interested parties may file additional proposals regarding the Commission's methodology for determining universal service support for rural and non-rural carriers on or before April 27, 1998. Interested parties may file comments in support of or opposition to the proposals on or before May 15, 1998. Reply comments are due on or before May 29, 1998. All filings should refer to CC Docket Nos. 96–45 and 97–160, and DA 98–715. One original and five copies of all filings must be sent to Magalie Roman Salas, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222, Washington, D.C. 20554. Parties must also send copies to the individuals listed on the attached Service List and to the Commission's copy contractor, International Transcription Service, Inc., 1231 20th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554.

List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 54

Universal service.

Federal Communications Commission.

James D. Schlichting,

Deputy Bureau Chief, Common Carrier Bureau.

Attachment

The Honorable Susan Ness, Chair, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 832, Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Harold Furchtgott-Roth, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 802, Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Gloria Tristani, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 826, Washington, DC 20554

The Honorable Julia Johnson, State Chair, Chairman, Florida Public Service Commission, 2540 Shumard Oak Blvd., Gerald Gunter Building Tallahassee, FL 32399–0850

The Honorable David Baker, Commissioner, Georgia Public Service Commission, 244 Washington Street, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30334–5701

The Honorable Laska Schoenfelder, Commissioner, South Dakota Public Utilities Commission, State Capitol, 500 East Capitol Street, Pierre, SD 57501–5070

The Honorable Patrick H. Wood, III, Chairman, Texas Public Utility Commission, 1701 North Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701

Martha S. Hogerty, Missouri Office of Public Council, 301 West High Street, Suite 250, Truman Building, Jefferson City, MO 65102

Charles Bolle, South Dakota Public Utilities Commission, State Capitol, 500 East Capitol Street, Pierre, SD 57501–5070

Deonne Bruning, Nebraska Public Service Commission, 300 The Atrium, 1200 N Street, P.O. Box 94927, Lincoln, NE 68509–4927

James Casserly, Federal Communications Commission, Commissioner Ness's Office, 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 832, Washington, DC 20554

Rowland Curry, Texas Public Utility Commission, 1701 North Congress Avenue, P.O. Box 13326, Austin, TX 78701

Ann Dean, Maryland Public Service Commission, 16th Floor, 6 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202–6806

Bridget Duff, State Staff Chair, Florida Public Service Commission, 2540 Shumard Oak Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32399–0866

Irene Flannery, Federal Staff Chair, Federal Communications Commission, Accounting and Audits Division, Universal Service Branch, 2100 M Street, N.W., Room 8922, Washington, DC 20554

Paul Gallant, Federal Communications Commission, Commissioner Tristani's Office 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 826, Washington, DC 20554

Lori Kenyon, Alaska Public Utilities Commission, 1016 West Sixth Avenue, Suite 400, Anchorage, AK 99501

Mark Long, Florida Public Service Commission, 2540 Shumard Oak Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32399–0866

Sandra Makeeff, Iowa Utilities Board, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319

Kevin Martin, Federal Communications Commission, Commissioner, Furchtgott-Roth's Office, 1919 M Street, N.W., Room 802, Washington, DC 20554

Philip F. McClelland, Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate, 1425 Strawberry Square, Harrisburg, PA 17120

Barry Payne, Indiana Office of the Consumer Counsel, 100 North Senate Avenue, Room N501, Indianapolis, IN 46204–2208

James Bradford Ramsey, National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., P.O. Box 684, Washington, DC 20044–0684

Brian Roberts, California Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

Tiane Sommer, Georgia Public Service Commission, 244 Washington Street, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30334–5701

Sheryl Todd (plus 8 copies), Federal Communications Commission, Accounting and Audits Division, Universal Service Branch, 2100 M Street, N.W., Room 8611, Washington, DC 20554

[FR Doc. 98–11200 Filed 4–27–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 980414096–8096–01; I.D. 032698A]

RIN 0648–AJ99

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Gear Allocation of Shortraker and Rougheye Rockfish in the Aleutian Islands Subarea

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes regulations to implement Amendment 53 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (FMP). Amendment 53 would allocate shortraker rockfish and rougheye rockfish (SR/RE) in the Aleutian Islands subarea (AI) between vessels using trawl gear and vessels using non-trawl gear. This action is necessary to prevent the incidental catch of SR/RE in trawl fisheries from closing non-trawl fisheries and is intended to further the objectives of the FMP.

DATES: Comments must be received at the following address by June 12, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent to Sue Salveson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802, Attn: Lori Gravel, or delivered to the Federal Building, 709 West 9th Street, Juneau, AK. Copies of the Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review prepared for this action may be obtained from the same address or by calling the Alaska Region, NMFS, at 907–586–7228.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alan Kinsolving, 907–586–7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Management Background and Need for Action

Fishing for groundfish by U.S. vessels in the exclusive economic zone of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI) is managed by NMFS according to the FMP. The FMP