

comprehensive Action Plan that builds on the * * * clean water successes over the past five years and addresses three major goals: enhanced protection from public health threats posed by water pollution; more effective control of polluted runoff; and promotion of water quality protection on a watershed basis." The Action Plan is informed by the following principles:

- Agencies will develop cooperative approaches that promote coordination and reduce duplication among Federal, State and local agencies and Tribal governments wherever possible.
- Agencies will ensure participation of community groups and the public to the maximum extent practicable. Such participation will include community and public access to information, to protect the public's right-to-know about water quality issues.
- Agencies will emphasize innovative approaches to pollution control, including, where appropriate, incentives, market-based mechanisms, and cooperative partnerships with landowners and other private parties.

On February 19, 1998, President Clinton announced the Clean Water Action Plan to restore and protect America's waters. NOAA and EPA view these administrative changes as supporting the goals of the President's Clean Water Action Plan to reduce polluted runoff in coastal areas. In particular, these changes respond to the following key action included in the Clean Water Action Plan.

NOAA and EPA will work with coastal states and territories to ensure that they have developed programs to reduce polluted runoff in coastal areas and that these programs are at least conditionally approved by June 1998 and that all programs are fully approved by December 1999, with appropriate state-enforceable policies and mechanisms.

The Final Administrative Changes provide guidance to the States on how NOAA and EPA intend to exercise their discretion in implementing the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program. As such, these Final Administrative Changes, as well as the previously issued guidance they modify, are not regulations.

(Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog 11.419 Coastal Zone Management Program Administration)

Dated: October 15, 1998.

Captain Evelyn J. Fields,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

J. Charles Fox,

Acting Assistant Administrator for Water, Environmental Protection Agency.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 101598C]

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Overfished Fisheries

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

ACTION: Notice of overfished fisheries.

SUMMARY: NMFS has identified overfished stocks or stocks that are approaching a condition of being overfished, as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA). The purpose of this notice is to notify the public that the Regional Fishery Management Councils (Councils) have been informed of those fisheries that are overfished, and directed to initiate action to end overfishing and rebuild stocks in overfished fisheries and to prevent overfishing in fisheries that are approaching an overfished condition.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George H. Darcy, NMFS, 301-713-2341.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

This action is required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) as amended by the SFA, which was signed into law on October 11, 1996. Section 304(e) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires that the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) report annually to the Congress and the Councils on the status of fisheries within each Council's geographical area of authority and identify those fisheries that are overfished or are approaching a condition of being overfished. For those fisheries managed under a Fishery Management Plan (FMP) or international agreement, the status is to be determined using the criteria for overfishing specified in such FMP or agreement. A fishery is classified as

approaching a condition of being overfished if, based on trends in fishing effort, fishery resource size, and other appropriate factors, the Secretary estimates that the fishery will become overfished within 2 years. Pursuant to section 304 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Councils were notified on October 9, 1998 of the species that were overfished or approaching an overfished condition by letter as follows:

Dear Council Chairman,

Enclosed is the 1998 Annual Report on the Status of Fisheries of the United States, prepared pursuant to section 304 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act on October 11, 1996. This report identifies 79 overfished stocks and 10 stocks that are approaching an overfished condition that are covered by fishery management plans (FMPs). This year's report identifies 8 additional species as "overfished." For each of the additional species identified as "overfished," each Council is required to develop measures by October 9, 1999 to end overfishing and rebuild stocks that are overfished, and to prevent overfishing from occurring for stocks that are approaching an overfished condition, for those species covered by FMPs under its management authority. There are also 11 stocks identified in this report as overfished that are not covered by an FMP. Each Council is also required to develop measures to end overfishing and rebuild those stocks within its geographical area of authority, in the same timeframe. Rebuilding programs must be as short as possible, but not exceed 10 years, except in cases where the biology of the stock of fish, other environmental conditions, or management measures under an international agreement in which the United States participates dictate otherwise.

The final national standard guidelines were published on May 1, 1998, and became effective on June 1, 1998. The revisions to the national standard 1 guidelines require that the overfishing definitions contained in each FMP be examined on the basis of their ability to ensure stock levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY) on a continuing basis.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Rolland A. Schmitt
Assistant Administrator
for Fisheries
Enclosure

A copy of the report is also available through the internet at <<<http://kingfish.ssp.nmfs.gov/SFA>>>.

Dated: October 15, 1998.

Gary C. Matlock,

Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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