The President has directed Federal agencies to use plain language in their communications with the public, including regulations. To comply with this directive, we seek public comment on any ambiguity or unnecessary complexity arising from the language used in this proposed rule. Such comments should be sent to the Northeast Regional Administrator (see **ADDRESSES**).

Dated: March 20, 2001.

William T. Hogarth

Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 01–7266 Filed 3–20–01; 2:05 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 010112013–1013–01; I.D. 031901E]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Species in the Rock sole/Flathead sole/''Other flatfish'' Fishery Category by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is closing directed fishing for species in the rock sole/flathead sole/''other flatfish'' fishery category by vessels using trawl gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the first seasonal apportionment of the 2001 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl rock sole/flathead sole/''other flatfish'' fishery category.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), March 20, 2001, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., April 1, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrew Smoker, 907–586–7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the BSAI exclusive economic zone according to the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (FMP) prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Regulations governing fishing by U.S. vessels in accordance with the FMP appear at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

The first seasonal apportionment of the 2001 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the BSAI trawl rock sole/flathead sole/''other flatfish'' fishery category, which is defined at § 679.21(e)(3)(iv)(B)(2), is 498 metric tons (66 FR 7276, January 22, 2001).

In accordance with § 679.21(e)(7)(v), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the first seasonal apportionment of the 2001 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl rock sole/flathead sole/''other flatfish'' fishery in the BSAI has been caught. Consequently, the Regional Administrator is closing directed fishing for species in the rock sole/flathead sole/''other flatfish'' fishery category by vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI.

Maximum retainable bycatch amounts may be found in the regulations at § 679.20(e) and (f).

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, finds that the need to immediately implement this action to avoid exceeding the halibut bycatch allowance for rock sole/flathead sole/''other flatfish'' fishery category constitutes good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(3)(B) and 50 CFR 679.20(b)(3)(iii)(A), as such procedures would be unnecessary and contrary to the public interest. Similarly, the need to implement these measures in a timely fashion to avoid exceeding the halibut bycatch allowance for rock sole/flathead sole/''other flatfish'' fishery category constitutes good cause to find that the effective date of this action cannot be delayed for 30 days. Accordingly, under 5 U.S.C. 553(d), a delay in the effective date is hereby waived.

This action is required by 50 CFR 679.21 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: March 19, 2001.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

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