

final harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (73 FR 10160, February 26, 2008).

In accordance with § 679.21(e)(3)(vi)(B) and § 679.21(e)(7)(v), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 2008 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl yellowfin sole fishery category by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the BSAI will be caught. Consequently, NMFS is closing directed fishing for yellowfin sole by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the BSAI.

After the effective date of this closure the maximum retainable amounts at § 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), finds good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) as such requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. This requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest as it would prevent NMFS from responding to the most recent fisheries data in a timely fashion and would delay the closure of directed fishing for yellowfin sole by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the BSAI. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of November 22, 2008.

The AA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effective date of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3). This finding is based upon the reasons provided above for waiver of prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

This action is required by § 679.21 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: November 21, 2008.

Alan D. Risenhoover

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 071106673-8011-02]

ID 112108A

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, and "Other Flatfish" by Vessels Participating in the Amendment 80 Limited Access Fishery in Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for rock sole, flathead sole, and "other flatfish" by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2008 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl rock sole, flathead sole, and "other flatfish" fishery category by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the BSAI.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), November 22, 2008, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Obren Davis, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the BSAI according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management 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 2008 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl rock sole, flathead sole, and "other flatfish" fishery category by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the BSAI is 224 metric tons as established by the 2008 and 2009 final harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (73 FR 10160, February 26, 2008). See

§ 679.21(e)(3)(vi)(A) and § 679.91(d)(1) and (3).

In accordance with § 679.21(e)(3)(vi)(B) and § 679.21(e)(7)(v), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 2008 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl rock sole, flathead sole, and "other flatfish" fishery category by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the BSAI will be caught. Consequently, NMFS is closing directed fishing for rock sole, flathead sole, and "other flatfish" by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the BSAI.

After the effective date of this closure the maximum retainable amounts at § 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

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This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), finds good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) as such requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. This requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest as it would prevent NMFS from responding to the most recent fisheries data in a timely fashion and would delay the closure of directed fishing for rock sole, flathead sole, and "other flatfish" by vessels participating in the Amendment 80 limited access fishery in the BSAI. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of November 22, 2008.

The AA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effective date of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3). This finding is based upon the reasons provided above for waiver of prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

This action is required by § 679.21 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: November 21, 2008.

Alan D. Risenhoover

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

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