

The regulations have been approved by NMFS (60 FR 14651, March 20, 1995, and amended at 61 FR 11337, March 20, 1996). On behalf of the IPHC, this inseason action is published in the Federal Register to provide additional notice of its effectiveness, and to inform persons subject to the inseason action of the restrictions and requirements established therein.

In Season Action

1996 Halibut Landing Report No. 2

First Oregon Sport Halibut Season to Close May 25

The preliminary catch estimate for the 1996 sport halibut fishery between Cape Falcon (45°46'00" N. lat.) and the Florence North Jetty (Siuslaw River, 44°01'08" N. lat.) indicates the 64,392 lb (29.20 metric tons (mt)) catch limit will be reached on May 25. Therefore, the sport halibut fishery in this area will close at 11:59 p.m. on May 25.

Sport fishing for Pacific halibut will reopen on May 26 and remain open through August 1, 7 days a week, only in the area inside the 30-fathom curve nearest to the coastline as plotted on National Ocean Service charts numbered 18520, 18580, and 18600 from Cape Falcon to the Florence North Jetty (Siuslaw River), or until 6,629 lb (3.0 mt) are estimated to have been taken and the season is closed by the IPHC, whichever occurs first. Any poundage remaining unharvested after the earlier season will be added to this season. The daily bag limit remains two halibut per person, one with a minimum overall size limit of 32 inches (81.28 centimeters (cm)) and the second with a minimum overall size limit of 50 inches (127.0 cm).

First Southwest Washington Coast Sport Halibut Fishery Season to Close May 26

The sport halibut fishery off the Southwest Washington coast (Queets River south to Leadbetter Point) will reach the sub-quota of 14,222 lb at the conclusion of fishing on Sunday, May 26. Therefore, the fishery will close at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, May 26.

In accordance with the pre-season catch sharing plan developed by the

Pacific Fishery Management Council, this fishery will immediately reopen on Monday, May 27, only in the near-shore area (south of the Queets River to 47°00'00" N. lat. and east of 124°40'00" W. long.), until the remaining quota of about 1,000 pounds is reached. The fishery will be open 7 days a week, with a one fish bag limit and no minimum size limit, until the remaining quota is harvested and the season is closed by the Commission or until September 30, whichever occurs first.

Dated: June 4, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-14589 Filed 6-11-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

50 CFR Part 675

[Docket No. 960129019-6019-01, I.D. 060696E]

Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area; Trawl Rock Sole/Flathead Sole/"Other Flatfish" Fishery Category

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is closing the directed fishery 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 second seasonal bycatch allowance of Pacific halibut apportioned to the trawl rock sole/flathead sole/"other flatfish" fishery category in the BSAI.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12 noon, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), June 8, 1996, until 12 noon, A.l.t., July 1, 1996.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The groundfish fishery in the BSAI exclusive economic zone is managed by NMFS

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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Fishing by U.S. vessels is governed by regulations implementing the FMP at 50 CFR parts 620 and 675.

The second seasonal bycatch allowance of Pacific halibut for the BSAI trawl rock sole/flathead sole/"other flatfish" fishery category, which is defined at § 675.21(b)(1)(iii)(B)(2), was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4311, February 5, 1996) as 139 metric tons (mt). This fishery was previously closed with the expectation that the second seasonal allocation had been taken (61 FR 16883, April 18, 1996), it was subsequently opened on June 3, 1996, when NMFS determined that 50 mt of halibut mortality remained in the allocation (61 FR 28071, June 4, 1996).

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with § 675.21(c)(1)(iii), that the second seasonal bycatch allowance of Pacific halibut apportioned to the trawl rock sole/flathead sole/"other flatfish" fishery in the BSAI has been caught. Therefore, NMFS is prohibiting 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 for applicable gear types may be found in the regulations at § 675.20(h).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 675.21 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: June 7, 1996.

Richard H. Schaefer,

Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-14925 Filed 6-7-96; 3:52 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F