§ 647.20 Closure.

Subpart B—Management Measures

§ 647.21 Specifically authorized activities.

The Secretary may authorize, for the acquisition of information and data, activities otherwise prohibited by these regulations.

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50 CFR Parts 611, 672 and 675

Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska and Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), NOAA, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of availability of amendments to fishery management plans and request for comments.

SUMMARY: NOAA issues this notice that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) has submitted Amendment 16 to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Area (BSAI FMP) and Amendment 21 to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA FMP) for Secretarial review and is requesting comments from the public. Copies of the amendments, the environmental assessment (EA), and the regulatory impact review/initial regulatory flexibility analysis (RIR/IRFA) may be obtained from the address below.

DATES: Comments on the plan amendments should be submitted on or before October 9, 1990.

ADDRESSES: All comments should be sent to Steven Pennoyer, Director, Alaska Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, P.O. Box 1668, Juneau, Alaska 99802.

Copies of the amendments and the EA and the RIR/IRFA are available upon request from the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, P.O. Box 103136, Anchorage, Alaska 99510.


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.) requires that each regional fishery management council submit any fishery management plan or plan amendment it prepares to the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) for review and approval or disapproval. The Magnuson Act also requires that the Secretary, upon reviewing the plan or amendment, must immediately publish a notice that the plan or amendment is available for public review and comment. The Secretary will consider the public comments received during the comment period in determining whether to approve Amendments 16 and 21. Amendment 16 will make the following changes to the BSAI FMP: (1) Extend and modify crab and halibut bycatch management measures, including the adoption of an incentive program to impose sanctions on vessels with excessively high bycatch rates; (2) amend the definition of overfishing; (3) establish a procedure to specify interim harvest levels until superseded by publication of final groundfish specifications in the Federal Register; and (4) permit legal fishing gear to be defined by regulatory amendment. Amendment 21 will make the following changes to the GOA FMP: (1) Amend the definition of overfishing; (2) establish a procedure to specify interim harvest levels until superseded by publication of final groundfish specifications in the Federal Register; (3) provide limited authority to the State of Alaska to manage the demersal shelf rockfish fishery with Council oversight; (4) permit legal fishing gear to be defined by regulatory amendment; and (5) clarify and expand the existing framework for managing halibut bycatch, including the adoption of an incentive program to impose sanctions on vessels with excessively high bycatch rates.

Regulations proposed by the Council and based on these amendments are scheduled to be published within 15 days.

List of Subjects

50 CFR Part 611

Fisheries, Foreign fishing.

50 CFR Parts 672 and 675

Fisheries, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

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

Dated: August 9, 1990.

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

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