is requesting comments from the public. Copies of the amendment may be obtained from the Council (see ADDRESSES). DATES: Comments on the FMP amendment should be submitted on or before January 11, 1993.

ADDRESS: Comments on the FMP amendment should be submitted to Ronald J. Berg, Chief, Fisheries Management Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, Alaska, 99802 (Attn: Lori Gravel) or delivered to the Federal Building Annex, suite 8, 9109 Mendenhall Mall Road, Juneau, Alaska.

Copies of the amendment and the environmental assessment/regulatory impact review/initial regulatory flexibility analysis prepared for the amendment are available from the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, P.O. Box 103136, Anchorage, Alaska 99510 (telephone 907-271-2809).


SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson Act) 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, disapproval, or partial 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 the plan or amendment.

Amendment 21 would (1) establish a procedure for setting and adjusting Pacific halibut bycatch mortality limits for trawl and non-trawl gear fisheries through a regulatory amendment process rather than an FMP amendment; (2) establish Pacific halibut bycatch limits in terms of halibut mortality rather than halibut bycatch; and (3) establish FMP authority to apportion annually the non-trawl halibut bycatch mortality limit among fisheries and seasons as bycatch allowances. This authority would be similar to existing FMP provisions for annual apportionments of prohibited species catch limits among trawl gear fisheries.

Halibut bycatch limits for trawl and non-trawl gear fisheries that were established for 1992 under Amendment 19 to the FMP (57 FR 43926, September 23, 1992) expire at the end of 1992. Unless regulations authorized under proposed Amendment 21 are implemented, no halibut bycatch restrictions will be in effect for BSAI non-trawl gear fisheries in 1993 and beyond, and the halibut bycatch limit for trawl gear fisheries will revert back to the 1991 level of 5,333 metric tons.

A proposed rule to establish halibut bycatch mortality limits for trawl and non-trawl gear fisheries during 1993 and beyond has been submitted for Secretarial review and approval, under the authority provided under proposed Amendment 21.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 675: Fisheries, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

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


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

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