

Copies of the Board's decision may be purchased from Da-2-Da Legal Copy Service by calling 202-293-7776

(assistance for the hearing impaired is available through FIRS at 1-800-877-8339) or visiting Suite 405, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006.

This action will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

Regulatory Flexibility Act Certification

In accordance with Board procedures adopted in *Implementation of the Regulatory Flexibility Act*, STB Administrative Matter No. 3, STB Issuance No. 52 (STB served Nov. 8, 2002), the Board certifies that the amended rule adopted in this case will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The amended delegations of authority relate primarily to rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice, and are designed simply to ensure continuity in carrying out necessary functions in the event of an emergency.

List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 1011

Administrative practice and procedure, Authority delegations (Government agencies), Organization and functions (Government agencies).

Decided: February 14, 2003.

By the Board, Chairman Nober, Vice Chairman Burkes, and Commissioner Morgan.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, the Surface Transportation Board amends part 1011 of title 49, chapter X, of the Code of Federal Regulations as follows:

PART 1011—BOARD ORGANIZATION; DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY

1. The authority citation for part 1011 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 553; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 49 U.S.C. 701, 721, 11123, 11124, 11144, 14122, and 15722.

2. Amend § 1011.4 by adding a new paragraph (a)(9) to read as follows:

§ 1011.4 Delegations to individual Board Members.

(a) * * *

(9) Authority to act alone to take necessary actions in emergency situations when the Chairman is the

only Board member reasonably available.

* * * * *

3. Amend § 1011.7 by adding a new paragraph (c)(5) to read as follows:

§ 1011.7 Delegations of authority by the Board to specific offices of the Board.

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(5) Issue orders by the Director in an emergency under 49 U.S.C. 11123 and 11124 if no Board Member is reasonably available.

[FR Doc. 03-4300 Filed 2-24-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 021212307-2307-01; I.D. 021903A]

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 interim 2003 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl rock sole/flathead sole/"other flatfish" fishery category in the BSAI.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), February 18, 2003, until superseded by the notice of Final 2003 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish for the BSAI, which will be published in the **Federal Register**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Furuness, 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 CFR part 679.

The interim 2003 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl rock sole/flathead sole/"other flatfish" fishery category in the BSAI is 195 metric tons as established by the interim 2003 harvest specifications for Groundfish of the BSAI (67 FR 78739, December 26, 2002).

In accordance with § 679.21(e)(7)(ii)(B), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the amount of the interim 2003 halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl rock sole/flathead sole/"other flatfish" fishery category in the BSAI will be caught. Consequently, NMFS is closing directed fishing for species in the rock sole/flathead sole/"other flatfish" fishery category by vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI.

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)(3)(B) as such requirement is contrary to the public interest. This requirement is contrary to the public interest as it would delay the closure of the fishery, lead to exceeding the interim 2003 halibut bycatch allowance, and therefore reduce the public's ability to use and enjoy the fishery resource.

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: February 19, 2003.

Richard W. Surdi,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 03-4330 Filed 2-19-03; 4:34 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S