

satisfies the reporting requirements of paragraph (c) of this section.

3. In § 635.20, paragraph (a) is revised to read as follows:

§ 635.20 Size limits.

(a) *General.* The CFL will be the sole criterion for determining the size and/or size class of whole (head on) Atlantic tunas. The LJFL will be the sole criterion for determining the size of an Atlantic swordfish possessed on board, or landed from, a vessel that has not been issued a limited access swordfish permit under § 635.4.

4. In § 635.21, paragraph (d)(4)(iv) is added to read as follows:

§ 635.21 Gear operation and deployment restrictions.

(d) * * *

(4) * * *

(iv) Except for persons aboard a vessel that has been issued a limited access swordfish permit under § 635.4, no person may fish for swordfish with, or possess a swordfish taken by, any gear other than handline or rod and reel.

5. In § 635.22, paragraphs (a), (c), and (d) are revised, and paragraphs (e) and (f) are added to read as follows:

§ 635.22 Recreational retention limits.

(a) *General.* Recreational retention limits apply to a longbill spearfish taken or possessed shoreward of the outer boundary of the Atlantic EEZ, to a shark taken from or possessed in the Atlantic EEZ, to a North Atlantic swordfish taken from or possessed in the Atlantic Ocean, and to bluefin and yellowfin tuna taken from or possessed in the Atlantic Ocean. The operator of a vessel for which a retention limit applies is responsible for the vessel retention limit and for the cumulative retention limit based on the number of persons aboard. Federal recreational retention limits may not be combined with any recreational retention limit applicable in state waters.

(c) *Sharks.* One shark from the large coastal, small coastal, or pelagic group may be retained per vessel per trip, subject to the size limits described in § 635.20(e), and, in addition, one Atlantic sharpnose shark may be retained per person per trip. Regardless of the length of a trip, no more than one Atlantic sharpnose shark per person may be possessed on board a vessel. No prohibited sharks listed in table 1(d) of appendix A to this part may be retained. The recreational retention limit for sharks applies to a person who fishes in any manner, except to a person aboard a vessel who has been issued a limited access vessel permit under § 635.4 for Atlantic sharks.

(d) *Yellowfin tuna.* Three yellowfin tunas per person per day may be retained. Regardless of the length of a trip, no more than three yellowfin tuna per person may be possessed on board a vessel. The recreational retention limit for yellowfin tuna applies to a person who fishes in any manner, except to a person aboard a vessel issued a vessel permit under § 635.4 for Atlantic tunas in a category other than Angling. The yellowfin tuna retention limit applies to all persons aboard a vessel issued an Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Charter/Headboat permit under § 635.4, including captain and crew.

(e) *Bluefin tuna.* Refer to § 635.23 for Atlantic bluefin tuna recreational retention limits.

(f) *North Atlantic swordfish.* One North Atlantic swordfish per vessel per day may be retained. Regardless of the length of a trip, no more than one North Atlantic swordfish may be possessed on board a vessel. The recreational retention limit for swordfish applies to a person who fishes in any manner, except to a person aboard a vessel that has been issued a limited access swordfish permit under § 635.4.

6. In § 635.30, paragraph (d) is revised to read as follows:

§ 635.30 Possession at sea and landing.

(d) *Swordfish.* Except for persons aboard a vessel that has been issued a limited access swordfish permit under § 635.4, any person who possesses an Atlantic swordfish on board a vessel or who lands an Atlantic swordfish in an Atlantic coastal port must maintain such swordfish with its head, fins, and bill intact through offloading; persons may eviscerate such swordfish, but it must otherwise be maintained whole. Persons aboard a fishing vessel that has been issued a limited access swordfish permit under § 635.4 must maintain Atlantic swordfish in either round or dressed form when possessed on board the vessel from the time of capture through offloading in an Atlantic coastal port.

7. In § 635.31, paragraph (b)(2)(ii) is revised and paragraph (b)(3) is added to read as follows:

§ 635.31 Restrictions on sale and purchase.

(b) Billfish.

(2) * * *

(ii) It is accompanied by a Billfish Certificate of Eligibility (COE) form obtained from NMFS or its equivalent that documents that the fish was harvested from other than the Atlantic Ocean management unit.

(A) The Billfish COE required under this section must indicate, in English,

the name and homeport of the harvesting vessel, and the date and port of offloading. Only the purchaser of the billfish from the harvesting vessel must complete this information.

(B) The Billfish COE must be signed and dated by each dealer in possession of the product throughout the chain of custody up to but not including the consumer. This signature indicates a declaration that the billfish were not harvested from the management unit.

(C) A Billfish COE may refer to billfish taken from only one harvesting vessel. If a shipment contains billfish taken from more than one vessel, a separate billfish COE must accompany the shipment for each harvesting vessel.

(D) A model Billfish COE can be obtained by contacting the Division Chief. An equivalent form may be used provided it contains all of the information required under this section.

(3) For the purposes of this paragraph 635.31(b), a dealer or seafood processor means any individual, other than a consumer, who engages in any activity, other than fishing, of industry, trade, or commerce, including but not limited to the buying or selling of a regulated species or parts thereof and activities conducted for the purpose of facilitating such buying and selling.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[I.D. 121701D]

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

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

ACTION: Notice of meeting to review proposed work plan for preparing a revised Alaska Groundfish Fisheries Draft Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and to discuss draft multi-objective policy alternatives.

SUMMARY: On November 27, 2001, NMFS announced its intent to revise the Alaska Groundfish Fisheries draft Programmatic SEIS. After reviewing more than 21,000 comment letters received on the draft Programmatic SEIS, NMFS determined that revisions to the draft Programmatic SEIS are

appropriate and necessary. NMFS also determined that these revisions will require the release of a revised draft Programmatic SEIS. Based on these decisions, NMFS announced a new series of dates for preparing the revised draft, preparing the final programmatic SEIS, and issuing the Record of Decision.

This document announces that NMFS will hold three public meetings in Seattle, WA, and in Anchorage and Bethel, AK in January 2002 for the purpose of presenting a work plan, answering questions concerning the new work plan, and schedule, and soliciting public input on new, multi-objective policy alternatives.

DATES: See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** under the heading "Meeting Dates and Addresses" for the dates of the public meetings.

ADDRESSES: See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** under the heading "Meeting Dates and Addresses" for meeting addresses.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steven K. Davis, Programmatic SEIS Coordinator, Anchorage, AK, (907) 271-3523.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 27, 2001, NMFS issued a notice informing the public of its decision to prepare a revised draft Programmatic SEIS and release that

draft for public comment prior to preparing a final Programmatic SEIS. This decision was based on the agency's review and preliminary analysis of the comments received on the draft Programmatic SEIS.

NMFS has scheduled two public meetings and is planning a third meeting in January 2002. The purpose of these meetings is to present a work plan for preparing the revised draft programmatic SEIS, answering questions concerning the work plan and schedule, and soliciting suggestions for draft multi-objective policy alternatives. The development of these new alternatives will be based on comments received on the January 2001 draft Programmatic SEIS, input received from the public at these January meetings, and on recommendations from the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council). The final suite of multi-objective policy alternatives will serve as the focus of the revised draft Programmatic SEIS.

Information on these meetings can also be found in the Council's December 2001 newsletter. A meeting announcement will also be mailed to the Programmatic SEIS mailing list. Additional information concerning the meeting agenda and draft multi-objective policy alternatives will be posted on the NMFS Alaska Region's website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov> and

at the Council's website at <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc> prior to the meetings.

Meeting Dates and Addresses

1. January 22, 2002, 9 a.m. Pacific standard time - Alaska Fisheries Science Center, 7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Building 9, Room A/B, Seattle, WA.

2. January 24, 2002, 9 a.m. Alaska local time - Federal Courthouse, 222 West 9th Avenue, Room 154, Anchorage, AK.

3. Bethel, AK. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. Alaska local time. The location and date to be announced (see websites for information).

Special Accommodations

The meetings will be physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Steven K. Davis (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) at least 7 working days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: December 19, 2001.

Jonathan M. Kurland,

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