

Stop arm and mirror requirements were implemented to reduce the number of loading zone injuries and fatalities. However, changes in clothing style and design have resulted in snagging and dragging injuries to bus occupants departing from the school bus. School bus manufacturers have implemented recalls to modify handrail designs.

The agency is interested in receiving views on how the above regulations and developments have affected school bus safety and school bus users.

There have also been many changes to the Federal requirements for school bus drivers. School bus drivers are now required to possess a commercial drivers license which requires pre-employment drug tests and random drug and alcohol tests. Staff from the Federal Highway Administration will be available to answer questions at the meeting.

Procedural Matters

The agency intends to conduct the meeting informally so as to allow for maximum participation by all who attend. Interested persons may ask questions or provide comments during any period after a party has completed its presentation, on a time allowed basis as determined by the presiding official. If time permits, persons who have not requested time to speak, but would like to make a statement, will be afforded an opportunity to do so.

The agency is interested in obtaining the views of its customers both orally and in writing. An agenda for the meeting will be made based on the number of persons wishing to make oral presentations and will be available on the day of the meeting.

Those speaking at the public meeting should limit their presentations to 15 minutes. If the presentation will include slides, motion pictures, or other visual aids, please indicate so that the proper equipment may be made available. Presenters should bring at least one copy of their presentation to the meeting so that NHTSA can readily include the material in the public record.

A schedule of participants making oral presentations will be available at the designated meeting room. NHTSA will place a copy of any written statement in the docket for this notice. Participation in the meeting is not a prerequisite for the submission of written comments. NHTSA invites written comments from all interested parties. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

If a commenter wishes to submit certain information under a claim of confidentiality, three copies of the complete submission, including

purportedly confidential business information, should be submitted to the Chief Counsel, NHTSA, Room 5219, at the street address given above, and copies from which the purportedly confidential information has been deleted should be submitted to the Docket Section. A request for confidentiality should be accompanied by a cover letter setting forth the information specified in the agency's confidential business information regulation (49 CFR Part 512.)

All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above will be considered. Comments will be available for inspection in the docket.

After the closing date, NHTSA will continue to file relevant information in the docket as it becomes available. It is therefore recommended that interested persons continue to examine the docket for new material.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 322, 30111, 30115, 30117, and 30166; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

Issued: September 30, 1996.

L. Robert Shelton,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 951227306-5306-01; I.D. 092596B]

Fisheries Off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Nontrawl Sablefish Mop-Up Fishery

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

ACTION: Announcement of nontrawl sablefish mop-up fishery; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces adjustments to the management measures for the Pacific coast groundfish fishery off Washington, Oregon, and California. This action establishes beginning and ending dates and trip limits applicable to the mop-up fishery for nontrawl limited entry sablefish, and sets trip limits for the nontrawl limited entry sablefish fishery after the mop-up fishery. These actions are intended to provide for harvest of

the remainder of the limited entry nontrawl allocation for sablefish.

DATES: The nontrawl sablefish mop-up fishery will begin at 1201 hours (local time), October 1, 1996, and will end at 1200 hours (local time), October 15, 1996, at which time the daily trip limits resume. The daily trip limits for the nontrawl sablefish fishery will remain in effect until the effective date of the 1997 annual specifications and management measures for the Pacific coast groundfish fishery, which will be published in the Federal Register. Comments will be accepted until October 15, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments on these actions should be sent to Mr. William Stelle, Jr., Administrator, Northwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, 7600 Sand Point Way NE., Bldg. 1, Seattle, WA 98115-0070; or Ms. Hilda Diaz-Soltero, Administrator, Southwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, 501 West Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4213. Information relevant to these actions has been compiled in aggregate form and is available for public review during business hours at the office of the Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William L. Robinson at 206-526-6140; or Rodney R. McInnis at 310-980-4040.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations at 50 CFR 660.323(a)(2) established a new season structure for the limited entry nontrawl sablefish fishery in 1995. The "regular season" is a derby fishery during which the only trip limit is for sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm). The regular season starts each year on September 1 (April 15, 1996, 61 FR 16402). Because of expected increases in effort and the difficulty in projecting catch rates during a short, intense season (7 days in 1995 and 5 days in 1996), the regular season was designed to harvest only 70 percent of the limited entry nontrawl allocation. The remainder of the nontrawl allocation was set aside as a buffer in case landings were much higher than projected. The Regional Administrator is authorized to release the buffer, if sufficient amounts remain, about 3 weeks after the end of the regular season, to be taken in a mop-up fishery consisting of one cumulative trip limit for each vessel.

Following the mop-up fishery, daily trip limits are reimposed until the end of the year. A daily trip limit is the maximum amount that may be taken and retained, possessed, or landed per vessel in 24 consecutive hours, starting at 0001 hours local time. Only one

landing of groundfish may be made in that 24-hour period. Daily trip limits may not be accumulated. If a trip lasts more than 1 day, only one daily trip limit is allowed. Daily trip limits were in effect until the beginning of the regular season, and went back into effect after the regular season ended on September 5.

The best available information on September 17, 1996, indicated that approximately 2,381 metric tons (mt) of sablefish had been landed before and during the regular season, about 86 percent of the limited entry nontrawl allocation of 2,754 mt. Therefore, 373 mt remains to be caught after September 6, 1996, of which 90–120 mt is expected to be taken in the daily trip limits after the regular season. The Regional Administrator, after consulting with the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) by telephone on September 19, 1996, has determined that the mop-up fishery will occur, and that a cumulative trip limit of 3,400 lb (1,542 kg) in a 2-week period (October 1–15, 1996) would provide for approximately 152–169 participating vessels, leaving enough for small daily trip limits from September 7–30, 1996, and from 1201 hours October 15, 1996, through the end of the year. The trip limit for sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm) total length, or 15.5 inches (39 cm) for sablefish that are headed, that was in effect during the regular season continues during the mop-up season but not under the daily trip limits. Once a vessel has landed its 3,400-lb (1,542-kg) cumulative trip limit, it may not land more sablefish until the daily trip limits resume at 1201 hours on October 15, 1996. A cumulative trip limit applies to each vessel with a valid limited entry permit endorsed for pot or longline gear. Therefore, acquiring additional limited entry permits does not entitle a vessel to more than one cumulative limit.

The daily trip limits for the limited entry fishery after the mop-up season are the same as those in effect before the mop-up season. Since the daily trip limits apply to a 24-hour day starting at

0001 hours, but the mop-up fishery begins and ends at 1200 hours, it will be legal for a vessel in the limited entry fishery to land a daily trip limit between 0001 hours and 1200 hours on October 1, 1996, just before the start of the mop-up season, and between 1201 hours and 2400 hours on October 15, 1996, following the mop-up season.

As specified in the annual management measures (61 FR 279, January 4, 1996) at paragraph IV.I., a vessel operating in the open access fishery must not exceed any trip limit, frequency limit, and/or size limit for the open access fishery or for the same gear and/or subarea in the limited entry fishery. This means that the limited entry trip limits applicable to nontrawl gear also are limits on nontrawl gear used in the open access fishery.

NMFS Actions

NMFS announces the dates of the nontrawl sablefish limited entry mop-up fishery and the amounts of sablefish that may be taken with nontrawl gear during and after the limited entry mop-up fishery in 1996. All other provisions remain in effect.

In the 1996 annual management measures, paragraph IV.E.(3)(c) is revised to read as follows:

IV. * * *

E. * * *

(3) * * *

(c) *Nontrawl trip and size limits.* (i) *Mop-Up Fishery.* Effective 1201 hours October 1, 1996, until 1200 hours October 15, 1996, the cumulative trip limit for sablefish caught with nontrawl gear in the limited entry fishery is 3,400 lb (1,542 kg) per vessel.

(Note: The States of Washington, Oregon, and California use a conversion factor of 1.6 to convert dressed sablefish to its round-weight equivalent. Therefore, 3,400 lb (1,542 kg) round weight corresponds to 2,125 lb (964 kg) for dressed sablefish.)

(ii) *Daily trip limits.* Effective 1201 hours October 15, 1996, daily trip limits, which apply to sablefish of any size, are reimposed as follows:

(A) *North of 36° N. lat.* The daily trip limit for sablefish taken and retained

with nontrawl gear north of 36° N. lat. is 300 lb (136 kg).

(B) *South of 36° N. lat.* The daily trip limit for sablefish taken and retained with nontrawl gear south of 36° N. lat. is 350 lb (159 kg).

(iii) *Trip limits for small sablefish.* During the regular and mop-up seasons, the only trip limit in effect, for sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm) (total length), is 1,500 lb (680 kg), or 3 percent of all legal sablefish on board 22 inches (56 cm) or larger, whichever is greater. (See paragraph IV.A.(6) of the annual management measures at (61 FR 279, January 4, 1996) regarding length measurement.

Classification

These actions are authorized by the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan, which governs the harvest of groundfish in the U.S. exclusive economic zone off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. The determination to take these actions is based on the most recent data available. The aggregate data upon which the determinations are based are available for public inspection at the office of the Regional Administrator (see **ADDRESSES**) during business hours. Because of the need for immediate action to start the mop-up fishery for sablefish, and because the public had an opportunity to comment on these actions at the September 1996 meeting of the Council's Groundfish Management Team in Portland, OR, NMFS has determined that good cause exists for this document to be published without affording a prior opportunity for public comment or a 30-day delayed effectiveness period. These actions are taken under the authority of 50 CFR 660.323(a)(2), and are exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: September 27, 1996.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

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