

in this paragraph to the new listing cited in parenthesis as follows: M T R Ravensburg, Inc. (Machine Tool Research, Inc.) and Buffalo Forge Company (Buffalo Machine Tools of Niagara, Inc.).

Dated: August 14, 1998.

Morton Schnabel,

Director, Office of Export Trading Company Affairs.

[FR Doc. 98-22280 Filed 8-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-DR-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 080598A]

Highly Migratory Species and Billfish Advisory Panels; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) and Billfish Advisory Panels (APs) will each hold a meeting to discuss management issues under consideration for inclusion in the draft HMS fishery management plan (FMP) and draft Billfish FMP amendment, respectively.

DATES: The HMS AP meeting will be held Thursday, August 27, 1998, and Friday, August 28, 1998, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. A public comment period is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 1998, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Public comment is solicited on issues in the draft HMS FMP, including the use of vessel monitoring systems (VMS) in HMS fisheries. The Billfish AP meeting will be held Wednesday, September 2, 1998, and Thursday, September 3, 1998, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. A public comment period for the Billfish AP meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 3, 1998, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The Billfish AP public comment period will be held in conjunction with and at the site of the regional meeting of the U.S. Advisory Committee to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

ADDRESSES: The HMS AP will meet at the Radisson Airport Hotel Providence, 2081 Post Road, Warwick, Rhode Island 02886; telephone: (401) 739-3000. The Billfish AP will meet at the Hotel on the Cay, Protestant Cay, P.O. Box 4020, Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands 00822; telephone: (340) 773-2035. The

Billfish AP public comment period will be held at the Buccaneer Hotel, Estate Shoys, St. Croix, Virgin Islands 00824; telephone: (340) 773-2100. Written comments should be submitted to, and informational materials related to the AP meetings are available from, Liz Lauck, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Pat Wilbert or Liz Lauck, telephone: (301) 713-2347, fax: (301) 713-1917.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The HMS and Billfish APs were established under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1901 *et seq.* The APs will assist the Secretary of Commerce in collecting and evaluating information relevant to the development of an FMP for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, and sharks, and an amendment to the Billfish FMP. All AP meetings are open to the public and will be attended by members of the AP, including appointed members, representatives of the five fishery management councils that work with Atlantic HMS, and the Chair, or his or her representative, of the U.S. Advisory Committee to ICCAT.

The agendas for the AP meetings will include discussion of draft documents for the HMS FMP and the Billfish FMP amendment, respectively, and the draft HMS Essential Fish Habitat document. Topics will include:

1. Rebuilding alternatives;
2. Bycatch reduction alternatives;
3. Permitting and reporting alternatives;
4. VMS (HMS AP meeting only);
5. Essential fish habitat identification; and
6. Other items related to meeting requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

The public comment period for the HMS Advisory Panel is scheduled for Wednesday, August 26, 1998, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the meeting location. NMFS seeks comments on issues in the draft HMS FMP including U.S. implementation of the ICCAT vessel monitoring system (VMS) program. The ICCAT VMS recommendation applies to vessels greater than 79 feet that fish for HMS on the high seas. Comments are requested specifically on applicability of the ICCAT recommendation to the U.S. fleet, costs of implementation, and participation in high seas fishing for HMS.

The public comment period for the Billfish Advisory Panel is scheduled for Thursday, September 3, 1998, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and will be held in conjunction with, and at the site of, the

ICCAT regional meeting. Note that the location of the Billfish AP public comment period/ICAAT regional meeting is different from the location of the Billfish AP meeting. Comments are solicited on management issues under consideration for inclusion in the draft Billfish FMP amendment. See **ADDRESSES** to request informational materials related to the AP discussion or to submit public comments on management issues for the draft FMP documents.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or for other auxiliary aids should be directed to Pat Wilbert, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, phone (301) 713-2347; fax: (301) 713-1917, at least 7 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: August 13, 1998.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

[FR Doc. 98-22220 Filed 8-13-98; 3:29 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 081198A]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska; Experimental Fishing Permit

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

ACTION: Issuance of an experimental fishing permit.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the issuance of an experimental fishing permit 98-01 (EFP) to the Groundfish Forum. The EFP authorizes the Groundfish Forum to conduct an experiment in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) that would test the effectiveness of a halibut excluder device for flatfish trawls in reducing halibut bycatch rates without significantly lowering catch rates of flatfish. Results of the experiment will be used to develop methods for trawl vessels targeting flatfish to reduce halibut bycatch rates and mortality. This EFP will provide information not otherwise available through research or commercial fishing operations. The intended effect of this

action is to promote the purposes and policies of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the EFP and the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the EFP are available from Lori J. Gravel, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sue Salvesson, 907-586-7228

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (FMP) authorizes the issuance of EFPs for fishing for groundfish in a manner that would otherwise be prohibited under existing regulations. The procedures for issuing EFPs are set out at 50 CFR 679.6.

On June 8, 1998, NMFS announced in the **Federal Register** the receipt of an application for an EFP from the Groundfish Forum (63 FR 31201). The application requested authorization for Groundfish Forum to test the effectiveness of a halibut excluder device in reducing halibut bycatch rates in the deep water flatfish fisheries while not lowering the amount of target flatfish species. The purpose of this research is to assist industry in developing gear modifications that will reduce the bycatch of halibut in flatfish fisheries off Alaska. This EFP will provide information not otherwise available through research or commercial fishing operations because it is not economically feasible for vessels to participate in an experiment of this extent and rigor during the short commercial fisheries.

A statistical analysis completed by Groundfish Forum and reviewed by NMFS has determined that 60 pairs of tows between two vessels would produce a 90-percent certainty of detecting a 35-percent decline in halibut bycatch rates, and nearly a 100-percent chance of detecting a 25-percent decrease in rex sole catch, the principle target species in the GOA deepwater flatfish fishery. To complete the experiment, Groundfish Forum estimates that 650 metric tons (mt) of groundfish may be taken by vessels participating in the experiment and between 18.5 mt and 25 mt of Pacific halibut bycatch mortality. The experiment is scheduled to take place in the Western or Central Regulatory Areas of the GOA during a 10 to 20-day period in September and October 1998. The effective date for the EFP may be revised to a date in 1999, pending agreement between the permit holder and the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator).

The Groundfish Forum will set up a "request for proposals" (RFP) process whereby companies submit applications to test an halibut excluder device.

Under the rules of the experiment, the performance of trawl gear with the excluder device in place will be tested against a standard control gear. The control gear will be the same trawl gear configured without the halibut excluder device. Trawling with experimental and control gear will be conducted with procedures and sites used during the commercial fishery for deep water flatfish species in the GOA.

The RFP will set out general standards for the design of a halibut excluder device that will be systematically tested against control trawl gear. These standards state the design should:

1. Release a large percentage of the halibut that come into the trawl unharmed;
2. Avoid significant reductions in target flatfish or round fish catches, while potentially releasing less desirable species (such as arrowtooth flounder);
3. Function with few failures or break downs and be resistant to clogging and debris jams;
4. Provide easy removal or disabling of the excluder to facilitate changes between experimental and control gear without handling difficulties or safety concerns for deck crew (this feature is especially critical for small vessels with limited deck length);
5. Provide durability and ease of storage on deck; and
6. Be constructed from affordable materials that are readily available.

Guidelines for applications to participate in the experiment will be provided by Groundfish Forum. This information will be conveyed to potential applicants through a short publication written and distributed by the Groundfish Forum and reviewed by NMFS personnel associated with the experiment. A Selection Panel of NMFS gear experts and other NMFS management personnel will review the suitability of applications and determine which design has the greatest potential for excluding halibut and retaining target catch. The device selected by the Selection Panel will be subjected to a systematic field test to establish its effectiveness as well as some exploration to isolate the elements that make the device successful (placement, towing speed, sea conditions, ambient light conditions, etc.).

The Regional Administrator has approved the EFP application and has issued EFP 98-01 to the Groundfish

Forum. The EFP authorizes Groundfish Forum to solicit vessel participants through the RFP process and authorizes the harvest of 650 mt of groundfish during the course of the 10-20 day experiment during September and October 1998, of which no more than 30 percent (195 mt) may be groundfish species other than Rex sole, Dover sole, Greenland turbot, deep sea sole, flathead sole, or arrowtooth flounder (deep water flatfish). The amount of groundfish species retained other than deep water flatfish will not exceed 15 percent per species or species group (see Table 10 of 50 CFR part 679 for a definition of species groups) of the retained catch of deep water flatfish as defined in this EFP, except that the retained amount of sablefish is not to exceed 2 percent of the retained catch of deep water flatfish. Groundfish and halibut bycatch mortality associated with this experiment will not be deducted from total allowable catch and halibut bycatch allowances specified for the 1998 groundfish fisheries. This will not cause a conservation problem for groundfish species because estimated total removals under the EFP likely would remain within their acceptable biological catches and not exceed overfishing levels already considered in the EA for the 1998 specifications.

The Regional Administrator may terminate the experiment if halibut bycatch mortality exceeds the high-end projections of the permit applicant, or 25 mt mortality (39 mt bycatch). Failure of the permittee to comply with the terms and conditions of the EFP may be grounds for revocation, suspension, or modification of the EFP under 15 CFR 904 with respect to any or all persons and vessels conducting activities under the EFP. Failure to comply with applicable laws may also result in sanctions imposed under those laws.

Classification

NMFS prepared an EA for this EFP. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA concluded that there will be no significant impact on the human environment as a result of fishing under this EFP. A copy of the EA is available from NMFS (see **ADDRESSES**). The Regional Administrator determined that fishing activities conducted pursuant to this EFP will not affect endangered and threatened species or critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act.

This notice is exempt from review under E.O. 12866. Because prior notice and opportunity for public comment are not required; the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act are inapplicable.

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

Dated: August 13, 1998.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

[FR Doc. 98-22245 Filed 8-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Technology Administration

Under Secretary for Technology; National Medal of Technology Nomination Evaluation Committee; Determination for Closure of Meeting

The National Medal of Technology Nomination Evaluation Committee has scheduled a meeting for August 25, 1998.

The Committee was established to assist the Department in executing its responsibilities under 15 U.S.C. 3711. Under this provision, the Secretary is responsible for recommending to the President prospective recipients of the National Medal of Technology. The committee's recommendations are made after reviewing all nominations received in response to a public solicitation. The Committee is chartered to have twelve members.

Time and Place: The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. on August 25, 1998. The meeting will be held in Room 4824 at the U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20230. For further information contact: Allison Rosenberg, Director, National Medal of Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Herbert C. Hoover Building, Room 4226, Washington, DC 20230, Ph: (202-482-5572).

If a member of the public would like to submit written comments concerning the committee's affairs at any time before and after the meeting, written comments should be addressed to the Director of the National Medal of Technology as indicated above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting will be closed to discuss the relative merits of persons and companies nominated for the Medal. Public disclosure of this information would be likely to significantly frustrate implementation of the National Medal of Technology program because premature publicity about candidates under consideration for the Medal, who may or may not ultimately receive the award, would be likely to discourage nominations for the Medal.

Accordingly, I find and determine, pursuant to Section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app. 2, as amended, that the August 25, 1998, meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with Section 552b(c)(9)(B) of Title 5, United States Code because revealing information about Medal candidates would be likely to significantly frustrate implementation of a proposed agency action.

Due to closure of the meeting, copies of the minutes of the meeting will not be available, however a copy of the Notice of Determination will be available for public inspection and copying in the office of Allison Rosenberg, Director, National Medal of Technology, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Herbert Hoover Building, Room 4226, Washington, DC 20230, (Ph: 202-482-5572).

Kelly H. Carnes,

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy.

[FR Doc. 98-22282 Filed 8-18-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-18-M

COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Adjustment of Import Limits for Certain Cotton, Wool and Man-Made Fiber Textiles and Textile Products Produced or Manufactured in Korea

August 13, 1998.

AGENCY: Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA).

ACTION: Issuing a directive to the Commissioner of Customs adjusting limits.

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 19, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ross Arnold, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-4212. For information on the quota status of these limits, refer to the Quota Status Reports posted on the bulletin boards of each Customs port or call (202) 927-5850. For information on embargoes and quota re-openings, call (202) 482-3715.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: Section 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1956, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1854); Executive Order 11651 of March 3, 1972, as amended.

The current limits for certain categories are being adjusted, variously, for swing, special swing, special shift, carryover, carryforward, carryforward

used and recrediting unused carryforward.

In accordance with the special swing provision contained in the exchange of notes dated April 2 and 8, 1997 between the Governments of the United States and Korea, 2,842,990 square meters equivalent is being charged to the 1998 Group II limit.

A description of the textile and apparel categories in terms of HTS numbers is available in the CORRELATION: Textile and Apparel Categories with the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (see **Federal Register** notice 62 FR 66057, published on December 17, 1997). Also see 62 FR 67833, published on December 30, 1997.

Troy H. Cribb,

Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements

August 13, 1998.

Commissioner of Customs,
Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC 20229.

Dear Commissioner: This directive amends, but does not cancel, the directive issued to you on December 22, 1997, by the Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements. That directive concerns imports of certain cotton, wool, man-made fiber, silk blend and other vegetable fiber textiles and textile products, produced or manufactured in Korea and exported during the period beginning January 1, 1998 and extending through December 31, 1998.

Effective on August 19, 1998, you are directed to adjust the limits for the following categories, as provided for under the Uruguay Round Agreement on Textiles and Clothing:

Category	Adjusted limit ¹
Group I 200-223, 224-V ² , 224-O ³ , 225, 226, 227, 300- 326, 360-363, 369pt. ⁴ , 400- 414, 464, 469pt. ⁵ , 600- 629, 666, 669- P ⁶ , 669pt. ⁷ , and 670-O ⁸ , as a group.	382,368,721 square meters equivalent.
Sublevel within Group I 619/620	94,459,400 square meters.
Sublevels within Group II 336	69,035 dozen.
338/339	1,421,090 dozen.
340	813,305 dozen of which not more than 415,800 dozen shall be in Category 340- D ⁹ .
342/642	252,425 dozen.