

Assumed Pacific halibut mortality rates for BSAI fisheries during 1995 are specified in Table 9.

TABLE 9.—ASSUMED PACIFIC HALIBUT MORTALITY RATES FOR THE BSAI FISHERIES DURING 1995

	Percent
Hook-and-line gear fisheries:	
Rockfish	24.0
Pacific cod ¹	12.5
Greenland turbot	19.0
Sablefish	17.0
Trawl gear fisheries:	
Midwater pollock	89.0
Non-pelagic pollock	77.0
Yellowfin sole	76.0
Rock sole, flathead sole, other flatfish	75.0
Rockfish	69.0
Pacific cod	65.0
Atka mackerel	59.0
Arrowtooth	49.0
Greenland turbot	48.0
Pot gear fisheries:	
Pacific cod	8.0

¹ The assumed halibut bycatch mortality rate for the hook-and-line Pacific cod fishery will be re-evaluated mid-1995 using final 1994 observer data and inseason 1995 observer data.

Groundfish PSC Limits

No PSC limits for groundfish species are specified in this action. Section 675.20(a)(6) authorizes NMFS to specify PSC limits for groundfish species or species groups for which the TAC will be completely harvested by domestic fisheries. These PSC limits apply only to JVP or TALFF fisheries. At this time, no groundfish are allocated to either JVP or TALFF and specifications of groundfish PSC limits are unnecessary.

Closures to Directed Fishing

If the Regional Director establishes a directed fishing allowance, and that allowance is or will be reached before the end of the fishing year, or, with respect to pollock, before the end of the fishing season, NMFS will prohibit directed fishing for that species or species group in the specified subarea or district under § 675.20(a)(8).

Fishing for groundfish in the BSAI is authorized from January 1 through December 31, with the following exceptions (§ 675.23): (1) Directed fishing for arrowtooth flounder and Greenland turbot is authorized from May 1, 1995, to December 31, 1995, subject to the other provisions in the BSAI regulations; (2) fishing for groundfish with trawl gear in the BSAI is prohibited until January 20, 1995; (3) with certain exceptions, directed fishing for pollock by the inshore component, defined at § 675.2, is authorized January 1, 1995, through April 15, 1995, and

August 15, 1995, through the end of the fishing year; (4) with certain exceptions, directed fishing for pollock by the offshore component, defined at § 675.2, is authorized from January 26, 1995, to April 15, 1995, and from August 15, 1995, through the end of the fishing year; (5) directed fishing for pollock under the Western Alaska CDQ Program is authorized from January 1, 1994, through the end of the fishing year (§ 675.23(e)); and (6) directed fishing with trawl gear in Zone 1 for rockfish, Greenland turbot, arrowtooth flounder, and sablefish is closed, as there is no crab PSC to support this fishery (See Table 7).

In addition to these regulatory closures, NMFS may take action to implement closures to directed fishing for species needed as bycatch amounts in other directed fisheries. A principal consideration for the Council in developing its 1995 TAC recommendations was ensuring that the sum of the species TACs did not exceed the maximum OY of 2 million mt. After consideration of the amount of each species category TAC which is required for bycatch in other directed fisheries, the Council recommended that TAC amounts specified for certain species be established as directed fishing allowances.

NMFS concurs with the Council's recommendations, and accordingly, is prohibiting directed fishing for the following species and species groups: (1) Pacific ocean perch in the Bering Sea, (2) other red rockfish in the Bering Sea, (3) shortraker/rougheye in the Aleutian Islands, (4) other rockfish in the BSAI, (5) arrowtooth flounder in the BSAI, and (6) pollock in the Bogoslof district. Species or species groups identified in Table 10 are necessary as incidental catch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries and TAC amounts for these species will be used for bycatch purposes only. If NMFS determines the full TAC amount will not be used as bycatch, NMFS may open a directed fishery for that species.

TABLE 10.—CLOSURES TO DIRECTED FISHING UNDER 1995 TACS ¹

Fishery (all gear)	Closed area ²
Pollock in Bogoslof District.	Statistical Area 518.
Pacific ocean perch ..	Bering Sea.
Shortraker/rougheye rockfish.	Al. ³
Other rockfish ⁴	BSAI.
Other red rockfish ⁵ ...	Bering Sea.
Rockfish, Greenland turbot/arrowtooth/sablefish.	Zone 1.

TABLE 10.—CLOSURES TO DIRECTED FISHING UNDER 1995 TACS ¹—Continued

Fishery (all gear)	Closed area ²
Arrowtooth	BSAI.

¹ These closures to directed fishing are in addition to closures and prohibitions found in regulations at 50 CFR part 675.

² Refer to § 675.2 for definitions of areas.

³ "Al" means Aleutian Islands area.

⁴ In the BSAI, "Other rockfish" includes *Sebastes* and *Sebastolobus* species except for Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species.

⁵ "Other red rockfish" includes shortraker, rougheye, sharpchin, and northern.

In addition to the above closures, NMFS closed the directed fishery for Atka mackerel in the Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea subarea effective noon, A.l.t., February 2, 1995, under authority of the interim 1995 specifications. In accordance with § 675.20(a)(7)(ii), these closures will remain in effect until 12 midnight, A.l.t., December 31, 1995. Directed fishing standards for applicable gear types may be found in the regulations at § 675.20(h).

Technical Amendment To Revise Specified Fishery Categories for Directed Fishing Standards and PSC Apportionments

Two technical amendments are necessary to update a directed fishery standard and a definition of a fishery category to reflect the establishment of a flathead sole TAC separate from the "other flatfish" category.

First, regulations under § 675.20(h)(2) establish directed fishing standards for yellowfin sole, rock sole, arrowtooth flounder, and "other flatfish." To the extent that flathead sole now has a separate ABC, TAC, OFL, and ITAC, the standards for directed fishing are revised by technical amendment to add flathead sole to this directed fishing category.

Second, regulations under § 675.21(b) authorize the apportionment of each PSC limit into bycatch allowances for specified trawl fishery categories. The definition of these fishery categories at § 675.21(b)(1)(iii) must be amended to include the new flathead sole fishery at § 675.21(b)(1)(iii)(B)(2). The fishery category "rock sole/other flatfish" is revised, therefore, to "rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish" to provide PSC amounts for this category.

Classification

This action is authorized under 50 CFR 611.93(b), 675.20, and 676; and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.