

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. It must be implemented immediately to prevent overharvesting the amount of the 1999 TAC for northern rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. A delay in the effective date is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. The fleet has taken the amount of the 1999 TAC for northern rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. Further delay would only result in overharvest. NMFS finds for good cause that the implementation of this action cannot be delayed for 30 days. Accordingly, under 5 U.S.C. 553(d), a delay in the effective date is hereby waived.

This action is required by § 679.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: September 2, 1999.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

[FR Doc. 99-23442 Filed 9-3-99; 3:50 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 679**

[Docket No. 990304062-9062-01; I.D. 090199D]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pelagic Shelf Rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting retention of pelagic shelf rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). NMFS is requiring that catch of pelagic shelf rockfish in this area be treated in the same manner as prohibited species and discarded at sea with a minimum of injury. This action is necessary because the amount of the 1999 total allowable catch (TAC) of pelagic shelf rockfish in this area has been achieved.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), September 3, 1999, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Thomas Pearson 907-481-1780 or tom.pearson@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska (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 50 CFR part 679.

The amount of the 1999 TAC of pelagic shelf rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA was established as 3,370 metric tons by the Final 1999 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish for the GOA (64 FR 12094, March 11, 1999). See § 679.20(c)(3)(ii).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(2), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the amount of the 1999 TAC for pelagic shelf rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA has been achieved. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that further catches of pelagic shelf rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA be treated as prohibited species in accordance with § 679.21(b).

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This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. It must be implemented immediately to prevent overharvesting the amount of the 1999 TAC for pelagic shelf rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. A delay in the effective date is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. The fleet has taken the amount of the 1999 TAC for pelagic shelf rockfish in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. Further delay would only result in overharvest. NMFS finds for good cause that the implementation of this action cannot be delayed for 30 days. Accordingly, under 5 U.S.C. 553(d), a delay in the effective date is hereby waived.

This action is required by § 679.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: September 2, 1999.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 679**

[Docket No. 990304063-9063-01; I.D. 090399A]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel to Vessels Using "Other Gear" in the Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Atka mackerel by vessels using "other gear" in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 1999 initial total allowable catch (ITAC) of Atka mackerel allocated to vessels using "other gear" in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), September 7, 1999, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 1999.

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 are found at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and CFR part 679.

The 1999 ITAC of Atka mackerel allocated to vessels using "other gear" in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea was established by the Final 1999 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish (64 FR 12103, March 11, 1999) as 15,568 metric tons (mt). See § 679.20(c)(6) and 679.20(a)(8).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the 1999 ITAC of Atka mackerel allocated to vessels using "other gear" in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea will be reached. Therefore, the Regional