

Islands (CAI/WAI) blackspotted/rougheye rockfish. This action is necessary to allow the fisheries to continue operating. It is intended to promote the goals and objectives of the fishery management plan for the BSAI management area.

DATES: Effective November 16, 2021, through 2400 hrs, Alaska local time, December 31, 2021. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., Alaska local time December 1, 2021.

ADDRESSES: Submit your comments, identified by docket number NOAA–NMFS–2020–0141, by either of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/NOAA-NMFS-2020-0141> click the “Comment” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- **Mail:** Submit written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS. Mail comments to P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802–1668.

Instructions: NMFS may not consider comments if they are sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the comment period ends. All comments received are a part of the public record and NMFS will post the comments for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender is publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steve Whitney, 907–586–7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the BSAI exclusive economic zone according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the BSAI Management 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 appear at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

The 2021 ITAC of BS Pacific ocean perch was established as 9,165 metric tons (mt), the 2021 ITAC of BS trawl sablefish was established as 1,443 mt,

the 2021 ITAC of BSAI shortraker rockfish was established as 425 mt, the 2021 ITAC of BSAI skates was established as 15,300 mt, the 2021 ITAC of BSAI sharks was established as 170 mt, and the 2021 ITAC of CAI/WAI blackspotted/rougheye rockfish was established as 144 mt by the final 2021 and 2022 harvest specifications for groundfish of the BSAI (86 FR 11449, February 25, 2021). In accordance with § 679.20(a)(3) the Regional Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has reviewed the most current available data and finds that the ITACs for BS Pacific ocean perch, BS trawl sablefish, BSAI shortraker rockfish, BSAI skates, BSAI sharks, and CAI/WAI blackspotted/rougheye rockfish need to be supplemented from the non-specified reserve to promote efficiency in the utilization of fishery resources in the BSAI and allow fishing operations to continue.

Therefore, in accordance with § 679.20(b)(3), NMFS apportions from the non-specified reserve of groundfish to ITACs in the BSAI management area as follows: 1,617 mt to BS Pacific ocean perch, 128 mt to BS trawl sablefish, 116 mt to BSAI shortraker rockfish, 4,700 mt to BSAI skates, 347 mt to BSAI sharks, and 25 mt to CAI/WAI blackspotted/rougheye rockfish. These apportionments are consistent with § 679.20(b)(1)(i) and do not result in overfishing of any target species because the revised ITACs and total allowable catches (TACs) are equal to or less than the specifications of the acceptable biological catch in the final 2021 and 2022 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (86 FR 11449, February 25, 2021).

The harvest specification for the 2021 ITACs and TACs included in the harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI are revised as follows 10,782 mt for BS Pacific ocean perch, 1,571 mt for BS trawl sablefish, 541 mt for BSAI shortraker rockfish, 20,000 mt for BSAI skates, 517 mt for BSAI sharks, and 169 mt for CAI/WAI blackspotted/rougheye rockfish.

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR part 679, which was issued pursuant to section 304(b), and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest, as it would prevent NMFS from responding to the most

recent fisheries data in a timely fashion and would delay the apportionment of the non-specified reserves of groundfish to the BS Pacific ocean perch, BS trawl sablefish, BSAI shortraker rockfish, BSAI skates, BSAI sharks, and CAI/WAI blackspotted/rougheye rockfish. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of November 9, 2021.

The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effective date of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3). This finding is based upon the reasons provided above for waiver of prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

Under § 679.20(b)(3)(iii), interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this action (see **ADDRESSES**) until December 1, 2021.

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

Dated: November 16, 2021.

Ngagne Jafnar Gueye,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 210210–0018]

RTID 0648–XA789

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher/processors using hook-and-line (HAL) gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the annual allowance of the 2021 total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific cod by catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. **DATES:** Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), November 15, 2021, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2021.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Allyson Olds, 907-586-7228.

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 annual allowance of the 2021 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA is 518 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2021 and 2022 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (86 FR 10184, February 19, 2021).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the annual allowance of the 2021 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA

will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 502 mt and is setting aside the remaining 16 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional Administrator finds that this directed fishing allowance has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA.

While this closure is effective the maximum retainable amounts at § 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR part 679, which was issued pursuant to section 304(b), and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment

would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest, as it would prevent NMFS from responding to the most recent fisheries data in a timely fashion and would delay the directed fishing closure for Pacific cod by catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of November 12, 2021.

The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effective date of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3). This finding is based upon the reasons provided above for waiver of prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

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

Dated: November 15, 2021.

Ngagne Jafnar Gueye,

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

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