

§ 17.11 [Amended]

■ 2. Amend § 17.11(h) by removing the entry for “Sucker, Modoc” under FISHES in the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife.

§ 17.95 [Amended]

■ 3. Amend § 17.95(e) by removing the entry for “Modoc Sucker (*Catostomus microps*)”.

Dated: November 30, 2015.

Stephen D. Guertin,

Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 2015–30915 Filed 12–7–15; 8:45 am]

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

[Docket No. 141021887–5172–02]

RIN 0648–XE344

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Several Groundfish Species in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; apportionment of reserves; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS apportions amounts of the non-specified reserve to the initial total allowable catch (ITAC) and total allowable catch (TAC) of Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) northern rockfish, BSAI octopus, BSAI sculpins, and BSAI skates in the BSAI management area. 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 December 3, 2015 through 2400 hrs, Alaska local time, December 31, 2015. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., Alaska local time, December 18, 2015.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by FDMS Docket Number NOAA–NMFS–2014–0134 by any of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0134>, click

the “Comment Now!” 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, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Mail comments to P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802–1668.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted 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 will be 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 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands 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 2015 TAC of BSAI northern rockfish was established as 6,263 metric tons (mt), the 2015 TAC of BSAI octopus was established as 400 mt, the 2015 ITAC of BSAI sculpins was established as 3,995 mt, and the 2015 ITAC of BSAI skates was established as 21,845 mt by the final 2015 and 2016 harvest specifications for groundfish of the BSAI (80 FR 11919, March 5, 2015) and further revisions (80 FR 52204, August 28, 2015). 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 and TACs for BSAI northern rockfish, BSAI octopus, BSAI sculpins, and BSAI skates 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

1,000 mt to the BSAI northern rockfish TAC, 100 mt to the BSAI octopus TAC, 800 mt to the BSAI sculpins ITAC, and 3,428 mt to the BSAI skates ITAC. 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 TACs are equal to or less than the specifications of the acceptable biological catch in the final 2015 and 2016 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (80 FR 11919, March 5, 2015).

The harvest specification for the 2015 ITACs and TACs included in the harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI are revised as follows: The ITAC and TAC are increased to 7,263 mt for BSAI northern rockfish, 500 mt for BSAI octopuses, 4,795 mt for BSAI sculpins, and 25,273 mt for BSAI skates.

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, (AA) finds good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) and § 679.20(b)(3)(iii)(A) as such a requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. This requirement is 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 BSAI northern rockfish, BSAI octopus, BSAI sculpins, and BSAI skates ITACS and TACS in the BSAI. Immediate notification is necessary to allow for the orderly conduct and efficient operation of this fishery, to allow the industry to plan for the fishing season, and to avoid potential disruption to the fishing fleet and processors. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of November 30, 2015.

The AA 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 18, 2015.

This action is required by § 679.20 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: December 3, 2015.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

*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. 141021887-5172-02]

RIN 0648-XE342

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; reallocation.

SUMMARY: NMFS is reallocating the projected unused amounts of Pacific cod from catcher vessels greater than 60 feet (18.3 meters (m)) length overall (LOA) using pot gear, American Fisheries Act (AFA) trawl catcher processors (C/Ps), and catcher vessels using trawl gear to C/Ps using hook-and-line gear and C/Ps using pot gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area. This action is necessary to allow the 2015 total allowable catch of Pacific cod to be harvested.

DATES: Effective December 3, 2015 through 2400 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), December 31, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Josh Keaton, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands 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 2015 Pacific cod TAC specified for catcher vessels greater than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot gear in the BSAI is 16,641 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2015 and 2016 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (80 FR 11919, March 5, 2015) and reallocations (80 FR 57105, September 22, 2015 and 80 FR 65971, October 28, 2015). The Regional Administrator has determined that catcher vessels greater than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot gear in the BSAI will not be able to harvest 3,000 mt of the remaining 2015 Pacific cod TAC allocated to those vessels under § 679.20(a)(7)(ii)(A)(5).

The 2015 Pacific cod TAC specified for catcher vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI is 39,354 mt as established by the final 2015 and 2016 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (80 FR 11919, March 5, 2015) and reallocations (80 FR 57105, September 22, 2015 and 80 FR 65971, October 28, 2015). The Regional Administrator has determined that catcher vessels using trawl gear will not be able to harvest 1,500 mt of the remaining 2015 Pacific cod TAC allocated to those vessels under § 679.20(a)(7)(ii)(A)(9).

The 2015 Pacific cod TAC specified for AFA trawl C/Ps in the BSAI is 4,623 mt as established by the final 2015 and 2016 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (80 FR 11919, March 5, 2015) and reallocations (80 FR 57105, September 22, 2015 and 80 FR 65971, October 28, 2015). The Regional Administrator has determined that AFA trawl C/Ps will not be able to harvest 800 mt of the remaining 2015 Pacific cod TAC allocated to those vessels under § 679.20(a)(7)(ii)(A)(7).

Therefore, in accordance with § 679.20(a)(7)(iii)(A) and § 679.20(a)(7)(iii)(B), NMFS reallocates 5,300 mt of Pacific cod to C/Ps using hook-and-line gear and C/Ps using pot gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area.

The harvest specifications for Pacific cod included in the final 2015 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (80 FR 11919, March 5, 2015, 80 FR 51757, August 26, 2015, 80 FR 57105, September 22, 2015 and 80 FR 65971, October 28, 2015) are revised as follows: 13,641 mt for catcher vessels

greater than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot gear, 37,854 mt for catcher vessels using trawl gear, 3,823 mt to AFA trawl C/Ps, 115,371 mt for C/Ps using hook-and-line, and 6,829 mt for C/Ps using pot gear.

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), finds good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) as such requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. This requirement is 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 reallocation of Pacific cod specified from multiple sectors to C/Ps using hook-and-line gear and C/Ps using pot gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area. Since these fisheries are currently open, it is important to immediately inform the industry as to the revised allocations. Immediate notification is necessary to allow for the orderly conduct and efficient operation of this fishery, to allow the industry to plan for the fishing season, and to avoid potential disruption to the fishing fleet as well as processors. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of December 1, 2015.

The AA 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.

This action is required by § 679.20 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: December 3, 2015.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

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