

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 622****[Docket No. 001005281-0369-02; I.D. 030906E]****Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Closure****AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.**ACTION:** Temporary rule; closure.**SUMMARY:** NMFS closes the commercial hook-and-line fishery for king mackerel in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the southern Florida west coast subzone. This closure is necessary to protect the Gulf king mackerel resource.**DATES:** The closure is effective 12:01 a.m., local time, March 12, 2006, until the start of the 2006-2007 fishing year at 12:01 a.m., July 1, 2006.**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Steve Branstetter, telephone: 727-824-5305, fax: 727-824-5308, e-mail: Steve.Branstetter@noaa.gov.**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The fishery for coastal migratory pelagic fish (king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, cero, cobia, little tunny, and, in the Gulf of Mexico only, dolphin and bluefish) is managed under the Fishery Management Plan for the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic (FMP). The FMP was prepared by the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils (Councils) and is implemented under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) by regulations at 50 CFR part 622.

Based on the Councils' recommended total allowable catch and the allocation ratios in the FMP, on April 30, 2001 (66 FR 17368, March 30, 2001), NMFS implemented a commercial quota of 2.25 million lb (1.02 million kg) for the eastern zone (Florida) of the Gulf migratory group of king mackerel. That quota is further divided into separate quotas for the Florida east coast and west coast subzones. The Florida west coast subzone is that part of the eastern zone south and west of 25°20.4' N. lat. (a line directly east from the Miami-Dade County, FL, boundary) along the west coast of Florida to 87°31.1' W.

long. (a line directly south from the Alabama/Florida boundary). The Florida west coast subzone is further divided into a northern and southern subzone. The southern subzone is that part of the Florida west coast subzone, which from November 1 through March 31 extends south and west from 25°20.4' N. lat. to 26°19.8' N. lat. (a line directly west from the Lee/Collier County, FL, boundary), i.e., the area off Collier and Monroe Counties. From April 1 through October 31, the southern subzone is that part of the Florida west coast subzone which is between 26°19.8' N. lat. and 25°48' N. lat. (a line directly west from the Monroe/Collier County, FL, boundary), i.e., the area off Collier County. The quota implemented for the southern Florida west coast subzone is 1,040,625 lb (472,020 kg). That quota is further divided into two equal quotas of 520,312 lb (236,010 kg) for vessels in each of two groups fishing with run-around gillnets and hook-and-line gear (50 CFR 622.42(c)(1)(i)(A)(2)(i)).

Under 50 CFR 622.43(a)(3), NMFS is required to close any segment of the king mackerel commercial fishery when its quota has been reached, or is projected to be reached, by filing a notification at the Office of the Federal Register. NMFS has determined that the commercial quota of 520,312 lb (236,010 kg) for Gulf group king mackerel for vessels using hook-and-line gear in the southern Florida west coast subzone has been met. Accordingly, the commercial fishery for king mackerel for such vessels in the southern Florida west coast subzone is closed at 12:01 a.m., local time, March 12, 2006, through 12:01 a.m., July 1, 2006, the beginning of the next fishing season.

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 prior notice and opportunity for public comment is unnecessary and contrary to the public interest. Such procedures would be unnecessary because the rule itself already has been subject to notice and comment, and all that remains is to notify the public of the closure. Allowing prior notice and opportunity for public comment is contrary to the public interest because of the need to immediately implement this action in order to protect the fishery since the capacity of the fishing fleet allows for rapid harvest of the quota. Prior notice

and opportunity for public comment will require time and would potentially result in a harvest well in excess of the established quota.

For the aforementioned reasons, the AA also finds good cause to waive the 30 day delay in effectiveness of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3).

This action is taken under 50 CFR 622.43(a) and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: March 9, 2006.

Alan D. Risenhoover,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 06-2504 Filed 3-10-06; 3:02 pm]**BILLING CODE 3510-22-S****DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 679****[Docket No. 060216045-6045-01; I.D. 030906G]****Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Processor Vessels Using Trawl Gear 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; closure.**SUMMARY:** NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher processor vessels using trawl gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2006 first seasonal allowance of the Pacific cod total allowable catch (TAC) specified for catcher processor vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI.**DATES:** Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), March 12, 2006, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., April 1, 2006.**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Josh Keaton, 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 2006 first seasonal allowance of the Pacific cod TAC specified for catcher processor vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI is 21,086 metric tons (mt) as established by the 2006 and 2007 final harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (71 FR 10894, March 3, 2006), for the period 1200 hrs, A.l.t., January 1, 2006, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., April 1, 2006. See § 679.20(c)(3)(iii), § 679.20(c)(5), and § 679.20(a)(7)(i)(B).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 2006 first seasonal allowance of the Pacific cod TAC specified for catcher processor vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 20,586 mt, and is setting aside the remaining 500 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 processor vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI.

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

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 closure of Pacific cod by catcher processor vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of March 9, 2006.

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: March 10, 2006.

Alan D. Risenhoover,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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