

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The snapper-grouper fishery of the South Atlantic is managed under the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Resources of the South Atlantic (FMP). The FMP was prepared by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council 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. Those regulations set the commercial quota for golden tilefish in the South Atlantic at 295,000 lb (133,810 kg), gutted weight (GW), and 151,000 lb (68,492 kg), GW, for snowy grouper for the current fishing year, January 1 through December 31, 2006.

Under 50 CFR 622.43(a), NMFS is required to close the commercial fishery for a species or species group when the quota for that species or species group is reached, or is projected to be reached, by filing a notification to that effect in the **Federal Register**. Based on current statistics, NMFS has determined that the available commercial quota of 295,000 lb (133,810 kg), GW, for golden tilefish and 151,000 lb (68,492 kg), GW, for snowy grouper will be reached on or before October 23, 2006. Accordingly, NMFS is closing the commercial golden tilefish and snowy grouper fisheries in the South Atlantic EEZ from 12:01 a.m., local time, on October 23, 2006, until 12:01 a.m., local time, on January 1, 2007. The operator of a vessel with a valid commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper having golden tilefish and/or snowy grouper aboard must have landed and bartered, traded, or sold such golden tilefish and/or snowy grouper prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, October 23, 2006.

During the closure, the appropriate bag limits specified in 50 CFR 622.39(d)(1) and the applicable possession limits specified in 50 CFR 622.39(d)(2) apply to all harvest or possession of golden tilefish and snowy grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, and the sale or purchase of golden tilefish or snowy grouper taken from the EEZ is prohibited. The prohibition on sale or purchase does not apply to sale or purchase of golden tilefish or snowy grouper that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, October 23, 2006, and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fisheries. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, finds that the need to immediately

implement this action to close the fisheries constitutes good cause to waive the requirements to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth in 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(3)(B), as such procedures would be unnecessary and contrary to the public interest. Similarly, there is a need to implement these measures in a timely fashion to prevent an overrun of the commercial quotas of South Atlantic golden tilefish and snowy grouper, given the capacity of the fishing fleet to harvest the quotas quickly. Any delay in implementing this action would be impractical and contrary to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the FMP, and the public interest. For these same reasons, NMFS finds 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 waived.

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: October 5, 2006.

James P. Burgess,

Acting 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. 060216045-6045-01; I.D. 100506C]

Fisheries of the Economic Exclusive Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel 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; modification of a closure; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS is opening directed fishing for Atka mackerel with gears other than jig 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 fully use the 2006 Atka mackerel total allowable catch (TAC) specified for gears other than jig in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), October 7, 2006, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2006.

Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., October 23, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Sue Salveson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, Attn: Ellen Walsh. Comments may be submitted by:

- Mail to: P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802;
- Hand delivery to the Federal Building, 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, Alaska;
- FAX to 907-586-7557;
- E-mail to atka@noaa.gov and include in the subject line of the e-mail comment the document identifier: aieamckro [E-mail comments, with or without attachments, are limited to 5 megabytes]; or
- Webform at the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions at that site for submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Hogan, 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.

NMFS closed directed fishing for Atka mackerel with gears other than jig in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on September 2, 2006 (71 FR 48485, August 21, 2006).

NMFS has determined that as of September 20, 2006, approximately 1,884 metric tons of Atka mackerel remain in the 2006 Atka mackerel TAC specified for gears other than jig in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI. Therefore, in accordance with § 679.25(a)(1)(i), (a)(2)(i)(C), and (a)(2)(iii)(D), and to allow the Atka mackerel fishery to resume, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is reopening directed fishing for Atka mackerel with gears other than jig in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI.

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 opening of the fishery, not allow the full utilization of the Atka mackerel TAC specified for gears other than jig in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI, and therefore reduce the public's ability to use and enjoy the fishery resource. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of October 4, 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.

Without this inseason adjustment, NMFS could not allow the Atka mackerel fishery by vessels using other gear in the GOA to be harvested in an expedient manner and in accordance with the regulatory schedule. Under § 679.25(c)(2), interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this action to the above address until October 23, 2006.

This action is required by § 679.25 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: October 5, 2006.

James P. Burgess,
Acting 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. 060216044-6044-01; I.D. 100606A]

Fisheries of the Economic Exclusive Zone Off Alaska; Trawl Gear in the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is closing directed fishing for groundfish by vessels using trawl gear in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA), except for directed fishing for pollock by vessels using pelagic trawl gear in those portions of the GOA open to directed fishing for pollock. This action is necessary because the 2006 Pacific halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) limit specified for vessels using trawl gear in the GOA has been reached.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), October 8, 2006, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Hogan, 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 2006 Pacific halibut PSC limit for vessels using trawl gear is 2,000 metric tons as established by the 2006 and 2007 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (71 FR 10870, March 3, 2006).

The Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with § 679.21(d)(7)(i), that the 2006 Pacific halibut PSC limit specified for vessels using trawl gear in the GOA has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is closing directed fishing for groundfish by vessels using trawl gear in the GOA, except for directed fishing for pollock by vessels using pelagic trawl gear in those portions of the GOA that remain open to directed fishing for pollock.

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 directed fishing for groundfish by vessels using trawl gear in 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 October 5, 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 § 679.21 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: October 6, 2006.

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. 060216045-6045-01; I.D. 100506B]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel in the Western Aleutian District of 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 Atka mackerel in the Western