

possesses a valid shark research permit under § 635.32 and an NMFS-approved observer is onboard. A shark dealer, issued a permit pursuant to § 635.4, may not purchase or receive non-sandbar LCS in the Gulf of Mexico region from a vessel issued an Atlantic Shark LAP, except that a permitted shark dealer or processor may possess non-sandbar LCS that were harvested, off-loaded, and sold, traded, or bartered, prior to the effective date of the closure and were held in storage. However, a permitted shark dealer or processor may possess non-sandbar LCS that were harvested by a vessel issued a valid shark research fishery permit (per § 635.32) with a NMFS-approved observer onboard during the trip the sharks were taken as long as the non-sandbar shark research fishery remains open. Under this closure, a shark dealer, issued a permit pursuant to § 635.4 may, in accordance with state regulations, purchase or receive a non-sandbar LCS in the Gulf of Mexico region if the sharks were harvested, off-loaded, and sold, traded, or bartered from a vessel that fishes only in state waters and that has not been issued a Shark LAP, HMS Angling permit, or HMS Charter/Headboat permit pursuant to § 635.4.

Classification

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), finds that providing for prior notice and public comment for this action is impracticable and contrary to the public interest because the fishery is currently underway, and any delay in this action would cause overharvest of the quota and be inconsistent with management requirements and objectives. Similarly, affording prior notice and opportunity for public comment on this action is contrary to the public interest because if the quota is exceeded, the affected public is likely to experience reductions in the available quota and a lack of fishing opportunities in future seasons. Thus, for these reasons, the AA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in effective date pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 (d)(3). This action is required under § 635.28(b)(2) and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: May 29, 2009.

Kristen C. Koch,

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. 0910091344-9056-02]

RIN 0648-XP57

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Deep-Water Species Fishery by Catcher Processor Rockfish Cooperatives 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 prohibiting directed fishing for species that comprise the deep-water species fishery by catcher processor rockfish cooperatives subject to sideboard limits established under the Central Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Rockfish Program in the GOA. This action is necessary because the 2009 Pacific halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) sideboard limit specified for the deep-water species fishery by catcher processor rockfish cooperatives subject to sideboard limits established under the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the GOA is insufficient to support directed fishing for the deep-water species fisheries.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 1, 2009, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., July 31, 2009.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Obren Davis, 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 2009 Pacific halibut PSC sideboard limit specified for the deep-water species fishery by catcher processor rockfish cooperatives subject to sideboard limits established under the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the GOA is 8 metric tons as established by § 679.82(d), the final 2009 and 2010 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (74 FR 7333, February 17, 2009), and as posted as the Catcher Processor Sideboards at [http://](http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/goarat/default.htm)

www.fakr.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/goarat/default.htm.

In accordance with § 679.82(d)(9)(i)(B), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 2009 Pacific halibut PSC sideboard limit specified for the deep-water species fishery by catcher processor rockfish cooperatives subject to sideboard limits established under the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the GOA is insufficient to support directed fishing for the deep-water species fisheries. Consequently, in accordance with § 679.82(d)(9)(ii)(B), NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for species that comprise the deep-water species fishery by catcher processor rockfish cooperatives subject to sideboard limits established under the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the GOA. The species and species groups that comprise the deep-water species fishery for the sideboard limit include deep-water flatfish, rex sole, and arrowtooth flounder.

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. Notice and comment is unnecessary because there is insufficient halibut PSC sideboard limit to support a directed fishery and therefore the Regional Administrator has no discretion for any action other than to prohibit directed fishing.

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 § 679.82 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: May 29, 2009.

Kristen C. Koch,

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