

TABLE 9—FINAL 2024 SECTOR ALLOCATIONS AND SEASONAL ALLOWANCES OF THE BSAI PACIFIC COD TAC—Continued  
[Amounts are in metric tons]

Sector	Percent	2024	2024	2024	
				Season	Amount
A-season				Jan 1–Jun 10	1,058
B-season				Sept 1–Dec 31	1,017
Pot catcher vessels ≥ 60 ft LOA	8.4	n/a	11,620	n/a	n/a
A-season				Jan 1–Jun 10	5,926
B-season				Sept–1–Dec 31	5,694
Catcher vessels < 60 ft LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear	2.0	n/a	2,767	n/a	n/a
Trawl catcher vessels <sup>3</sup>	22.1	30,754	n/a	n/a	n/a
A-Season ICA				Jan 20–Apr 1	1,500
A-season PCTC				Jan 20–Apr 1	21,258
B-season ICA				Apr 1–Jun 10	700
B-season PCTC				Apr 1–Jun 10	2,683
C-season trawl catcher vessels				Jun 10–Nov 1	4,613
AFA trawl catcher/processors	2.3	3,201	n/a	n/a	n/a
A-season				Jan 20–Apr 1	2,400
B-season				Apr 1–Jun 10	800
C-season				Jun 10–Nov 1	
Amendment 80	13.4	18,647	n/a	n/a	n/a
A-season				Jan 20–Apr 1	13,985
B-season				Apr 1–Jun 10	4,662
C-season				Jun 10–Dec 31	
Jig	1.4	1,948	n/a	n/a	n/a
A-season				Jan 1–Apr 30	1,169
B-season				Apr 30–Aug 31	390
C-season				Aug 31–Dec 31	390

<sup>1</sup> The sector allocations and seasonal allowances for BSAI Pacific cod TAC are based on the sum of the BS and AI Pacific cod TACs, after subtraction of the reserves for the CDQ Program. If the TAC for Pacific cod in either the BS or AI is or will be reached, then directed fishing will be prohibited for non-CDQ Pacific cod in that subarea, even if a BSAI allowance remains (§ 679.20(d)(1)(iii)).

<sup>2</sup> The ICA for the hook-and-line and pot sectors will be deducted from the aggregate portion of Pacific cod TAC allocated to the hook-and-line and pot sectors. The Regional Administrator approves an ICA of 500 mt based on anticipated incidental catch by these sectors in other fisheries.

<sup>3</sup> The A and B season trawl CV Pacific cod allocation will be allocated to the Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program after subtraction of the A and B season ICAs (§ 679.131(b)(1)). The Regional Administrator approves the A and B seasons ICAs of 1,500 mt and 700 mt, respectively, to account for projected incidental catch of Pacific cod by trawl catcher vessels engaged in directed fishing for groundfish other than Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative (PCTC) Program Pacific cod.

Note: Seasonal or sector apportionments may not total precisely due to rounding.

**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 allow for harvests that exceed the appropriate allocations for pollock, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod in the BSAI based on the best scientific information available. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of December 14, 2023.

Without this inseason adjustment, NMFS could not allow the fishery for pollock, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod in the BSAI 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 January 10, 2024.

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

Dated: December 19, 2023.

**Everett Wayne Baxter,**

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

[FR Doc. 2023–28323 Filed 12–22–23; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**50 CFR Part 679**

[Docket No. 230224–0053; RTID 0648–XD295]

**Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Western 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 Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2023 Pacific cod total allowable catch (TAC) apportioned to catcher/processors using

HAL gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), December 21, 2023, through 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 2023.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Adam Zaleski, 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 2023 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA is 1,439 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2023 and 2024 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (88 FR 13238, March 2, 2023) and inseason adjustment (88 FR 76141, November 6, 2023).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the 2023 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 1,430 mt and is setting aside the remaining 9 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 Western 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 closure of Pacific cod by catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Western 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 December 19, 2023.

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: December 20, 2023.

**Everett Wayne Baxter,**

*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. 230224-0053; RTID 0648-XD598]

#### Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2024 Gulf of Alaska Pollock and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts

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

**ACTION:** Temporary rule; inseason adjustment; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is adjusting the 2024 total allowable catch (TAC) amounts for the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) pollock and Pacific cod fisheries. This action is necessary because NMFS has determined these TACs are incorrectly specified, and will ensure the GOA pollock and Pacific cod TACs are the appropriate amount based on the best scientific information available for pollock and Pacific cod in the GOA. This action is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska.

**DATES:** Effective 0001 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), January 1, 2024, until the effective date of the final 2024 and 2025 harvest specifications for GOA

groundfish, unless otherwise modified or superseded through publication of a notification in the **Federal Register**.

Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., January 10, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments on this document, identified by docket number NOAA-NMFS-2022-0094, by any of the following methods:

**Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and enter NOAA-NMFS-2022-0094 in the Search box. Click on the "Comment" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

**Mail:** Submit written comments to Gretchen Harrington, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, 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 <https://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:** Adam Zaleski, 907-586-7228.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone according to the FMP for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (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 final 2023 and 2024 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (88 FR 13238, March 2, 2023) set the 2024 pollock TAC at 168,416 metric tons (mt) in the GOA. In December 2023, the Council recommended a 2024 pollock TAC of 195,720 mt for the GOA, which is greater than the 168,416 mt established by the final 2023 and 2024 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA. The Council's recommended 2024 TAC, and the area and seasonal