

date of filing. From the effective date and time of the closure until NMFS announces, via a notice in the **Federal Register**, that additional quota is available and the season is reopened, the fishery for that specific quota is closed, even across fishing years.

On December 24, 2008, NMFS announced that the sandbar shark quota for the shark research fishery for the 2009 fishing year would be 87.5 metric tons (mt) dressed weight (dw) (193,784 lb dw). Scientific observer reports received through June 26, 2009, and dealer reports through August 26, 2009, indicate that 79.6 mt dw or 90.5 percent of the available quota for the sandbar shark research fishery has been taken. Accordingly, NMFS is closing the commercial sandbar shark research fishery as of 11:30 p.m. local time October 13, 2009. The SCS and pelagic shark fisheries will remain open.

During this closure, a fishing vessel, issued an Atlantic Shark Limited Access Permit (LAP) pursuant to § 635.4, may not possess or sell a sandbar shark, except under the conditions specified in § 635.22(a) and (c) or if the vessel 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 sandbar sharks, except that a permitted shark dealer or processor may possess sandbar sharks that were harvested, off-loaded, and sold, traded, or bartered, prior to the effective date of the closure and were held in storage. Additionally, a shark dealer issued a Federal permit, pursuant to § 635.4 may, in accordance with state regulations, purchase or receive a sandbar shark if the shark was harvested, off-loaded, and sold, traded, or bartered from a vessel that fishes only in state waters and had not been issued a Shark LAP, HMS Angling permit, or HMS CHB permit under § 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 fisheries are 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 50 CFR 635.28(b)(2) and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: September 29, 2009.

Emily H. Menashes,

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. 09100091344-9056-02]

RIN 0648-XS04

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 630 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 pollock in Statistical Area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2009 total allowable catch (TAC) of pollock for Statistical Area 630 in the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), October 1, 2009, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2009.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Josh Keaton, 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 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA is 11,058 metric tons (mt) as established by the final

2009 and 2010 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (74 FR 7333, February 17, 2009).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the 2009 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 10,800 mt, and is setting aside the remaining 258 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 pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA.

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 pollock in Statistical Area 630 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 September 30, 2009.

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: October 1, 2009.

Emily H. Menashes,

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