

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 679**

[Docket No. 071106671–8010–02]

RIN 0648–XM87

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 610 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 610 in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the A season allowance of the 2009 total allowable catch (TAC) of pollock for Statistical Area 610 in the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), January 22, 2009, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., March 10, 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 A season allowance of the 2009 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the GOA is 3,234 metric tons (mt) as established by the 2008 and 2009 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (73 FR 10562, February 27, 2008) and inseason adjustment (74 FR 233, January 5, 2009).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the A season allowance of the 2009 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 3,200 mt, and is setting aside the remaining 34 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 610 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 610 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 January 20, 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: January 22, 2009.

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. 071106673–8011–02]

RIN 0648–XM81

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic 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; closures and openings.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Atka mackerel in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI) for vessels participating in the BSAI trawl limited access fishery. This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2009 A season total allowable catch (TAC) of Atka mackerel in these areas for vessels participating in the BSAI trawl limited access fishery. NMFS is also announcing the opening and closing dates of the first and second directed fisheries within the harvest limit area (HLA) in Statistical Areas 542 and 543. These actions are necessary to conduct directed fishing for Atka mackerel in the HLA in areas 542 and 543.

DATES: The effective dates are provided in Table 1 under the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this temporary action.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Furuness, 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 2009 A season TAC of Atka mackerel for vessels participating in the BSAI trawl limited access fishery in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea was established as 244 metric tons (mt) by the final 2008 and 2009 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (73 FR 10160, February 26, 2008) and as posted as the 2009 Allocations at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/amds/80/2009allocationtables.pdf>.

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i) and (d)(1)(ii)(B), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that 244 mt of the 2009 A season Atka mackerel TAC for vessels participating in the BSAI trawl limited access fishery in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea will be necessary as incidental catch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing