

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 648**

[Docket No. 051209329-5329-01; I.D. 042606C]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries; Reopening of Directed Fishery for Loligo Squid

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

ACTION: Directed fishery reopening.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that commercial quota is available to allow the directed fishery for *Loligo* squid to reopen. Vessels issued a Federal moratorium permit to harvest *Loligo* squid in excess of the incidental catch allowance may continue landing *Loligo* squid as of April 27, 2006 effective date of this notice. The intent of this action is to allow for the full utilization of the commercial quota allocated to the *Loligo* squid directed fishery.

DATES: Effective April 27, 2006 through June 30, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Don Frei, Fishery Management Specialist, 978-281-9221, fax 978-281-9135.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 648.22 of part 50 CFR requires NMFS to close the directed *Loligo* squid fishery in the EEZ in Quarters I, II and III when 80 percent of the quarterly quota has been harvested. The Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS, based on dealer reports and other available information, determined that 80 percent of the Quarter II quota for *Loligo* squid would be harvested by April 21, 2006 (71 FR 20900, April 24, 2006). Therefore, effective 0001 hours, April 21, 2006, the directed fishery for *Loligo* squid was closed. However, analysis of more recent data indicated that the closure threshold level of *Loligo* harvest had not been attained. Therefore, NMFS announces that the directed *Loligo* squid fishery will reopen on April 27, 2006. Vessels issued a Federal moratorium permit to harvest *Loligo* squid in excess of the incidental catch allowance may continue fishing for, retaining and landing *Loligo* squid in excess of the incidental catch upon reopening.

Classification

This action is required by 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: April 26, 2006.

James P. Burgess,

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

[FR Doc. 06-4117 Filed 4-27-06; 12:50 pm]

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

[Docket No. 060216044-6044-01; I.D.042606F]

Fisheries of the Economic Exclusive Zone Off Alaska; Deep-water Species Fishery by Vessels Using 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 prohibiting directed fishing for species that comprise the deep-water species fishery by vessels using trawl gear in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary because the second seasonal apportionment of the 2006 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the deep-water species fishery in the GOA has been reached.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), April 27, 2006, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., July 1, 2006.

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 second seasonal apportionment of the 2006 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the deep-water species fishery in the GOA is 300 metric tons as established by the 2006 and

2007 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (71 FR 10870, March 3, 2006), for the period 1200 hrs, A.l.t., April 1, 2006, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., July 1, 2006.

In accordance with § 679.21(d)(7)(i), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the second seasonal apportionment of the 2006 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl deep-water species fishery in the GOA has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for the deep-water species fishery by vessels using trawl gear in the GOA. The species and species groups that comprise the deep-water species fishery are sablefish, rockfish, 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. 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 the deep-water species fishery 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 April 26, 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: April 26, 2006.

James P. Burgess,

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

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