

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

[Docket No. 0910131362–0087–02]

RIN 0648–XX65

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch for Catcher Vessels Participating in the Rockfish Entry Level Trawl Fishery in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; modification of closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is reopening directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch by trawl catcher vessels participating in the rockfish entry level fishery in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully use the 2010 directed fishing allowance of Pacific ocean perch for trawl catcher vessels participating in the rockfish entry level fishery in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 15, 2010, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., July 17, 2010. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., July 30, 2010.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Sue Salvesson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. You may submit comments, identified by 0648–XX65, by any one of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal website at <http://www.regulations.gov>.
- Mail: P. O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802.
- Fax: (907) 586–7557.
- Hand delivery to the Federal Building: 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK.

All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (e.g., name, address)

voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter N/A in the required fields, if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe portable document file (pdf) formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steve Whitney, 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.

NMFS closed the directed fishery for Pacific ocean perch allocated to trawl catcher vessels participating in the entry level rockfish fishery in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on July 3, 2010 (75 FR 38396, July 7, 2010).

NMFS has determined that approximately 209 mt of Pacific ocean perch remain in the directed fishing allowance in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. Therefore, in accordance with § 679.25(a)(1)(i), (a)(2)(i)(C) and (a)(2)(iii)(D), and to fully utilize the allowance of the 2010 TAC of Pacific ocean perch in Statistical Area 630, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is reopening directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. This will enhance the socioeconomic well-being of harvesters dependent upon Pacific ocean perch in this area. The Administrator, Alaska Region (Regional Administrator) considered the following factors in reaching this decision: (1) The current catch of Pacific ocean perch by the Rockfish Pilot Program entry level trawl vessels and, (2) the harvest capacity and stated intent on future harvesting patterns of vessels participating in this fishery.

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional Administrator finds that

this directed fishing allowance will be reached after 48 hours. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch by entry level trawl vessels in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA, effective 1200 hrs, A.l.t., July 17, 2010.

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) and 679.25(c)(1)(ii) 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 opening of Pacific ocean perch in the Central 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 July 9, 2010.

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.

Without this inseason adjustment, NMFS could not allow the fishery for Pacific ocean perch by entry level trawl vessels in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA 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 July 30, 2010.

This action is required by § 679.20 and § 679.25 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: July 15, 2010.

Galen Tremble,

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

[FR Doc. 2010–17689 Filed 7–15–10; 4:15 pm]

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