

implemented through this action help to ensure that the Northeast multispecies common pool fishery may achieve the optimum yield (OY) for the relevant stocks, while controlling catch to help prevent inseason closures or quota overages. Delay of this action would leave the common pool fishery with no possession or trip limits to control catch and would likely lead to early closure of a trimester and quota overages. Any overage of catch must be deducted from the Trimester 3 quota, which could substantially disrupt the trimester structure and intent to distribute the fishery across the entire fishing year. An overage reduction in Trimester 3 would further reduce fishing opportunities for common pool vessels and likely result in early closure of Trimester 3.

This would undermine management objectives of the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan and cause unnecessary negative economic impacts to the common pool fishery.

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

Dated: April 26, 2017.

**Karen H. Abrams,**

*Acting Deputy 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. 161020985-7181-02]

RIN 0648-XF389

#### Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Greenland Turbot in the Aleutian Islands Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Temporary rule; closure.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Greenland turbot in the Aleutian Islands subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2017 Greenland turbot initial total allowable catch (ITAC) in the Aleutian Islands subarea of the BSAI.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), May 1, 2017, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2017.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Steve Whitney, 907-586-7228.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the BSAI 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 2017 Greenland turbot ITAC in the Aleutian Islands subarea of the BSAI is 106 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2017 and 2018 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (82 FR 11826, February 27, 2017). The Regional Administrator has determined that the 2017 ITAC for Greenland turbot in the Aleutian Islands subarea of the BSAI is necessary to account for the incidental catch of this species in other anticipated groundfish fisheries for the 2017 fishing year. Therefore, in accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator establishes the directed fishing allowance for Greenland turbot in the Aleutian Islands subarea of the BSAI as zero mt. Consequently, in

accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Greenland turbot in the Aleutian Islands subarea of the BSAI.

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 directed fishing closure of Greenland turbot in the Aleutian Islands subarea of the BSAI. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as April 25, 2017.

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: April 26, 2017.

**Karen H. Abrams,**

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

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