

TABLE 1—CURRENT AND NEW POSSESSION AND TRIP LIMITS—Continued

Stock	Permit	Current	New
	Small Vessel Category.		

* The Small Vessel Category trip limit of 300 lb (136 kg) of cod, yellowtail flounder, and haddock combined remains in place.

Weekly quota monitoring reports for the common pool fishery can be found on our website at: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/ro/fso/MultiMonReports.htm>. We will continue to monitor common pool catch through vessel trip reports, dealer-reported landings, VMS catch reports, and other available information and, if necessary, we will make additional adjustments to common pool management measures.

Classification

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

The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, finds good cause pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) and 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3) to waive prior notice and the opportunity for public comment and the 30-day delayed effectiveness period because this action relieves possession and landing restrictions, and delayed implementation would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest.

The regulations at § 648.86(o) authorize the Regional Administrator to adjust the possession and trip limits for common pool vessels in order to help avoid overharvest or underharvest of the common pool quotas.

The catch data used as the basis for this action only recently became available. The available analysis indicates that the increased possession and trip limit adjustments for GOM cod and witch flounder should help the fishery achieve the optimum yield (OY) for this stock. Any delay in this action would limit the benefits to common pool vessels that the increased landing and possession limits are intended to provide.

The time necessary to provide for prior notice and comment, and a 30-day delay in effectiveness, would keep NMFS from implementing the necessary possession and trip limit before the end of the fishing year on April 30, 2019, which could prevent the fishery from achieving the OY and cause negative economic impacts to the common pool fishery. This would undermine management objectives of the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan and cause unnecessary negative economic impacts to the common pool fishery. The public received prior notice and an opportunity to comment on the

Regional Administrator's exercise of this authority. The fishing industry participants have experienced these adjustments and have become accustomed to this process. There is additional good cause to waive the delayed effective period because this action relieves restrictions on fishing vessels by increasing a trip limit.

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

Dated: March 8, 2019.

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 648

[Docket No. 151110999-5999-01]

RIN 648-XG866

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish; 2019 River Herring and Shad Catch Cap Reached for the Directed Atlantic Mackerel Commercial Fishery

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is reducing the Atlantic mackerel possession limit for Federal limited access Atlantic mackerel permitted vessels based on a projection that the 2019 river herring and shad catch cap for that fishery has been reached. This action is necessary to comply with the regulations implementing the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan and is intended to limit the harvest of river herring and shad in the Greater Atlantic Region.

DATES: Effective 00:01 hr local time, March 12, 2019, through December 31, 2019.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alyson Pitts, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9352.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations governing the Atlantic mackerel fishery can be found at 50 CFR part 648, including requirements for setting annual catch cap allocations for river herring and shad. NMFS set the 2018 river herring and shad catch cap for the directed Atlantic mackerel fishery at 82 mt as part of a final rule to implement the 2016 through 2018 Atlantic mackerel specifications (81 FR 24504, April 4, 2016). The 2019 river herring and shad catch cap will be adjusted in the final rule of Framework adjustment 13 to the Atlantic mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan, which is currently under development. NMFS will evaluate the mackerel fishery and landings relative to the new proposed cap, if approved.

The NMFS Administrator of the Greater Atlantic Region (Regional Administrator) monitors river herring and shad catch from the directed Atlantic mackerel fishery based on vessel and dealer reports, state data, and other available information. The regulations at § 648.24 require that when the Regional Administrator projects that when 95 percent of the river herring and shad catch cap has been caught by the directed Atlantic mackerel fishery (*i.e.*, trips that land more than 20,000 lb (9.08 mt) of Atlantic mackerel) will reach 95 percent of a catch cap, NMFS must prohibit, through notification in the **Federal Register**, Federal limited access permitted Atlantic mackerel vessels from fishing for, possessing, transferring, receiving, landing, or selling more than 20,000 lb (9.08 mt) of Atlantic mackerel per trip or landing more than once per calendar day for the remainder of the calendar year.

The Regional Administrator has determined, based on vessel and dealer reports, state data, and other available information, that Federal limited access Atlantic mackerel vessels will have caught 95 percent of the river herring and shad catch cap by March 12, 2019. The regulations at § 648.24(d) require NMFS to provide at least a 72 hour notice to the public before any Atlantic mackerel possession reduction or fishery closure. Therefore, effective 00:01 hr local time, March 12, 2019, federally permitted vessels targeting Atlantic mackerel may not fish for,

catch, possess, transfer, land, or sell more than 20,000 lb (9.08 mt) of Atlantic mackerel per trip or calendar day through December 31, 2019. Vessels with more than 20,000 lb (9.08 mt) of Atlantic mackerel that have entered port before 00:01 hr local time, March 12, 2019, may land and sell more than 20,000 lb (9.08 mt) of Atlantic mackerel from that trip.

Classification

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

NMFS finds good cause pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) to waive prior notice and the opportunity for public comment because it would be contrary to the public interest and impracticable. This action restricts the catch of Atlantic mackerel for the remainder of the fishing year. Data have only recently become available indicating that directed Atlantic mackerel trips by federally permitted vessels will have caught 95 percent of the river herring and shad catch cap established for the 2019 calendar year. Once NMFS projects that river herring and shad catch will reach 95 percent of the catch cap, NMFS is required by Federal regulation to implement a 20,000 lb (9.08 mt) Atlantic mackerel possession limit and prohibit vessels from landing Atlantic mackerel more than once per calendar day through December 31, 2019. The regulations at § 648.24(b)(6) require such action to ensure that such vessels do not exceed the river herring and shad catch cap for the Atlantic mackerel fishery. If implementation of this closure is delayed to solicit prior public comment, the river herring and shad catch cap for this fishing year will likely be exceeded; thereby, undermining the conservation objectives of the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan. NMFS further finds, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), good cause to waive the 30-day delayed effectiveness period for the reasons stated above.

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

Dated: March 8, 2019.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

[FR Doc. 2019-04594 Filed 3-8-19; 4:15 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 170816769-8162-02]

RIN 0648-XG885

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 B season allowance of the 2019 total allowable catch of pollock for Statistical Area 610 in the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), March 10, 2019, through 1200 hours, A.l.t., May 31, 2019.

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 B season allowance of the 2019 total allowable catch (TAC) of pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the GOA is 848 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2018 and 2019 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (83 FR 8768, March 1, 2018) and inseason adjustment (84 FR 33, January 4, 2019).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the B season allowance of the 2019 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 748 mt and is setting aside the remaining 100 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.

While this closure is effective, 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 directed fishing for 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 March 7, 2019.

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: March 8, 2019.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

[FR Doc. 2019-04593 Filed 3-8-19; 4:15 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 180713633-9174-02]

RIN 0648-XG356

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands; Final 2019 and 2020 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish

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