

Table 3 (South) Continued

Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table

7/1/2023

	JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>						
43	40°10' N lat. - 38°57.5' N lat.		40 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 125 fm line <sup>1/</sup>			
44	38°57.5' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.		50 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 125 fm line <sup>1/</sup>			
45	South of 34°27' N lat.		100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup> (also applies around islands)			
See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, CCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Banks, and EFHCAs).						
46 <b>SALMON TROLL</b> (subject to RCAs when retaining all species of groundfish, except for yellowtail rockfish, as described below)						
47	South of 40°10' N lat.	Salmon trollers may retain and land up to 1 lb of yellowtail rockfish for every 2 lb of Chinook salmon landed, with a cumulative limit of 200 lb/month, both within and outside of the RCA. This limit is within the 4,000 lb per 2 month limit for minor shelf rockfish between 40°10' and 34°27' N lat., and not in addition to that limit. All groundfish species are subject to the open access limits, seasons, size limits and RCA restrictions listed in the table above, unless otherwise stated here.				
48 <b>RIDGEBACK PRAWN AND, SOUTH OF 38°57.50' N lat., CA HALIBUT AND SEA CUCUMBER NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL</b>						
49 <b>NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) for CA Halibut, Sea Cucumber &amp; Ridgeback Prawn:</b>						
50	40°10' N lat. - 38°00' N lat.	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 200 fm line <sup>1/</sup>	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup>		100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 200 fm line <sup>1/</sup>	
51	38°00' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup>				
52	South of 34°27' N lat.	100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup>				
53	Groundfish: 300 lb/trip. Species-specific limits described in the table above also apply and are counted toward the 300 lb groundfish per trip limit. The amount of groundfish landed may not exceed the amount of the target species landed, except that the amount of spiny dogfish landed may exceed the amount of target species landed. Spiny dogfish are limited by the 300 lb/trip overall groundfish limit. The daily trip limits for sablefish coastwide and thornyheads south of Pt. Conception and the overall groundfish "per trip" limit may not be multiplied by the number of days of the trip. Vessels participating in the California halibut fishery south of 38°57.50' N lat. are allowed to (1) land up to 100 lb/day of groundfish without the ratio requirement, provided that at least one California halibut is landed and (2) land up to 3,000 lb/month of flatfish, no more than 300 lb of which may be species other than Pacific sanddabs, sand sole, starry flounder, rock sole, curfin sole, or California scorpionfish (California scorpionfish is also subject to the trip limits and closures in line 29).					
54 <b>PINK SHRIMP NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL GEAR</b> (not subject to RCAs)						
55	South	Effective April 1 - October 31: Groundfish: 500 lb/day, multiplied by the number of days of the trip, not to exceed 1,500 lb/trip. The following sublimits also apply and are counted toward the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/ trip groundfish limits: lingcod 300 lb/ month (minimum 24 inch size limit); sablefish 2,000 lb/ month; canary rockfish, thornyheads and yelloweye rockfish are PROHIBITED. All other groundfish species taken are managed under the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/ trip groundfish limits. Landings of all groundfish species count toward the per day, per trip or other species-specific sublimits described here and the species-specific limits described in the table above do not apply. The amount of groundfish landed may not exceed the amount of pink shrimp landed.				

TABLE 3 (South) Continued

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting.

2/ Minor Shelf and Slope Rockfish complexes are defined at § 660.11. Pacific ocean perch is included in the trip limits for minor slope rockfish. Blackgill rockfish have a species specific trip sub-limit within the minor slope rockfish cumulative limits. Yellowtail rockfish is included in the trip limits for minor shelf rockfish. Bronzespotted rockfish have a species specific trip limit.

3/ "Other flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

4/ "Shallow Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(1).

5/ "Deeper Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(2).

6/ The commercial minimum size limit for lingcod is 22 inches (56 cm) South of 42° N lat.

7/ "Other fish" are defined at § 660.11 and includes kelp greenling off California and leopard shark.

8/ Open access vessels may be allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See § 660.330 (d) of the regulations for more information.

To convert pounds to kilograms, divide by 2.20462, the number of pounds in one kilogram.

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**50 CFR Part 679**

[Docket No. 230224-0053]

RTID 0648-XD088

**Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Jig Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of 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 Pacific cod by vessels using jig gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2023 total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific cod by vessels using jig gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), August 2, 2023, through 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 2023.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Krista Milani, 907-581-2062.

**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 2023 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to vessels using jig gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA is 131 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2023 and 2024 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (88 FR 13238, March 2, 2023).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the 2023 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to vessels using jig gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 130 mt and is setting aside the remaining 1 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 Pacific cod by vessels using jig gear in the Western Regulatory Area 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**

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR part 679, which was issued pursuant to

section 304(b), and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment would be 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 Pacific cod by vessels using jig gear in the Western 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 August 01, 2023.

The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA 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.

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

Dated: August 2, 2023.

**Jennifer M. Wallace,**

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

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