

gear in the West Yakutat District of the GOA has been reached.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 13, 1996, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Pearson, 907-486-6919.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone is managed by NMFS 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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Fishing by U.S. vessels is governed by regulations implementing the FMP at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

The allocation of the sablefish TAC assigned to trawl gear in the West Yakutat District of the GOA was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4304, February 5, 1996), as 152 metric tons. (See § 679.20(a)(4)(i).)

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with § 679.24(c)(2)(ii), that the allocation of the sablefish TAC assigned to trawl gear in the West Yakutat District of the GOA has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that further catches of sablefish by vessels using trawl gear in the West Yakutat District of the GOA be treated as prohibited species in accordance with § 679.21(b).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 679.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: July 12, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 960129018-6018-01; I.D. 071596B]

Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska; Sablefish in the Central Regulatory Area

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting retention of sablefish by vessels using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). NMFS is requiring that catches of sablefish by vessels using trawl gear in this area be treated in the same manner as prohibited species and discarded at sea with a minimum of injury. This action is necessary because the allocation of the sablefish total allowable catch (TAC) assigned to trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA has been reached.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 15, 1996, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Pearson, 907-486-6919.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive

economic zone is managed by NMFS 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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Fishing by U.S. vessels is governed by regulations implementing the FMP at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

The allocation of the sablefish TAC assigned to trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4304, February 5, 1996), as 1,380 metric tons. (See § 679.20(a)(4)(ii)(B).)

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with § 679.20(d)(2), that the allocation of the sablefish TAC assigned to trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that further catches of sablefish by vessels using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA be treated as prohibited species in accordance with § 679.21(b).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 679.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: July 15, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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