

50 CFR Part 679**[Docket No. 960129018-6018-01; I.D. 072696B]****Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska; "Other Rockfish" Species Group in the Eastern Regulatory Area****AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.**ACTION:** Modification of a closure.**SUMMARY:** NMFS is opening the directed fishery for the "other rockfish" species group in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully utilize the total allowable catch (TAC) of the "other rockfish" in that area.**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 31, 1996, until 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 1996.**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Andrew Smoker, 907-586-7228.**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 annual TAC for the "other rockfish" species group in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA, was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4304, February 5, 1996) as 750 metric tons (mt) (see § 679.20(c)(3)(ii)). The Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish also closed the directed fishery for the "other rockfish" in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA (see § 679.20(d)(1)(iii)) in anticipation that the TAC would be needed as incidental catch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries during 1996. NMFS has determined that as of July 13, 1996, 700 mt remain in the directed fishing allowance.

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 1996 directed fishing allowance of the "other

rockfish" species group in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA has not been reached. Therefore, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for the "other rockfish" species group in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA.

All other closures remain in full force and effect.

Classification

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

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

Dated: July 29, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

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

[FR Doc. 96-19686 Filed 7-30-96; 12:40 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F

50 CFR Part 679**[Docket No. 960129019-6019-01; I.D. 072696A]****Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area; Atka Mackerel in the Central and Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea Subarea****AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.**ACTION:** Modification of a closure.**SUMMARY:** NMFS is opening directed fishing for Atka mackerel in the Central and Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to fully utilize the total allowable catch (TAC) of Atka mackerel in these areas.**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 31, 1996, until 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 1996.**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Andrew N. Smoker, 907 586-7228.**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The groundfish fishery in the BSAI exclusive economic zone is managed by NMFS according to the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (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 50 CFR parts 600 and 679.

The Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4311, February 5, 1996) for the BSAI (see § 679.20(c)(3)(iii)) and subsequent reserve apportionment (61 FR 16085, April 11, 1996) established 33,600 metric tons (mt) as the TAC of Atka mackerel for the Central Aleutian District and 26,700 mt as the TAC for the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea, respectively.

The directed fisheries for Atka mackerel for the Central Aleutian District (61 FR 16883, April 18, 1996; 61 FR 37403, July 18, 1996) and the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea (61 FR 6323, February 20, 1996; 61 FR 36306, July 10, 1996) were closed to directed fishing in order to reserve amounts anticipated to be needed for incidental catch in other fisheries (see § 679.20(d)(1)). NMFS has determined that as of July 13, 1996, 1,000 mt in the Central Aleutian District and 800 mt in the Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea subarea remain in the respective directed fishing allowances.

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 1996 directed fishing allowances for Atka mackerel in the Central Aleutian District and Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea have not been reached. Therefore, NMFS is terminating the previous closures and is reopening directed fishing for Atka mackerel in the Central Aleutian District and Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea.

All other closures remain in full force and effect.

Classification

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

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

Dated: July 29, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

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

[FR Doc. 96-19685 Filed 7-30-96; 12:40 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-F