

Dated: July 19, 1996.
John G. Rogers,
Acting Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.
[FR Doc. 96-19963 Filed 8-6-96; 8:45 am]
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 960129018-6018-01; I.D. 073196A]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish in the Eastern Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting retention of northern rockfish in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska

(GOA). NMFS is requiring that catches of northern rockfish 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 northern rockfish total allowable catch (TAC) in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA has been reached.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), August 1, 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 GOA (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 TAC for northern rockfish 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 20 metric tons. (See § 679.20(c)(3)(ii).)

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with § 679.20(d)(2), that the TAC for northern rockfish in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that further catches of northern rockfish in the Eastern 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: August 1, 1996.
Richard W. Surdi,
Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 96-20056 Filed 8-1-96; 4:40 pm]

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