

The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, finds for good cause that providing prior notice and public comment or delaying the effective date of this action is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. Immediate effectiveness is necessary to prevent overfishing of sharpchin/northern rockfish in the Aleutian Islands subarea of the BSAI. Under § 679.25(c)(2), interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this action to the above address until September 23, 1996.

Classification

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

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

Dated: September 6, 1996.

Gary Matlock,

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

[FR Doc. 96-23321 Filed 9-6-96; 5:02 pm]

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50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 960129019-6019-01; I.D. 090696F]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock by Vessels Using Nonpelagic Trawl Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Island Area

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is closing the directed fishery for pollock by trawl vessels using nonpelagic trawl gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the BSAI bycatch allowance of halibut specified for the trawl pollock/Atka mackerel/“other species” fishery category.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), September 7, 1996, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Furuness, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The groundfish fishery in the BSAI exclusive economic zone is managed by the 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 1996 bycatch allowance of halibut specified for the trawl pollock/Atka mackerel/“other species” fishery category which is defined at § 679.21(e)(3)(iv)(F), was established as 430 metric tons by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4311, February 5, 1996).

The Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with § 679.21(e)(7), that the bycatch allowance of halibut specified for the trawl pollock/Atka mackerel/“other species” fishery category has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is closing the directed fishery for pollock by trawl vessels using nonpelagic trawl gear in the BSAI.

Maximum retainable bycatch amounts for applicable gear types may be found in the regulations at § 679.20(e).

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 679.21 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: September 6, 1996.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

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