

(ZD31)

76. Appendix G to Chapter 2 is amended in Part 10 by revising under entry "MDA972—WS" the abbreviation "ARPA" to "DARPA".

**Appendix I to Chapter 2 [Amended]**

77. Appendix I to Chapter 2 is amended in section I-102, paragraphs (a) and (b), and in section I-103, paragraph (a), by revising the date "September 30, 1995" to read "September 30, 1996".

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**50 CFR Part 679**

[Docket No. 960129018-6018-01; I.D. 091996B]

**Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Northern Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area**

**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 northern rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully utilize the total allowable catch (TAC) of northern rockfish in that area.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), October 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 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.

In accordance with § 679.20(c)(3)(ii), the annual TAC for northern rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4304, February 5, 1996) as 640 metric tons (mt). The directed fishery for northern rockfish in the Western

Regulatory Area of the GOA was closed to directed fishing under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) in order to reserve amounts anticipated to be needed for incidental catch in other fisheries (61 FR 37226, July 17, 1996). NMFS has determined that, as of September 7, 1996, 527 mt remain in the directed fishing allowance.

The Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 1996 directed fishing allowance of northern rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA has not been reached. Therefore, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for northern rockfish in the Western 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: September 20, 1996.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

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