

Dated: September 23, 1996.

John G. Rogers,

Acting Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 960129019-6019-01; I.D. 100296H]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Greenland Turbot in the Bering Sea Subarea

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting retention of Greenland turbot in the Bering Sea subarea (BS) of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). NMFS is requiring that catches of Greenland turbot 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 Greenland turbot total allowable catch (TAC) in the BS has been reached.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.L.T.), October 6, 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 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 subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

In accordance with § 679.20(c)(3)(iii), the initial TAC for Greenland turbot in the BS was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4311, February 5, 1996), as 3,967 metric tons. The Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish also closed the directed fishery with trawl gear for Greenland turbot in the BSAI.

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined, in accordance with

§ 679.20(d)(2), that the TAC for Greenland turbot in the BS has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that further catches of Greenland turbot in the BS 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: October 4, 1996.

Bruce Morehead,

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

[FR Doc. 96-25966 Filed 10-04-96; 4:17 pm]

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50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 960129019-6019-01; I.D. 100296G]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements; Pacific Ocean Perch and "Other Red Rockfish" in the Bering Sea Subarea

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

ACTION: Modification of a closure; notice of change in recordkeeping and reporting requirements.

SUMMARY: NMFS is opening directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in the Bering Sea subarea (BS) of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). NMFS has determined that Daily Production Reports (DPRs) must be submitted by processor vessels using trawl gear that catch or receive Pacific ocean perch or "other red rockfish" and shoreside processing facilities that receive Pacific ocean perch or "other red rockfish" from vessels using trawl gear in the BS. These actions are necessary to fully utilize the total allowable catches (TACs) of Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in that area and to prevent exceeding the TACs for those species and species groups.

EFFECTIVE DATE: From 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.L.T.), October 6, 1996, until 2400 hrs, 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 subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

In accordance with § 679.20(c)(3)(iii), the initial TACs for Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in the BS were established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4311, February 5, 1996) as 1,530 metric tons (mt) and 1,071 mt, respectively. The Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish also closed the directed fishery for Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in the BS in accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii).

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Director), has determined that the 1996 directed fishing allowances of Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in the BS have not been reached. NMFS has determined that as of September 21, 1996, 1,228 mt of Pacific ocean perch in the BS and 902 mt of the "other red rockfish" species group in the BS remain in the respective directed fishing allowances. Therefore, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is reopening directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in the BS. All other closures remain in full force and effect.

In accordance with § 679.20(a)(2), the remainder of the TACs for Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in the BS will become available for directed fishing at 1200 hrs, A.L.T., October 6, 1996. These remaining TACs are expected to be rapidly harvested.

Pursuant to § 679.5(j), the Regional Director is requiring processor vessels using trawl gear that catch or receive Pacific ocean perch and "other red rockfish" in the BS and shoreside processing facilities that receive Pacific ocean perch and "other red rockfish" from vessels using trawl gear as defined at § 679.2 in the BS to submit DPRs in addition to Weekly Production Reports.

These requirements are necessary to manage Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in the BS. The Regional Director is doing so in consideration of the potential for exceeding the TACs of Pacific ocean perch and the "other red rockfish" species group in the BS.