

all parties agreed to use a conservative approach. This conservative approach concluded that adding another day of fishing to capture the estimated 200 to 300 chinook salmon remaining in the quota was not warranted because of the potential for fishing above the 6,500 quota. Therefore, the fishery was closed at midnight, May 12.

After the closure, the updated catch and effort data and projections were re-analyzed, and the estimated number of chinook salmon caught was 5,600, with 900 chinook salmon left in the season's quota. The higher number of chinook salmon left in the quota was due to harsh weather conditions on May 11 and 12, which limited the catch of fish. Therefore, the 900 chinook salmon left in the quota allowed for the season to reopen on May 20 through May 23, with each vessel allowed to possess, land, and deliver no more than 75 salmon for the open period.

After the first reopening, the updated catch and effort data and projections were re-analyzed, and the estimated number of chinook salmon caught was 5,940, with 560 chinook salmon left in the season's quota. The higher number of chinook salmon left in the quota was due to harsh weather conditions on May 20 through May 23, which limited the catch of fish. Therefore, the 560 chinook salmon left in the quota allowed for the season to reopen on June 2 through June 4, with each vessel allowed to possess, land, and deliver no more than 50 salmon for the open period.

Reopenings of the fishery are authorized by 50 CFR 660.409(a)(2). The Regional Administrator consulted with representatives of the Pacific Fishery Management Council, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to ensure that these actions are consistent with Council policy and state regulations. The States of Washington and Oregon manage the commercial fishery in state waters adjacent to this area of the exclusive economic zone in accordance with this Federal action. As provided by the inseason notice procedures of 50 CFR 660.411, actual notice to fishermen of these actions was given prior to 2400 hours local time, May 12, 1998, for the initial closure; prior to 0001 hours local time, May 20, 1998, for the first reopening; and prior to 0001 hours local time, June 2, 1998, for the second reopening by telephone hotline number 206-526-6667 and 800-662-9825 and by U.S. Coast Guard Notice to Mariners broadcasts on

Channel 16 VHF-FM and 2182 kHz. Because of the need for immediate action to manage the fishery to achieve but not exceed the quota, NMFS has determined that good cause exists for this notice to be issued without affording a prior opportunity for public comment. This notice does not apply to other fisheries that may be operating in other areas.

Classification

This action is authorized by 50 CFR 660.409 and 660.411 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: June 9, 1998.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 971208297-8054-02; I.D. 061198A]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 630

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the second seasonal apportionment of pollock total allowable catch (TAC) in this area.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), June 12, 1998, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 1, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom 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-Stevens 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 pollock TAC in Statistical Area 630 was established by the Final 1998 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish for the GOA (63 FR 12027, March 12, 1998) as 39,315 metric tons (mt) for the entire 1998 fishing year. In accordance with § 679.20 (a)(5)(ii)(B), the second seasonal apportionment of pollock TAC in Statistical Area 630 is 14,040 mt.

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the second seasonal apportionment of pollock TAC in Statistical Area 630 will be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 13,540 mt and is setting aside the remaining 500 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional Administrator finds that this directed fishing allowance will soon be reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA.

Maximum retainable bycatch amounts can be found in the regulations at § 679.20(e) and (f).

Classification

This action responds to the second seasonal TAC limitations and other restrictions on the fisheries established in the Final 1998 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish for the GOA as amended (63 FR 12027, March 12, 1998). It must be implemented immediately to prevent overharvesting the second seasonal apportionment of pollock TAC in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA. A delay in the effective date is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. Further delay would only result in overharvest. NMFS finds for good cause that the implementation of this action should not be delayed for 30 days. Accordingly, under 5 U.S.C. 553(d), a delay in the effective date is hereby waived.

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

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

Dated: June 11, 1998.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

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