

NMFS has determined that as of July 9, 1998, 2,000 mt remain in the directed fishing allowance. Therefore, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA.

Classification

All other closures remain in full force and effect. This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. It must be implemented immediately in order to allow full utilization of the Pacific ocean perch TAC. Providing prior notice and opportunity for public comment for this action is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. Further delay would only disrupt the FMP objective of providing the Pacific ocean perch TAC for harvest. NMFS finds for good cause that the implementation of this action cannot 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: July 10, 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. 071098A]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Eastern 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 Pacific ocean perch in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska management area (GOA). This action is necessary to fully utilize the 1998 total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific ocean perch in this area.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 12, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrew Smoker, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone 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. Regulations governing fishing by U.S. vessels in accordance with the FMP appear at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

In accordance with § 679.20(c)(3)(ii), the Final 1998 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish for the GOA (63 FR 12027, March 12, 1998) established the amount of the 1998 TAC of Pacific ocean perch in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska as 2,366 metric tons (mt).

The Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has established a directed fishing allowance of 2,116 mt, and set aside the remaining 250 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. The fishery for Pacific ocean perch in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA was closed to directed fishing under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on July 6, 1998, (63 FR 37071, July 9, 1998).

NMFS has determined that as of July 9, 1998, 1,900 mt remain in the directed fishing allowance. Therefore, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA.

Classification

All other closures remain in full force and effect. This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. It must be implemented immediately in order to allow full utilization of the Pacific ocean perch TAC. Providing prior notice and opportunity for public comment for this action is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. Further delay would only disrupt the FMP objective of providing the Pacific ocean perch TAC for harvest. NMFS finds for good cause that the implementation of this action cannot 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: July 10, 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. 071098C]

Fisheries of the Economic Exclusive Zone Off Alaska; "Other Rockfish" Species Group in the Eastern 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 the "other rockfish" species group in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully utilize the total allowable catch (TAC) of "other rockfish" in that area.

DATES: Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 12, 1998, until 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrew Smoker, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone 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. Regulations governing fishing by U.S. vessels in accordance with the FMP appear at subpart H of 50 CFR part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

In accordance with § 679.20(c)(3)(ii), the Final 1998 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish for the GOA (63 FR 12027, March 12, 1998) established the amount of the 1998 TAC of "other rockfish" in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska as 1,500 metric tons (mt). The Final 1998 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish for the GOA also closed directed fishing for "other rockfish" in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the GOA (see § 679.20(d)(1)(iii)) in anticipation that the TAC would be needed as incidental catch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries during 1998.

The Regional Administrator has determined that the entire TAC for "other rockfish" will not be needed as incidental catch and is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 1,400 mt and is setting aside the remaining 100 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries.