

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 50 CFR 679.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: July 17, 1998.

Richard W. Surdi, Acting 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.  
071698D]

#### Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska

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

**ACTION:** Closure.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is prohibiting directed  
fishing for northern rockfish in the  
Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of  
Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary  
to prevent exceeding the 1998 total  
allowable catch (TAC) of northern  
rockfish in this area.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local  
time (A.l.t.), July 17, 1998, through 2400  
hrs A.l.t., December 31, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Thomas Pearson, 907-486-6919.

**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 northern rockfish in

the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf  
of Alaska as 840 metric tons (mt).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i),  
the Administrator, Alaska Region,  
NMFS (Regional Administrator), has  
determined that the 1998 TAC for  
northern rockfish will be reached.  
Therefore, the Regional Administrator is  
establishing a directed fishing  
allowance of 740 mt, and is setting aside  
the remaining 100 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 has been reached.  
Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting  
directed fishing for northern rockfish in  
the Western Regulatory Area of the  
GOA.

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

#### Classification

This action responds to the best  
available information recently obtained  
from the fishery. It must be  
implemented immediately to prevent  
overharvesting the 1998 TAC of  
northern rockfish for the Western  
Regulatory Area 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 50 CFR  
679.20 and is exempt from review under  
E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: July 17, 1998.

**Richard W. Surdi,**

*Acting 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.  
071698F]

#### Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; "Other Rockfish" in the Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries  
Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),  
Commerce.

**ACTION:** Closure.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is prohibiting directed  
fishing for "other rockfish" in the  
Eastern Regulatory Area of the Gulf of  
Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary  
to prevent exceeding the 1998 total  
allowable catch (TAC) of "other  
rockfish" in this area.

**DATES:** 1200 hrs, Alaska local time  
(A.l.t.), July 19, 1998, until 2400 hrs,  
A.l.t., December 31, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Thomas Pearson, 907-486-6919.

**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  
directed fishery for "other rockfish" in  
the Eastern Regulatory Area was closed  
in conjunction with the Final 1998  
Harvest Specifications of Groundfish for  
the GOA (63 FR 12697, March 16, 1998)  
and reopened on July 12, 1998, (63 FR  
38341, July 16, 1998).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i),  
the Administrator, Alaska Region,  
NMFS (Regional Administrator), has  
determined that the 1998 TAC for  
"other rockfish" will be reached.  
Therefore, the Regional Administrator 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. In accordance with  
§ 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional  
Administrator finds that this directed  
fishing allowance has been reached.  
Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting  
directed fishing for "other rockfish" in  
the Eastern Regulatory Area.

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

#### Classification

This action responds to the best  
available information recently obtained  
from the fishery. It must be