

4. On page 1323, in the first column, in line 1, under *Chilipepper*, insert "was" before "conducted".

5. On page 1327, in the first column, in the second complete paragraph, in line 11, insert "is" after "discard".

6. On page 1332, in the first column, in line 1, "processing" should read "processor".

7. On page 1333, in the second column, in paragraph A. (1)(b), in line 5, "landing" should read "landings".

8. On page 1338, in the second column, under the heading "*C. Trip Limits in the Open Access Fishery*", in line 1, insert "is gear" before "used" and in line 3, insert "limited entry" before "permit".

Dated: February 23, 1999.

**Andrew A. Rosenberg,**

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 981222314-8321-02; I.D. 021999A]

#### Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Central Regulatory Area in the Gulf of Alaska

**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 cod by vessels catching Pacific cod for processing by the offshore component in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully utilize the interim total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific cod in that area.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), February 25, 1999.

**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(a)(6)(iii), the Interim 1999 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish (64 FR 46, January 4, 1999), established the allowance of the interim 1999 Pacific cod TAC apportioned for vessels catching Pacific cod for processing by the offshore component in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA as 834 metric tons (mt).

NMFS closed the offshore component fishery for Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area to directed fishing under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on January 20, 1999 (64 FR 3658, January 25, 1999).

NMFS has determined that as of February 18, 1999, approximately 500 mt remain in the offshore component directed fishing allowance. Therefore, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for Pacific cod by vessels catching Pacific cod for processing by the offshore component in 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 cod 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 cod TAC for harvest. NMFS finds for good cause that 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: February 24, 1999.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

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

[FR Doc. 99-5018 Filed 2-24-99; 4:08 pm]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 990115017-9017-01; I.D. 022399B]

#### Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Vessels Greater Than 99 feet (30.2 m) LOA Catching Pollock for Processing by the Inshore Component in the Bering Sea

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

**ACTION:** Closure.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock by vessels greater than 99 feet (30.2 m) length over all (LOA) catching pollock for processing by the inshore component in the critical habitat/catcher vessel operation area (CH/CVOA) of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary because the A2 season limit of pollock total allowable catch specified for the inshore component within the CH/CVOA will be reached.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), February 24, 1999, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., August 1, 1999.

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

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the BSAI 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-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(a)(5)(i)(C)(1), and the revised interim 1999 TAC amounts for pollock in the Bering Sea subarea (64 FR 3437, January 22, 1999), the A2 season limit of pollock total allowable catch specified for the inshore component for harvest within the CH/CVOA is 36,716 metric tons (mt).

In accordance with § 679.22(a)(11)(iv)(A) and (C)(2) the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the A2 season limit of pollock total allowable catch specified to the inshore component for harvest

within the CH/CVOA will be reached. The Regional Administrator has estimated that 1,000 mt is likely to be harvested by catcher vessels less than or equal to 99 feet (30.2 m) LOA during the remainder of the A2 season and is reserving that amount to accommodate fishing by such vessels after the closure of the CH/CVOA to vessels greater than 99 feet (30.2 m) LOA.

Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock by vessels greater than 99 feet (30.2 m) LOA catching pollock for processing by the inshore component within the CH/CVOA conservation zone, as defined at § 679.22(a)(11)(iv)(B).

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 in order to prevent exceeding the A2 season limit of pollock total allowable catch specified to the inshore component for harvest within the CH/CVOA. A delay in the effective date is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. Further delay would result in noncompliance with reasonable and prudent management measures implemented to

promote the recovery of the endangered Steller sea lion. NMFS finds for good cause that the implementation of this action can 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 § 679.22 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: February 24, 1999.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

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

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