(i) *Annual report.* NMFS will publish annually a report describing the status of the IFQ Cost Recovery Program.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 000211039–0039–01; I.D. 031000A]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 620 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 pollock in Statistical Area 620 outside the Shelikof Strait conservation area in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the B season allowance of the pollock total allowable catch (TAC) for Statistical Area 620 outside the Shelikof Strait conservation area.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), March 15, 2000, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., August 20, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Furuness, 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 B season allowance of pollock TAC in Statistical Area 620 outside the Shelikof Strait conservation area is 273 metric tons (mt) as established by the Final 2000 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish (65 FR 8298, February 18, 2000) and subsequent correction (65 FR 11909, March 7, 2000).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the B season allowance of the pollock TAC in Statistical Area 620 outside the Shelikof Strait conservation area will be reached and is necessary as incidental catch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. Consequently, the Regional Administrator establishes the B season directed fishing allowance as zero. 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 pollock in Statistical Area 620 outside the Shelikof Strait conservation area in 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 seasonal allocation of pollock in Statistical Area 620 outside the Shelikof Strait conservation area. Providing prior notice and an opportunity for public comment 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: March 15, 2000.

Gary C. Matlock,

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

[FR Doc. 00–6831 Filed 3–15–00; 2:31 pm]

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