

Dated: July 19, 2001.

John Oliver,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 660

[Docket No. 010502110-1110-01; I.D. 071601E]

Fisheries Off West Coast States and in the Western Pacific; West Coast Salmon Fisheries; Closure of the Commercial Fishery from U.S.-Canada Border to Leadbetter Pt., WA

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

ACTION: Closure; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the commercial fishery for all salmon in the area from the U.S.-Canada Border to Leadbetter Pt., WA, was closed on July 9, 2001, at 2359 hours local time (l.t.). The Northwest Regional Administrator of NMFS (Regional Administrator) determined that the guideline of 7,000 chinook salmon had been reached. This action was necessary to conform to the 2001 annual management measures for ocean salmon fisheries.

DATES: Closure effective 2359 hours l.t., July 9, 2001. Comments will be accepted through August 9, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Comments on this action may be mailed to Donna Darm, Acting Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS, NOAA, 7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 1, Seattle, WA 98115-0070; fax 206-526-6376; or Rebecca Lent, Regional Administrator, Southwest Region, NMFS, NOAA, 501 W. Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200, Long Beach, CA 90802-4132; fax 562-980-4018. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or the Internet. Information relevant to this document is available for public review during business hours at the Office of the Regional Administrator, Northwest Region, NMFS.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher Wright, 206-526-6140, Northwest Region, NMFS, NOAA.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations governing the ocean salmon fisheries at 50 CFR 660.409 (a)(1) state that, when a quota for any salmon

species in any portion of the fishery management area is projected by the Regional Administrator to be reached on or by a certain date, NMFS will, by notification issued under 50 CFR 660.411 (a)(2), close the fishery for all salmon species in the portion of the fishery management area to which the quota applies, as of the date the quota is projected to be reached.

In the 2001 annual management measures for ocean salmon fisheries (66 FR 23185, May 8, 2001), NMFS announced that the commercial fishery for all salmon in the area from the U.S.-Canada Border to Leadbetter Pt., WA, would open on July 1 through the earlier of July 27, a 7,000-chinook pre-season guideline, or a 12,000-marked coho guideline.

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. The best available information as of July 9, 2001, related to the catch and effort to date and projected catch for fish that were yet to be landed, indicated that the 7,000-chinook quota would likely be reached by 2359 hours l.t., July 9, 2001, and that a closure of the area was warranted. The State of Washington will manage the fishery in state waters adjacent to this area of the exclusive economic zone in accordance with this Federal action. As provided by the in-season notice procedures of 50 CFR 660.411, actual notice to fishermen of these actions was given prior to 2359 hours l.t. on July 9, 2001, 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.

NMFS has determined that the need for immediate action to close the fishery upon achievement of the quota is good cause for this notification to be issued without affording a prior opportunity for public comment. Such notification would be unnecessary, impracticable, and contrary to the public interest. Moreover, because of the immediate need to close the fishery upon achievement of the quota, the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, finds for good cause, under 5 U.S.C. 553 (d)(3), that delaying the effectiveness of this rule for 30 days is impracticable and contrary to public interest. This action 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 Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: July 19, 2001.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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. 010112013-1013-01; I.D. 071901B]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Sablefish by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in the West Yakutat District of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting retention of sablefish by vessels using trawl gear in the West Yakutat District of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). NMFS is requiring that catch of sablefish by vessels using trawl gear in this area be treated in the same manner as prohibited species and discarded at sea with a minimum of injury. This action is necessary because the allocation of the sablefish 2001 total allowable catch (TAC) assigned to trawl gear in this area has been reached.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 20, 2001, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2001.

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 the Groundfish Fishery 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 CFR part 679.

The 2001 TAC allocation of sablefish assigned to trawl gear for the West Yakutat District was established as 271 metric tons (mt) by the Final 2001 Harvest Specifications and Associated Management Measures for the Groundfish Fisheries Off Alaska (66 FR