

**§ 660.520 Reporting requirements.**

(a) *Otter interaction.* (1) If a southern sea otter is entangled in a net, regardless of whether the animal is injured or killed, the vessel operator must report this interaction within 24 hours to the Regional Administrator.

(2) While fishing for CPS, vessel operators must record all observations of otter interactions (defined as otters within encircled nets or coming into contact with nets or vessels, including but not limited to entanglement) with their purse seine net(s) or vessel(s). With the exception of an entanglement, which must be initially reported as described in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, all other observations must be reported within 20 days to the Regional Administrator.

(3) When contacting NMFS after an interaction, vessel operators must provide the location (latitude and longitude) of the interaction and a description of the interaction itself. If available, location information should also include water depth, distance from shore, and relation to port or other landmarks. Descriptive information of the interaction should include: whether or not the otters were seen inside or outside the net; if inside the net, had the net been completely encircled; whether any otters came in contact with either the net or the vessel; the number of otters present; duration of interaction; the otter's behavior during interaction; measures taken to avoid interaction.

(b) [Reserved]

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 679**

**Docket No. 070213033-7033-01]**

**RIN 0648-XA45**

**Fisheries of the Economic Exclusive Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands**

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

**ACTION:** Temporary rule; modification of a closure.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is opening directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher vessels less than 60 feet (18.3 meters (m)) length overall (LOA) using pot or hook-and-line gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian

Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to fully use the 2007 total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific cod specified for catcher vessels less than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot or hook-and-line gear in the BSAI.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), May 27, 2007, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2007. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., June 8, 2007.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments to Sue Salveson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Comments may be submitted by:

- Mail to: P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802;
- Hand delivery to the Federal Building, 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, Alaska;
- FAX to 907-586-7557;
- E-mail [inseason-akr@noaa.gov](mailto:inseason-akr@noaa.gov) and include in the subject line and body of the e-mail the document identifier: bspclt60re2 (E-mail comments, with or without attachments, are limited to 5 megabytes); or
- Webform at the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Follow the instructions at that site for submitting comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jennifer Hogan, 907-586-7228.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the BSAI exclusive economic zone according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management 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.

NMFS closed directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher vessels less than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot or hook-and-line gear in the BSAI under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on March 30, 2007 (72 FR 15848, April 3, 2007). The fishery was reopened on April 30, 2007 (72 FR 18920, April 16, 2007) and was closed again on May 15, 2007 (72 FR 27980, May 18, 2007).

NMFS has determined that as of May 22, 2007, approximately 30 metric tons of Pacific cod remain in the 2007 Pacific cod TAC allocated to catcher vessels less than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot or hook-and-line gear in the BSAI. Therefore, in accordance with § 679.25(a)(2)(i)(C) and (a)(2)(iii)(D), and

to fully use the 2007 TAC of Pacific cod specified for catcher vessels less than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot or hook-and-line gear in the BSAI, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher vessels less than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot or hook-and-line gear in the BSAI. The opening is effective 1200 hrs, A.l.t., May 27, 2007, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2007.

**Classification**

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), finds good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) as such requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. This requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest as it would prevent NMFS from responding to the most recent fisheries data in a timely fashion and would delay the opening of the Pacific cod fishery by catcher vessels less than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot or hook-and-line gear in the BSAI. Immediate notification is necessary to allow for the orderly conduct and efficient operation of this fishery, to allow the industry to plan for the fishing season, and to avoid potential disruption to the fishing fleet and processors. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of May 22, 2007.

The AA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effective date of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3). This finding is based upon the reasons provided above for waiver of prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

Without this inseason adjustment, NMFS could not allow the fishery for Pacific cod by catcher vessels less than 60 feet (18.3 m) LOA using pot or hook-and-line gear in the BSAI to be harvested in an expedient manner and in accordance with the regulatory schedule. Under § 679.25(c)(2), interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this action to the above address until June 8, 2007.

This action is required by § 679.25 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: May 23, 2007.

**James P. Burgess**

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

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