

Dated: March 3, 2009

James W. Balsiger,

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

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 648

Fisheries, Fishing, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

■ For the reasons stated in the preamble, 50 CFR part 648 is amended as follows:

PART 648—FISHERIES OF THE NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

1. The authority citation for part 648 continues to read as follows:

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

■ 2. In § 648.260, paragraph (a)(1) is suspended and paragraph (a)(4) is added to read as follows:

§ 648.260 Specifications.

(a) * * *

(4) *Target total allowable catch.* The target TAC for fishing year 2009 will be 3.560 million lb (1,615 mt), unless modified pursuant to this paragraph.

* * * * *

■ 3. In § 648.262, paragraph (b)(2) is suspended and paragraph (b)(7) is added to read as follows:

§ 648.262 Effort-control program for red crab limited access vessels.

(b) * * *

(7) *For fishing year 2009.* Each limited access permit holder shall be allocated 116 DAS unless one or more vessels declares out of the fishery consistent with § 648.4(a)(13)(i)(B)(2) or the TAC is adjusted consistent with § 648.260.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 0910091344-9056-02]

RIN 0648-XN53

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; modification of a closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is reopening directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area

630 of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully use the A season allowance of the 2009 total allowable catch (TAC) of pollock specified for Statistical Area 630 of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), March 9, 2009, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., March 10, 2009. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., March 18, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Sue Salvesson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. You may submit comments, identified by 0648-XN53, by any one of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal website at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

- Mail: P. O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802.

- Fax: (907) 586-7557.

- Hand delivery to the Federal Building: 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK.

All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (e.g., name, address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

NMFS will accept anonymous comments. Enter "N/A" in the required fields, if you wish to remain anonymous. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe portable document file (pdf) formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Josh Keaton, 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.

NMFS closed the directed fishery for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on

January 22, 2009 (74 FR 5625, January 30, 2009).

NMFS has determined that approximately 1,524 metric tons of pollock remain in the directed fishing allowance in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA. Therefore, in accordance with § 679.25(a)(1)(i), (a)(2)(i)(C), and (a)(2)(iii)(D), and to fully utilize the A season allowance of the 2009 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is reopening directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA.

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 a 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 pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of February 26, 2009. 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 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA 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 March 18, 2009.

This action is required by § 679.20 and § 679.25 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: March 3, 2009.

Emily H. Menashes,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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