

prosecution of the live bait portion of the Pacific sardine fishery.

Classification

This action is required by 50 CFR 660.509 and is exempt from Office of Management and Budget review under Executive Order 12866.

NMFS 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) for the closure of the directed harvest of Pacific sardine. For the reasons set forth below, notice and comment procedures are impracticable and contrary to the public interest. For the same reasons, NMFS also finds good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3) to waive the 30-day delay in effectiveness for this action. This measure responds to the best available information and is necessary for the conservation and management of the Pacific sardine resource. A delay in effectiveness would cause the fishery to exceed the in-season harvest level. These seasonal harvest levels are important mechanisms in preventing overfishing and managing the fishery at optimum yield. The established directed and incidental harvest allocations are designed to allow fair and equitable opportunity to the resource by all sectors of the Pacific sardine fishery and to allow access to other profitable CPS fisheries, such as squid and Pacific mackerel. Many of the same fishermen who harvest Pacific sardine rely on these other fisheries for a significant portion of their income.

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

Dated: September 22, 2010.

Carrie Selberg,

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. 0910131363-0087-02]

RIN 0648-XZ27

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific cod by pot catcher/processors in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2010 Pacific cod total allowable catch (TAC) specified for pot catcher/processors in the BSAI.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), September 23, 2010, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2010.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Obren Davis, 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.

The 2010 Pacific cod TAC allocated as a directed fishing allowance to pot catcher/processors in the BSAI is 2,248 metric tons as established by the final 2010 and 2011 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (75 FR 11778, March 12, 2010).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 2010 Pacific cod TAC allocated as a directed fishing allowance to pot catcher/processors in the BSAI has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific cod by pot catcher/processors in the BSAI.

After the effective date of this closure the maximum retainable amounts at § 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

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 closure of Pacific cod by pot catcher/processors in the BSAI. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of September 21, 2010.

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.

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

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

Dated: September 22, 2010.

Carrie Selberg,

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

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