Dated: January 19, 2012.

Carrie Selberg,

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

[FR Doc. 2012–1560 Filed 1–20–12; 4:15 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 101126522–0640–02]

RIN 0648–XA954

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

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 630 in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the A season allowance of the 2012 total allowable catch of pollock for Statistical Area 630 in the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), January 23, 2012, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., March 10, 2012.

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.

The A season allowance of the 2012 total allowable catch (TAC) of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA is 5,787 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2011 and 2012 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (76 FR 11111, March 1, 2011) and inseason adjustment (77 FR 438, January 5, 2012).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the A season allowance of the 2012 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 5,537 mt and is setting aside the remaining 250 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. 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 630 of the GOA.

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 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 January 19, 2012.

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: January 20, 2012.

Steven Thur,

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

[FR Doc. 2012–1562 Filed 1–20–12; 4:15 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 101126521–0640–02]

RIN 0648–XA955

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 A season apportionment of the 2012 Pacific cod total allowable catch (TAC) specified for pot catcher/processors in the BSAI.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), January 23, 2012, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 1, 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Josh Keaton, (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 A season apportionment of the 2012 Pacific cod TAC allocated as a directed fishing allowance to pot catcher/processors in the BSAI is 1,777 metric tons as established by the final 2011 and 2012 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (76 FR 11139, March 1, 2011) and inseason adjustment (76 FR 81875, December 29, 2011).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the A season apportionment of the 2012 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