DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 111207737–2141–02]

RIN 0648–XB149

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 610 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 610 in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the B season allowance of the 2012 total allowable catch of pollock for Statistical Area 610 in the GOA.


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 parts 600 and 679.

The B season allowance of the 2012 total allowable catch (TAC) of pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the GOA is 5,797 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2012 and 2013 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (77 FR 15194, March 14, 2012). In accordance with § 679.20(a)(5)(iv)(B), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), hereby increases the B season pollock allowance by 1,159 mt to reflect the underharvest of the A seasonal apportionment in Statistical Area 610. Therefore, the revised B season pollock allowance of the pollock TAC in Statistical Area 610 is 6,956 mt (5,797 mt plus 1,159 mt).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the B season allowance of the 2012 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 6,756 mt and is setting aside the remaining 200 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated...