

TABLE 2—COORDINATES FOR THE SOUTHERN TEMPORARY PSP CLOSURE AREA

Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	41°39' N	71°00' W
2	41°39' N	69°00' W
3	40°00' N	69°00' W
4	40°00' N	71°00' W
5	41°39' N	71°00' W

Classification

This action is issued pursuant to section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), 16 U.S.C. 1855(c). Pursuant to section 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) of the Administrative Procedure Act, the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries finds there is good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action as notice and comment would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest due to a public health emergency, and public comment has been solicited concurrently with each of the extensions of this action, as detailed and responded to below. In addition, under section 553(d)(3) there is good cause to waive the 30-day delay in effectiveness due to a public health emergency. The original emergency closure was in response to a public health emergency. Toxic algal blooms are responsible for the marine toxin that causes PSP in persons consuming affected shellfish. People have become seriously ill and some have died from consuming affected shellfish under similar circumstances. Pursuant to section 305(c)(3)(C) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the closure to the harvest of shellfish, as modified on September 9, 2005, and re-instated on October 18, 2005, may remain in effect until the circumstances that created the emergency no longer exist, provided the public has had an opportunity to comment after the regulation was published, and, in the case of a public health emergency, the Secretary of Health and Human Services concurs with the Commerce Secretary's action. During the initial comment period, June 16, 2005, through August 1, 2005, no comments were received. Two comments have been received after the re-opening of the southern component of the Temporary PSP Closure Area on September 9, 2005. One commenter described the overall poor quality of water in Boston Harbor, but provided no evidence to back these claims. The other commenter expressed reluctance to re-opening a portion of the closure area without seeing the results of the FDA

tests. Data used to make determinations regarding closing and opening of areas to certain types of fishing activity are collected from Federal, state, and private laboratories. NOAA maintains a Red Tide Information Center (<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/redtide/>), which can be accessed directly or through the Web site listed in the **ADDRESSES** section. Information on test results, modeling of algal bloom movement, and general background on red tide can be accessed through this information center. While NMFS is the agency with the authority to promulgate the emergency regulations, it modified the regulations on September 9, 2005, at the request of the FDA, after the FDA determined that the results of its tests warranted such action. If necessary, the regulations may be terminated at an earlier date, pursuant to section 305(c)(3)(D) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, by publication in the **Federal Register** of a notice of termination, or extended further to ensure the safety of human health.

This emergency action is exempt from the procedures of the Regulatory Flexibility Act because the rule is issued without opportunity for prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

This rule is not significant for the purposes of Executive Order 12866.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 648

Fisheries, Fishing, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Dated: November 30, 2012.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, performing the functions and duties of the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, 50 CFR part 648 is amended to read 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 § 648.14, paragraphs (a)(10)(iii) and (a)(10)(iv) are added to read as follows:

§ 648.14 Prohibitions.

(a) * * *

(10) * * *

(iii) Fish for, harvest, catch, possess or attempt to fish for, harvest, catch, or possess any bivalve shellfish, including Atlantic surfclams, ocean quahogs, and mussels, with the exception of sea scallops harvested only for adductor

muscles and shucked at sea, unless issued and possessing on board a Letter of Authorization (LOA) from the Regional Administrator authorizing the collection of shellfish for biological sampling and operating under the terms and conditions of said LOA, in the area of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone bound by the following coordinates in the order stated:

(A) 43°00' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.;

(B) 43°00' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.;

(C) 41°39' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.;

(D) 41°39' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.; and then ending at the first point.

(iv) Fish for, harvest, catch, possess, or attempt to fish for, harvest, catch, or possess any sea scallops, except for sea scallops harvested only for adductor muscles and shucked at sea, unless issued and possessing on board a Letter of Authorization (LOA) from the Regional Administrator authorizing collection of shellfish for biological sampling and operating under the terms and conditions of said LOA, in the area of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone bound by the following coordinates in the order stated:

(A) 41°39' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.;

(B) 41°39' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.;

(C) 40°00' N. lat., 69°00' W. long.;

(D) 40°00' N. lat., 71°00' W. long.; and then ending at the first point.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 111213751-2102-02]

RIN 0648-XC377

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Other Flatfish, Other Rockfish, Pacific Ocean Perch, Sculpin, and Squid 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; apportionment of reserves; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS apportions amounts of the non-specified reserve to the initial total allowable catch of Bering Sea Pacific ocean perch, Aleutian Islands other rockfish, Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) other flatfish, BSAI sculpin, and BSAI squid in the BSAI

management area. This action is necessary to allow the fisheries to continue operating. It is intended to promote the goals and objectives of the fishery management plan for the BSAI management area.

DATES: Effective December 4, 2012 through 2400 hrs, Alaska local time, December 31, 2012. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., Alaska local time, December 19, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA–NMFS–2012–0243, by any of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal www.regulations.gov. To submit comments via the e-Rulemaking Portal, first click the “submit a comment” icon, then enter NOAA–NMFS–2012–0243 in the keyword search. Locate the document you wish to comment on from the resulting list and click on the “Submit a Comment” icon on that line.

- **Mail:** Address written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Mail comments to P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802–1668.

- **Fax:** Address written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Fax comments to 907–586–7557.

- **Hand delivery to the Federal Building:** Address written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Deliver comments to 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK.

Instructions: Comments must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure that the comments are received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address) submitted voluntarily by the sender will 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 or Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

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 2012 initial total allowable catch (ITAC) of Bering Sea (BS) Pacific ocean perch in the BSAI was established as 4,854 metric tons (mt), the 2012 ITAC of Aleutian Islands (AI) other rockfish was established as 485 mt, the 2012 ITAC of BSAI other flatfish was established as 3,200 mt, the 2012 ITAC of BSAI sculpin was established as 5,200 mt, and the 2012 ITAC of BSAI squid was established as 425 mt by the final 2012 and 2013 harvest specifications for groundfish of the BSAI (77 FR 10669, February 23, 2012). This includes apportionments of the non-specified reserve to BSAI other flatfish and BSAI squid in two separate actions (77 FR 46641, August 6, 2012 and 77 FR 44172, July 27, 2012, respectively). In accordance with § 679.20(a)(3) the Regional Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has reviewed the most current available data and finds that the ITACs for BS Pacific ocean perch, AI other rockfish, BSAI other flatfish, BSAI sculpin, and BSAI squid in the BSAI need to be supplemented from the non-specified reserve in order to promote efficiency in the utilization of fishery resources in the BSAI and allow fishing operations to continue.

Therefore, in accordance with § 679.20(b)(3), NMFS apportions from the non-specified reserve of groundfish 856 mt to the BS Pacific ocean perch ITAC, 85 mt to the AI other rockfish ITAC, 400 mt to the BSAI other flatfish ITAC, 550 mt to the BSAI sculpin ITAC, and 275 mt to the BSAI squid ITAC in the BSAI. These apportionments are consistent with § 679.20(b)(1)(i) and do not result in overfishing of any target species because the revised ITACs are equal to or less than the specifications of the acceptable biological catch in the final 2012 and 2013 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (77 FR 10669, February 23, 2012).

The harvest specification for the 2012 ITACs included in the harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI are revised as follows: 5,710 mt for BS Pacific ocean perch, 570 mt for AI other rockfish, 3,600 mt for BSAI other flatfish, 5,750 mt for BSAI sculpin, and 700 mt for BSAI squid.

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) and § 679.20(b)(3)(iii)(A) 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 apportionment of the non-specified reserves of groundfish to the BS Pacific ocean perch, AI other rockfish, BSAI other flatfish, BSAI sculpin, and BSAI squid fisheries 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 November 30, 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.

Under § 679.20(b)(3)(iii), interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this action (see **ADDRESSES**) until December 19, 2012.

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: December 3, 2012.

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