NMFS is reallocating the projected unused amount of Pacific cod from catcher vessels using trawl gear to catcher/processors using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska management area (GOA). This action is necessary to allow the 2013 total allowable catch of Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA to be harvested.

DATES: Effective December 3, 2013, through 2400 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), December 31, 2013.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Obren Davis, 907–586–7228.


The 2013 Pacific cod total allowable catch specified for catcher vessels using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA is 15,065 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2013 and 2014 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (78 FR 13162, February 26, 2013). The Administrator, Alaska Region (Regional Administrator) has determined that catcher vessels using trawl gear will not be able to harvest 1,000 mt of the 2013 Pacific cod TAC allocated to those vessels under §679.20(a)(12)(ii)(B). In accordance with §679.20(a)(12)(ii)(B), the Regional Administrator has also determined that catcher/processors using trawl gear currently have the capacity to harvest this excess allocation and reallocates 1,000 mt to catcher/processors using trawl gear.

The harvest specifications for Pacific cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA included in the final 2013 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (78 FR 13162, February 26, 2013) is revised as follows: 14,065 mt for catcher vessels using trawl gear, and 2,521 mt to catcher/processors using trawl gear.

**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 reallocation of Pacific cod specified from catcher vessels using trawl gear to catcher/processors using trawl gear. Since the fishery is currently ongoing, it is important to immediately inform the industry as to the revised allocations. 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 as well as processors. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of December 2, 2013.

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.


Sean F. Corson,
Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.


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