DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

[Docket No. FWS–R6–ES–2017–0025; FXES1113090000 167 FF09E42000]

RIN 1018–BC04

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reinstatement of Removal of Federal Protections for Gray Wolves in Wyoming

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), are issuing this final rule to comply with a court order that reinstates the removal of Federal protections for the gray wolf (Canis lupus) in Wyoming under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), is located in title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations in part 17 (50 CFR 17.11(h)). On September 10, 2012, we published a final rule to remove the gray wolf in Wyoming from the List and remove this population’s status as a nonessential experimental population under the ESA (77 FR 55530; “2012 final rule”). Additional background information on the gray wolf in Wyoming and on this decision, including previous Federal actions, can be found in our 2012 final rule at http://www.regulations.gov in Docket No. FWS–R6–ES–2011–0039, or at https://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/es/grayWolf.php.

Various groups filed lawsuits challenging our 2012 final rule. On September 23, 2014, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia vacated and set aside our 2012 final rule (Defenders of Wildlife v. Jewell, 68 F. Supp. 3d 193 (D.D.C. 2014)) and reinstated our April 2, 2009 (74 FR 15123), final rule that protected gray wolves in Wyoming as a nonessential experimental population under the ESA. On December 1, 2014, the United States appealed the District Court’s decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Pending the appeal, and consistent with the District Court’s September 23, 2014, order, we published a final rule reinstating the April 2, 2009, final rule protecting the gray wolf in Wyoming (80 FR 9218, February 20, 2015).

On March 3, 2017, the U.S. Court of Appeals, in a unanimous opinion, reversed the ruling of the U.S. District Court (Defenders of Wildlife v. Zinke, No. 14–5300 (D.C. Cir. March 3, 2017). On April 25, 2017, the U.S. Court of Appeals issued its mandate consistent with its March 3, 2017, opinion reversing the U.S. District Court’s vacatur of our 2012 final rule for gray wolves in Wyoming. The issuance of the mandate makes the delisting go into effect. To the extent that a regulatory change is required to effectuate the delisting, we are doing so now.

Therefore, this rule amends the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife by removing gray wolves in Wyoming.

Administrative Procedure

This rulemaking is necessary to comply with the March 3, 2017, court order and April 25, 2017, mandate. Therefore, under these circumstances, the Director has determined, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(3)(B), that prior notice and opportunity for public comment are impractical and unnecessary. The Director has further determined, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3), that the court order and mandate constitute good cause to make this rule effective upon publication.

Effects of the Rule

Per the March 3, 2017, court order and April 25, 2017, mandate, the protections of the ESA are removed for gray wolves in Wyoming. Additionally, the regulations under section 10(j) of the ESA at 50 CFR 17.84(j) and (n) designating Wyoming as a nonessential experimental population area are also removed.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and threatened species, Exports, Imports, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Transportation.

Regulation Promulgation

To comply with the court order and mandate discussed above, we amend part 17, subchapter B of chapter I, title 50 of the CFR, as set forth below:

PART 17—ENDANGERED AND THREATENED WILDLIFE AND PLANTS

§ 17.11 [Amended]

1. The authority citation for part 17 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1361–1407; 1531–1544; and 4201–4245, unless otherwise noted.

§ 17.11 [Amended]

2. Amend § 17.11(h) by removing the entry for “Wolf, gray [Northern Rocky Mountain DPS]” under MAMMALS from the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife.
§ 17.84 [Amended]

3. Amend § 17.84 by removing and reserving paragraphs (i) and (u).


James K. Kurth,
Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 2017–08720 Filed 4–28–17; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4333–15–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 150105004–5355–01]

RIN 0648–XF377

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Possession and Trip Limit Implementation for the Common Pool Fishery

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; possession and trip limit implementation.

SUMMARY: This action sets the initial possession and trip limits for Northeast multispecies common pool vessels for the 2017 fishing year. The regulations authorize the Regional Administrator to implement trip limits for common pool vessels in order to prevent exceeding the pertinent common pool quotas. This action is intended to optimize the harvest of Northeast regulated multispecies.

DATES: The possession and trip limit implementation is effective at 0001 hours on May 1, 2017, through April 30, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Spencer Talmage, Fishery Management Specialist, 978–281–9232.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations at § 648.86(o) authorize the Regional Administrator (RA) to implement possession and trip limits for common pool vessels in order to prevent the overharvest of common pool quotas. Effective May 1, 2017, this action sets the initial possession and trip limits for the 2017 fishing year, as summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below. These possession and trip limits were developed after considering any changes to the common pool quota, preliminary 2017 sector rosters, and 2016 catch rates. These adjustments are intended to facilitate optimized harvest of the common pool quotas and prevent early trimester closures.

The initial 2017 possession and trip limits are the same as the initial 2016 limits, with the exception of four stocks (Georges Bank (GB) cod, Gulf of Maine (GOM) haddock, Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) yellowtail flounder, and witch flounder). The initial possession and trip limit for GB cod outside the Eastern U.S./Canada area and witch flounder are reduced relative to initial 2016 possession and trip limits to prevent early stock area closures in Trimester 1 as occurred in 2016. For GOM haddock and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, the initial 2017 limits are higher than the initial 2016 limits to allow additional opportunities given that quota utilization was low for these stocks in 2016.

Weekly quota monitoring reports for the common pool fishery can be found on our Web site at: http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/ro/so/MultiMonReports.htm. We will continue to monitor common pool catch through vessel trip reports, dealer-reported landings, vessel monitoring system catch reports, and other available information and, if necessary, we will make additional adjustments to common pool management measures.

Table 1—Initial 2016 and Initial 2017 Common Pool Possession and Trip Limits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stock</th>
<th>2016 Trip limit</th>
<th>2017 Trip limit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GB Cod (outside Eastern U.S./Canada Area)</td>
<td>500 lb (227 kg) per DAS, up to 2,500 lb per (1,134 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>250 lb (113 kg) per DAS, up to 500 lb per (227 kg) per trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GB Cod (inside Eastern U.S./Canada Area)</td>
<td>100 lb (45 kg) per DAS, up to 500 lb per (227 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>100 lb (45 kg) per DAS, up to 500 lb per (227 kg) per trip.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOM Cod</td>
<td>25 lb (11 kg) per DAS, up to 100 lb (45 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>25 lb (11 kg) per DAS, up to 100 lb (45 kg) per trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GB Haddock</td>
<td>100,000 lb (45,359 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>100,000 lb (45,359 kg) per trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOM Haddock</td>
<td>200 lb (91 kg) per DAS up to 600 lb (272 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>200 lb (91 kg) per DAS up to 600 lb (272 kg) per trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GB Yellowtail Flounder</td>
<td>100 lb (45 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>100 lb (45 kg) per trip.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder</td>
<td>250 lb (113 kg) per DAS, up to 500 lb (227 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>250 lb (113 kg) per DAS, up to 500 lb (227 kg) per trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Cod (CC)/GOM Yellowtail Flounder</td>
<td>750 lb (340 kg) per DAS up to 1,500 lb (680 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>750 lb (340 kg) per DAS up to 1,500 lb (680 kg) per trip.</td>
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<tr>
<td>American plaice</td>
<td>1,000 lb (454 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>1,000 lb (454 kg) per trip.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Witch Flounder</td>
<td>250 lb (113 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>250 lb (113 kg) per trip.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GB Winter Flounder</td>
<td>2,000 lb (907 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>2,000 lb (907 kg) per trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOM Winter Flounder</td>
<td>2,000 lb (907 kg) per DAS, up to 4,000 lb (1,814 kg) per trip.</td>
<td>2,000 lb (907 kg) per DAS, up to 4,000 lb (1,814 kg) per trip.</td>
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