

(B) *Headboats*. The owner or operator of a headboat for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Gulf coastal migratory fish has been issued, as required under § 622.370(b)(1), who is selected to report by the SRD must submit an electronic fishing record for each trip of all fish harvested within the time period specified in paragraph (b)(2)(i)(B) of this section, via the Southeast Region Headboat Survey.

(ii) *Atlantic—(A) Charter vessels*. The owner or operator of a charter vessel for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish has been issued, as required under § 622.370(b)(1), and whose vessel is operating as a charter vessel, must record all fish harvested and discarded, and any other information requested by the SRD for each trip, and submit an electronic fishing report within the time period specified in paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of this section. The electronic fishing report must be submitted to the SRD via NMFS-approved hardware and software, as specified in paragraph (b)(5) of this section. If the owner or operator subject to this paragraph (b)(1)(ii)(A) has been issued a Federal permit that requires more restrictive reporting requirements, as determined by NMFS and posted on the NMFS Southeast Region website, reporting under those more restrictive regulations will meet the requirements of this paragraph (b)(1)(ii)(A).

(B) *Headboats*. The owner or operator of a headboat for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish has been issued, as required under § 622.370(b)(1), and whose vessel is operating as a headboat in state or Federal waters, must record all fish harvested and discarded, and any other information requested by the SRD for each trip in state or Federal waters, and submit an electronic fishing report within the time period specified in paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of this section. The electronic fishing report must be submitted to the SRD via NMFS-approved hardware and software, as specified in paragraph (b)(5) of this section.

(2) *Reporting deadlines—(i) Gulf of Mexico—(A) Charter vessels*. Completed fishing records required by paragraph (b)(1)(i)(A) of this section for charter vessels must be submitted to the SRD weekly, postmarked no later than 7 days after the end of each week (Sunday). Information to be reported is indicated on the form and its accompanying instructions.

(B) *Headboats*. Electronic fishing records required by paragraph (b)(1)(i)(B) of this section for headboats must be submitted at weekly intervals (or intervals shorter than a week if

notified by the SRD) by 11:59 p.m., local time, the Sunday following a reporting week. If no fishing activity occurred during a reporting week, an electronic report so stating must be submitted for that reporting week by 11:59 p.m., local time, the Sunday following a reporting week.

(ii) *Atlantic*. Completed electronic fishing reports required by paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section must be submitted to the SRD by the Tuesday following each previous reporting week of Monday through Sunday, or at shorter intervals if notified by the SRD. If no fishing activity as a charter vessel or headboat occurred during a reporting week, an electronic report so stating must be submitted by the Tuesday following that reporting week, or at a shorter interval if notified by the SRD.

(3) *Catastrophic conditions*. During catastrophic conditions only, NMFS provides for use of paper forms for basic required functions as a backup to the electronic reports required by paragraphs (b)(1)(i)(B) and (b)(1)(ii) of this section. The RA will determine when catastrophic conditions exist, the duration of the catastrophic conditions, and which participants or geographic areas are deemed affected by the catastrophic conditions. The RA will provide timely notice to affected participants via publication of notification in the **Federal Register**, and other appropriate means such as fishery bulletins or NOAA weather radio, and will authorize the affected participants' use of paper-based components for the duration of the catastrophic conditions. The paper forms will be available from NMFS. During catastrophic conditions, the RA has the authority to waive or modify reporting time requirements.

(4) *Compliance requirements*. Electronic reports required by paragraphs (b)(1)(i)(B) and (b)(1)(ii) of this section must be submitted and received by NMFS according to the reporting requirements under this section. A report not received within the applicable time specified in paragraph (b)(2)(i)(B) or (b)(2)(ii) of this section is delinquent. A delinquent report results in the owner and operator of a charter vessel or headboat for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Gulf or Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish has been issued, as required under § 622.370(b)(1), being prohibited from harvesting or possessing such species automatically, with no additional requirement for NMFS to provide notice to the owner and operator of their delinquency. The owner and operator who are prohibited from harvesting or possessing such species due to delinquent reports are authorized to

harvest or possess such species only after all required and delinquent reports have been submitted and received by NMFS according to the reporting requirements under this section.

(5) *Hardware and software requirements for electronic reporting*. An owner or operator of a vessel for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish has been issued must submit electronic reports using NMFS-approved hardware and software as posted on the NMFS Southeast Region website.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 635

[Docket No. 180117042-8884-02]

RTID 0648-XT033

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries

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

ACTION: Temporary rule.

SUMMARY: NMFS closes the southern area Angling category fishery for large medium and giant (“trophy” (*i.e.*, measuring 73 inches (185 cm) curved fork length or greater)) Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT). This action is being taken to prevent further overharvest of the Angling category southern area trophy BFT subquota.

DATES: Effective 11:30 p.m., local time, February 20, 2020, through December 31, 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah McLaughlin, 978-281-9260, Larry Redd, 301-427-8503, or Nicholas Velseboer 978-675-2168.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Regulations implemented under the authority of the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA; 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*) and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act; 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) governing the harvest of BFT by persons and vessels subject to U.S. jurisdiction are found at 50 CFR part 635. Section 635.27 subdivides the U.S. BFT quota recommended by the International Commission for the

Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) among the various domestic fishing categories, per the allocations established in the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (2006 Consolidated HMS FMP) (71 FR 58058, October 2, 2006) and amendments.

NMFS is required, under § 635.28(a)(1), to file a closure notice with the Office of the Federal Register for publication when a BFT quota is reached or is projected to be reached. On and after the effective date and time of such notification, for the remainder of the fishing year or for a specified period as indicated in the notification, retaining, possessing, or landing BFT under that quota category is prohibited until the opening of the subsequent quota period or until such date as specified in the notice.

Angling Category Large Medium and Giant Southern “Trophy” Fishery Closure

The 2020 BFT fishing year, which is managed on a calendar-year basis and subject to an annual calendar-year quota, began January 1, 2020. The Angling category season opened January 1, 2020, and continues through December 31, 2020. The currently codified Angling category quota is 232.4 metric tons (mt), of which 5.3 mt is allocated for the harvest of large medium and giant (trophy) BFT by vessels fishing under the Angling category quota, with 1.8 mt allocated for each of the following areas: North of 39°18′ N lat. (off Great Egg Inlet, NJ); south of 39°18′ N lat. and outside the Gulf of Mexico (the “southern area”); and in the Gulf of Mexico. Trophy BFT measure 73 inches (185 cm) curved fork length or greater.

Based on reported landings from the NMFS Automated Catch Reporting System and the North Carolina Tagging Program, NMFS has determined that the codified Angling category southern area trophy BFT subquota of 1.8 mt has been reached and exceeded and that a closure of the southern area trophy BFT fishery is warranted. Therefore, retaining, possessing, or landing large medium or giant BFT south of 39°18′ N. lat. and outside the Gulf of Mexico by persons aboard vessels permitted in the HMS Angling category and the HMS Charter/Headboat category (when fishing recreationally) must cease at 11:30 p.m. local time on February 20, 2020. This closure will remain effective through December 31, 2020. This action is intended to prevent further overharvest of the Angling category southern area trophy BFT subquota, and is taken

consistent with the regulations at § 635.28(a)(1).

If needed, subsequent Angling category adjustments will be published in the **Federal Register**. Information regarding the Angling category fishery for Atlantic tunas, including daily retention limits for BFT measuring 27 inches (68.5 cm) to less than 73 inches and any further Angling category adjustments, is available at hmspermits.noaa.gov or by calling (978) 281–9260. HMS Angling and HMS Charter/Headboat category permit holders may catch and release (or tag and release) BFT of all sizes, subject to the requirements of the catch-and-release and tag-and-release programs at § 635.26. Anglers are also reminded that all BFT that are released must be handled in a manner that will maximize survival, and without removing the fish from the water, consistent with requirements at § 635.21(a)(1). For additional information on safe handling, see the “Careful Catch and Release” brochure available at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/outreach-and-education/careful-catch-and-release-brochure>.

HMS Charter/Headboat and Angling category vessel owners are required to report the catch of all BFT retained or discarded dead, within 24 hours of the landing(s) or end of each trip, by accessing hmspermits.noaa.gov, using the HMS Catch Reporting app, or calling (888) 872–8862 (Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.).

Classification

The Assistant Administrator for NMFS (AA) finds that it is impracticable and contrary to the public interest to provide prior notice of, and an opportunity for public comment on, this action for the following reasons:

The regulations implementing the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP and amendments provide for inseason retention limit adjustments and fishery closures to respond to the unpredictable nature of BFT availability on the fishing grounds, the migratory nature of this species, and the regional variations in the BFT fishery. The closure of the southern area Angling category trophy fishery is necessary to prevent any further overharvest of the southern area trophy fishery subquota. NMFS provides notification of closures by publishing the notice in the **Federal Register**, emailing individuals who have subscribed to the Atlantic HMS News electronic newsletter, and updating the information posted on the Atlantic Tunas Information Line and on hmspermits.noaa.gov.

These fisheries are currently underway and delaying this action would be contrary to the public interest as it could result in excessive trophy BFT landings that may result in future potential quota reductions for the Angling category, depending on the magnitude of a potential Angling category overharvest. NMFS must close the southern area trophy BFT fishery before additional landings of these sizes of BFT occur. Therefore, the AA finds good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) to waive prior notice and the opportunity for public comment. For all of the above reasons, there is good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553(d) to waive the 30-day delay in effectiveness.

This action is being taken under 50 CFR 635.28(a)(1), and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.* and 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: February 19, 2020.

Karyl K. Brewster-Geisz,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 180831813–9170–02]

RTID 0648–XY070

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 620 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 620 in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the A season allowance of the 2020 total allowable catch of pollock for Statistical Area 620 in the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), February 19, 2020, through 1200 hours, A.l.t., March 10, 2020.

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