

incidental catch could be landed per fishing trip. The incidental catch set-aside is intended to allow continued operation of fisheries for other stocks, particularly other CPS stocks that may school with Pacific mackerel.

The Regional Administrator, NMFS West Coast Region, will publish a notice in the **Federal Register** announcing the date of any closure of directed fishing if and when harvest levels reach or exceed the ACT. Additionally, to ensure the regulated community is informed of any closure, NMFS will also make announcements through other means available, including by email to fishermen, processors, and state fishery management agencies.

The 30-day public comment period for the proposed rule (90 FR 41376, August 25, 2025) ended on September 24, 2025. Two comments in support of the rulemaking were received.

Classification

Pursuant to section 304(b)(1)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the NMFS Assistant Administrator has determined that this final rule is consistent with the CPS FMP, other provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and other applicable law.

This final rule has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866. This final rule is exempt from the requirements of E.O. 14192 because it is a routine fishing action.

The Chief Counsel for Regulation of the Department of Commerce certified to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration during the proposed rule stage that this action would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities for the purposes of the Regulatory Flexibility Act. The factual basis for the certification was published in the proposed rule (90 FR 41376, August 25, 2025) and is not repeated here. No comments were received regarding this certification. As a result, a final regulatory flexibility analysis was not required and none was prepared.

A Tribal summary impact statement under section (5)(b)(2)(B) and section (5)(c)(2)(B) of E.O. 13175 was not required for this final rule because this action does not impose substantial direct compliance costs on Indian Tribal Governments and this action does not preempt Tribal law. A Tribal summary impact statement has therefore not been prepared.

This final rule contains no information collection requirements under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. There are no relevant Federal

rules that may duplicate, overlap, or conflict with the proposed action.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 660

Fisheries, Fishing, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Dated: February 26, 2026.

Samuel D. Rauch, III,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, NMFS amends 50 CFR part 660 as follows:

PART 660—FISHERIES OFF WEST COAST STATES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 660 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, 16 U.S.C. 773 *et seq.*, and 16 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.*

■ 2. In § 660.511, revise paragraphs (i)(1) and (2) to read as follows:

§ 660.511 Catch restrictions.

* * * * *

(i) * * *

(1) For the Pacific mackerel fishing season July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, the harvest guideline is 9,143 mt and the ACT is 8,143 mt; and

(2) For the Pacific mackerel fishing season July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, the harvest guideline is 10,448 mt and the ACT is 9,448 mt.

* * * * *

[FR Doc. 2026-05252 Filed 3-17-26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 260305-0067; RTID 0648-XF430]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Greater Than or Equal to 50 Feet Length Overall Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of 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 Pacific cod by catcher vessels greater than or equal to 50 feet (15.2 meters (m)) length overall using hook-and-line (HAL) gear in the Central

Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the A season allowance of the 2026 Pacific cod total allowable catch (TAC) allocated to catcher vessels greater than or equal to 50 feet (15.2 m) length overall using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), March 16, 2026, through 1200 hours, A.l.t., September 1, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Abby Jahn, 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 GOA (FMP) prepared and recommended by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens 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 A season allowance of the 2026 Pacific cod TAC allocated to catcher vessels greater than or equal to 50 feet (15.2 m) length overall using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA is 1,160 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2025 and 2026 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (90 FR 12468, March 18, 2025) and the inseason adjustment (91 FR 5858, February 10, 2026).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) has determined that the A season allowance of the 2026 Pacific cod TAC allocated to catcher vessels greater than or equal to 50 feet (15.2 m) length overall using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA will be or has been reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 1,060 mt and is setting aside the remaining 100 mt as incidental catch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional Administrator finds that this directed fishing allowance has been or will be reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for catcher vessels greater than or equal to 50 feet (15.2 m) length overall using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA to prevent exceeding this sector's A season allowance of Pacific cod TAC.

While this closure is effective the maximum retainable amounts at

§ 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR part 679, which was issued pursuant to section 304(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), 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, as it would prevent NMFS from responding to the most recent fisheries data on Pacific cod catch in a timely fashion and would delay the closure of directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher vessels greater than or equal to 50 feet (15.2 m) length overall using HAL gear in the A season in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data on Pacific cod catch only became available as of March 13, 2026.

There is good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3) to establish an effective date less than 30 days after date of publication. This finding is based upon the reasons provided above for waiver of prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

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

Dated: March 14, 2026.

David R. Blankinship,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2026-05266 Filed 3-16-26; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P