

Legal lobsters that are harvested during the trips would be landed for sale. For each late-stage egg-bearing female, the fishermen would remove for collection the smallest walking leg. After recording carapace length and latitude/longitude, the female would be released. A maximum of 240 samples would be collected from across the 6 locations, with a target sample size of 25 at each location. One trip would be taken for each location with each trip lasting 3 days.

If approved, the applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research and have minimal impacts that do not change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request. Any fishing activity conducted outside the scope of the exempted fishing activity would be prohibited.

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

Dated: April 6, 2026.

David R. Blankinship,

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

[FR Doc. 2026-06793 Filed 4-8-26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF662]

Endangered Species; File No. 29414

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

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Jesse Senko, Ph.D., Arizona State University, School of Ocean Futures, 777 E. University Dr., Tempe, AZ 85281, has applied in due form for a permit to take green (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), and olive ridley (*L. olivacea*) sea turtles for purposes of scientific research.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before May 11, 2026.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by selecting "Records Open for Public Comment" from the "Features" box on the Applications and Permits for

Protected Species home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 29414 from the list of available applications. These documents are also available upon written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov.

Written comments on this application should be submitted via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include File No. 29414 in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request via email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on this application would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Amy Hapeman or Erin Markin, Ph.D., (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226).

The applicant proposes to develop and test technologies to reduce sea turtle bycatch in pound nets and gillnets in North Carolina waters. Researchers would capture sea turtles in pound nets and gillnets and perform the following procedures before their release: handling, measuring, photography, and flipper and passive integrated transponder tagging. The applicant also requests to perform this suite of post-capture procedures on animals that are legally incidentally caught in the Virginia pound net fishery in the Chesapeake Bay. Researchers would annually take up to 175 green, 4 hawksbill, 110 Kemp's ridley, 9 leatherback, 245 loggerhead, 4 olive, and 10 unidentified sea turtles across both locations and projects combined. Dr. Senko also requests unintentional mortality for up to two green, two loggerhead, one Kemp's ridley, one hawksbill, one leatherback, and one olive ridley sea turtles over the life of the permit during netting operations in North Carolina. The permit would be valid for 5 years.

Dated: April 6, 2026.

Shannon Bettridge,

Chief, Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2026-06830 Filed 4-8-26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF486]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska; Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program Cost Recovery Fee Notice

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

ACTION: Notification of standard prices and fee percentage.

SUMMARY: NMFS publishes the standard ex-vessel prices and fee percentage for cost recovery under the Central Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Rockfish Program (Rockfish Program). This action is intended to provide participants in a rockfish cooperative with the standard prices and fee percentage for the 2025 fishing year, which was authorized from April 1 through November 15. The fee percentage is 3.00 percent. The fee payments were due from each rockfish cooperative on or before February 15, 2026.

DATES: Valid on April 9, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dana Whitely, 907-586-7231.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The rockfish fisheries are conducted in Federal waters near Kodiak, Alaska by trawl and longline vessels. Regulations implementing the Rockfish Program are set forth at 50 CFR part 679. Exclusive harvesting privileges are allocated as quota share under the Rockfish Program for rockfish primary and secondary species. Each year, NMFS issues rockfish primary and secondary species cooperative quota (CQ) to rockfish quota share holders to authorize harvest of these species. The rockfish primary species are northern rockfish, Pacific ocean perch, and dusky rockfish. The rockfish secondary species include Pacific cod, roughey rockfish, shortraker rockfish, sablefish, and thornyhead rockfish. Rockfish cooperatives began fishing under the Rockfish Program in 2012.

The Rockfish Program is a limited access privilege program established under the provisions of section 303A of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). Sections 303A and 304(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act require NMFS to collect fees to recover

the actual costs directly related to the management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement of any limited access privilege program. Therefore, NMFS is required to collect fees for the Rockfish Program under sections 303A and 304(d)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Section 304(d)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act also limits the cost recovery fee so that it may not exceed 3.00 percent of the ex-vessel value of the fish harvested under the Rockfish Program.

Standard Prices

NMFS calculates cost recovery fees based on standard ex-vessel value prices, rather than actual price data provided by each rockfish CQ holder. Use of standard ex-vessel prices is allowed under sections 303A and 304(d)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. NMFS generates a standard ex-vessel price for each rockfish primary and secondary species on a monthly basis to determine the average price paid per pound (lb) for all shoreside processors receiving rockfish primary and secondary species CQ. Rockfish processors that receive and purchase landings of rockfish CQ groundfish must submit, on an annual basis, a volume and value report for the period April 1 to November 15 (50 CFR 679.5(r)(10)(ii)).

Regulations at 50 CFR 679.85(b)(2) require the Regional Administrator to publish rockfish standard ex-vessel values during the first quarter of each calendar year. The standard prices are described in U.S. dollars per pound for rockfish primary and secondary species CQ landings made during the previous year.

Fee Percentage

NMFS assesses a fee on the standard ex-vessel value of rockfish primary species and rockfish secondary species CQ harvested by rockfish cooperatives in the Central GOA and waters adjacent to the Central GOA when rockfish primary species caught by a cooperative are deducted from the Federal total allowable catch. The rockfish entry level longline fishery and trawl vessels that opt out of joining a cooperative are not subject to cost recovery fees because those participants do not receive rockfish CQ. Specific details on the Rockfish Program's cost recovery provision may be found in the implementing regulations set forth at 50 CFR 679.85.

NMFS informs, by letter, each rockfish cooperative of the fee percentage applied to the previous year's landings and the total amount

due. Fees are due on or before February 15 of each year. Failure to pay on time would result in the permit holder's rockfish quota share becoming non-transferable, and the person would be ineligible to receive any additional rockfish quota share by transfer. In addition, cooperative members will not receive any rockfish CQ the following year until full payment of the fee is received by NMFS.

NMFS calculates and publishes in the **Federal Register** the fee percentage in the first quarter of each year according to the factors and methods described in Federal regulations at 50 CFR 679.85(c)(2). NMFS determines the fee percentage that applies to landings made in the previous year by dividing the total Rockfish Program management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement costs (direct program costs) during the previous year by the total standard ex-vessel value of the rockfish primary species and rockfish secondary species for all rockfish CQ landings made during the previous year (fishery value). NMFS captures the direct program costs through an established accounting system that allows staff to track labor, travel, contracts, and procurement. Fee collections in any given year may be less than or greater than the direct program costs and fishery value for that year, as the fee percentage is established by regulation in the first quarter of the calendar year based on the program costs and the fishery value of the previous calendar year.

Using the fee percentage formula described above, the estimated percentage of program costs to value for the 2025 calendar year is 3.05 percent of the standard ex-vessel value; since this is higher than the statutory cap, the fee percentage is capped at 3.00 percent. Program costs for 2025 decreased by 35 percent compared to 2024 costs and the fishery value increased by approximately 60 percent resulting in a lower estimated fee percentage.

TABLE 1—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES BY SPECIES FOR THE 2025 ROCKFISH PROGRAM SEASON IN KODIAK, ALASKA

Species	Month	Average price/lb
Dusky Rockfish	April	\$0.11
	May	0.10
	June	0.10
	July	0.10
	August	0.10
	September ..	0.10
	October	0.10
Northern Rockfish	November ...	0.10
	April	0.10

TABLE 1—STANDARD EX-VESSEL PRICES BY SPECIES FOR THE 2025 ROCKFISH PROGRAM SEASON IN KODIAK, ALASKA—Continued

Species	Month	Average price/lb
Pacific Cod	May	0.10
	June	0.10
	July	0.10
	August	0.10
	September ..	0.10
	October	0.10
	November ...	0.10
	April	0.32
	May	0.29
	June	0.25
	July	0.28
Pacific Ocean Perch	August	0.28
	September ..	0.28
	October	0.28
	November ...	0.28
	April	0.13
	May	0.13
	June	0.13
Rougheye Rockfish	July	0.13
	August	0.13
	September ..	0.13
	October	0.13
	November ...	0.13
	April	0.11
	May	0.11
Sablefish	June	0.11
	July	0.11
	August	0.11
	September ..	0.11
	October	0.11
	November ...	0.11
	April	1.06
Shortraker Rockfish	May	0.87
	June	1.00
	July	1.15
	August	1.15
	September ..	1.15
	October	1.15
	November ...	1.15
Thornyhead Rockfish	April	0.10
	May	0.10
	June	0.10
	July	0.10
	August	0.10
	September ..	0.10
	October	0.10
Thornyhead Rockfish	November ...	0.10
	April	0.21
	May	0.18
	June	0.16
	July	0.21
	August	0.21
	September ..	0.21
Thornyhead Rockfish	October	0.21
	November ...	0.21

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 773 *et seq.*; 1801 *et seq.*; 3631 *et seq.*; Public Law 108–447; Public Law 111–281.

Dated: April 6, 2026.

David R. Blankinship,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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