

of the 2005 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 1,538 mt, and is setting aside the remaining 200 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries.

Regulations at § 679.23(b) specify that the time of all openings and closures of fishing seasons other than the beginning and end of the calendar fishing year is 1200 hrs, A.l.t. Current information shows the catching capacity of vessels catching pollock for processing by the inshore component in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA is about 4,000 mt per day. The Regional Administrator has determined that the B season allowance of the 2005 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 would be exceeded if a 24-hour fishery were allowed to occur. NMFS intends that the seasonal allowance not be exceeded and, therefore, will not allow a 24-hour directed fishery. NMFS, in accordance with §§ 679.25(a)(1)(i), (a)(2)(i)(A), and (a)(2)(i)(C), is adjusting the directed fishery for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA by opening the fishery at 1200 hrs, A.l.t., March 10, 2005, and closing the fishery at 2400 hrs, A.l.t., March 10, 2005, at which time directed fishing for pollock will be prohibited. This action has the effect of opening the fishery for 12 hours.

NMFS is taking this action to allow a controlled fishery to occur, thereby preventing the overharvest of the B season allowance of the 2005 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 designated in accordance with the 2005 and 2006 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (70 FR 8958, February 24, 2005) and § 679.20(a)(5)(iii). In accordance with § 679.25(a)(2)(iii)(C), NMFS has determined that prohibiting directed fishing at 2400 hrs, A.l.t., March 10, 2005, after a 12 hour opening is the least restrictive management adjustment to achieve the B season allowance of the 2005 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA. Pursuant to § 679.25(b)(2), NMFS has considered data regarding catch per unit of effort and rate of harvest in making this adjustment.

After the effective date of this closure the maximum retainable amounts at §§ 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

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 prevent the full utilization of the B season allowance of the 2005 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA.

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.

Without this inseason adjustment, NMFS could not allow the B season allowance of the 2005 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA to be harvested in an expedient manner and in accordance with the regulatory schedule. Under § 679.25(c)(2), interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this action to the above address until March 29, 2005.

This action is required by §§ 679.20 and 679.25 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: March 11, 2005.

Alan D. Risenhoover,
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. 041126332-5039-02; I.D. 031505B]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Yellowfin Sole by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in Bycatch Limitation Zone 1 of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is closing directed fishing for yellowfin sole by vessels using trawl gear in Bycatch Limitation Zone 1 (Zone 1) of the Bering Sea and

Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2005 bycatch allowance of red king crab specified for the trawl yellowfin sole fishery in Zone 1.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), March 16, 2005, until 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary Furuness, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the BSAI exclusive economic zone according to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (FMP) prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management 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.

In accordance with § 679.21(e)(3)(iv)(B)(1), the 2005 red king crab bycatch allowance specified for Zone 1 of the BSAI trawl yellowfin sole fishery is 33,843 animals as established by the 2005 and 2006 final harvest specifications for groundfish of the BSAI (70 FR 8979, February 24, 2005).

In accordance with § 679.21(e)(7)(ii), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the 2005 bycatch allowance of red king crab specified for the trawl yellowfin sole fishery in Zone 1 of the BSAI has been reached. Consequently, the Regional Administrator is closing directed fishing for yellowfin sole by vessels using trawl gear in Zone 1 of the BSAI.

After the effective date of this closure the maximum retainable amounts at §§ 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

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 a 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 closure of the trawl yellowfin sole fishery in Zone 1 of the BSAI.

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 § 679.21 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: March 15, 2005.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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