

thornyhead rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA has been reached. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that thornyhead rockfish caught in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA be treated as prohibited species in accordance with § 679.21(b).

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 delay the prohibition of retention of thornyhead rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of August 11, 2008.

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

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

Dated: August 12, 2008.

Alan D. Risenhoover

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. 071106673-8011-02]

RIN 0648-XJ73

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel Lottery in Areas 542 and 543

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notification of fishery assignments.

SUMMARY: NMFS is notifying the owners and operators of registered vessels of their assignments for the 2008 B season Atka mackerel fishery in harvest limit area (HLA) 542 and/or 543 of the Aleutian Islands subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to allow the harvest of the 2008 B season HLA limits established for area 542 and area 543 pursuant to the 2008 and 2009 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), August 12, 2008, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., November 1, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Hogan, 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 § 679.20(a)(8)(iii)(A), owners and operators of vessels using trawl gear for directed fishing for Atka mackerel in the HLA are required to register with NMFS. Eight vessels have registered with NMFS to fish in the B season HLA fisheries in areas 542 and/or 543. In accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii)(B), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has randomly assigned each vessel to the HLA directed fishery for Atka mackerel for which they have registered and is now notifying each vessel of its assignment.

For the Amendment 80 cooperative, the vessels authorized to participate in the first HLA directed fishery in area 542 and the second HLA directed fishery in area 543 in accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii) is as follows: Federal Fishery Permit number (FFP) 2733 Seafreeze Alaska and FFP 3835 Seafisher. The vessel authorized to participate in the first HLA directed fishery in area 543 and the second HLA directed fishery in area 542 in

accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii) is as follows: FFP 2134 Ocean Peace.

For the Amendment 80 limited access sector, vessels authorized to participate in the first HLA directed fishery in area 542 and in the second HLA directed fishery in area 543 in accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii) are as follows: FFP 4093 Alaska Victory and FFP 3819 Alaska Spirit. Vessels authorized to participate in the first HLA directed fishery in area 543 and in the second HLA directed fishery in area 542 in accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii) are as follows: FFP 2443 Alaska Juris and FFP 3423 Alaska Warrior.

For the BSAI trawl limited access sector, the vessel authorized to participate in the first HLA directed fishery in area 542 in accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii) is as follows: FFP 11770 Alaska Knight.

Classification

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 unnecessary. This notice merely advises the owners of these vessels of the results of a random assignment required by regulation. The notice needs to occur immediately to notify the owner of each vessel of its assignment to allow these vessel owners to plan for participation in the B season HLA fisheries in area 542 and area 543.

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

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

Dated: August 12, 2008.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

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