

final 2012 and 2013 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (77 FR 10669, February 23, 2012) and a subsequent inseason adjustment to catcher vessels using hook-and-line or pot gear (77 FR 53152, August 31, 2012). The Regional Administrator has determined that catcher vessels using trawl gear will not be able to harvest 3,260 mt of the 2012 Pacific cod TAC allocated to those vessels under § 679.20(a)(7)(ii)(A)(9). The Regional Administrator has also determined that this unharvested amount is unlikely to be harvested through the hierarchy set forth in § 679.20(a)(7)(iii)(A). Therefore, in accordance with § 679.20(a)(7)(iii)(A) and § 679.20(a)(7)(iii)(B), NMFS reallocates 1,260 mt to American Fisheries Act (AFA) catcher/processors and 2,000 mt to Amendment 80 catcher/processors.

The harvest specifications for Pacific cod included in the final 2012 harvest specifications for groundfish in the BSAI (77 FR 10669, February 23, 2012) and inseason adjustment (77 FR 53152, August 31, 2012) are revised as follows: 6,621 mt for AFA catcher/processors, 33,232 mt for Amendment 80 catcher/processors, and 47,749 mt for trawl catcher vessels. In accordance with § 679.91(f), NMFS will reissue cooperative quota permits for the reallocated Pacific cod to Amendment 80 catcher/processors following the procedures set forth in § 679.91(f)(3).

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 reallocation of Pacific cod specified for catcher vessels using trawl gear to AFA catcher/processors and Amendment 80 catcher/processors. Since the fishery is currently open, it is important to immediately inform the industry as to the revised allocations. Immediate notification is necessary to allow for the orderly conduct and efficient operation of this fishery, to allow the industry to plan for the fishing season, and to avoid potential disruption to the fishing fleet as well as processors. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for

public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of October 24, 2012.

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: October 25, 2012.

Lindsay Fullenkamp,

Acting Deputy 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. 111213751-2102-02]

RIN 0648-XC320

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; modification of a closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is opening directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch in the Bering Sea subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area. This action is necessary to fully use the 2012 total allowable catch of Pacific ocean perch specified for the Bering Sea subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), October 26, 2012, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 2012. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., November 13, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2012-0214, by any of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal www.regulations.gov. To submit

comments via the e-Rulemaking Portal, first click the “submit a comment” icon, then enter NOAA-NMFS-2012-0213 in the keyword search. Locate the document you wish to comment on from the resulting list and click on the “Submit a Comment” icon on that line.

- **Mail:** Address written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Mail comments to P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668.

- **Fax:** Address written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Fax comments to 907-586-7557.

- **Hand delivery to the Federal Building:** Address written comments to Glenn Merrill, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. Deliver comments to 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK.

Instructions: Comments must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure that the comments are received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address) submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steve Whitney, 907-586-7269.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (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.

NMFS closed the directed fishery for Pacific ocean perch (POP) in the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) (77 FR 10669, February 23, 2012).

NMFS has determined that approximately 3,400 metric tons of POP remain in the directed fishing allowance. Therefore, in accordance with § 679.25(a)(1)(i), (a)(2)(i)(C), and (a)(2)(iii)(D), and to fully utilize the 2012 total allowable catch of POP in the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for POP in Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI. This will enhance the socioeconomic well-being of harvesters dependent upon POP in this area. The Administrator, Alaska Region considered the following factors in reaching this decision: (1) the current catch of POP in the BSAI and, (2) the harvest capacity and stated intent on future harvesting patterns of vessels participating in this fishery.

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 opening of POP directed fishing in the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public comment because the most recent, relevant data only became available as of October 22, 2012.

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 fishery for POP in the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI 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 November 13, 2012.

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: October 26, 2012.

William D. Chappell,

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

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