2006 to 2015 will be based on NMFS’ logbook records, submitted on or before February 16, 2016. If NMFS’ logbooks are not available, state landings records or data for 2006 to 2015 that were submitted in compliance with applicable Federal and state regulations on or before February 16, 2015, may be used.

§ 622.385 Commercial trip limits.
   (a) * * *
      (1) * * *
      (2) * * *
      (i) * * *
      (A) * * *
      (1) In the Florida west coast southern subzone, king mackerel in or from the EEZ may be possessed on board or landed from a vessel for which a commercial vessel permit for king mackerel has been issued, as required by § 622.370(a)(2), in amounts not exceeding 0.0006 metric tons (20 lb) per trip, if directed fishing for groundfish, other than demersal shelf rockfish, by C/Vs is prohibited in the GOA.

§ 622.388 Annual catch limits (ACLs), annual catch targets (ACTs), and accountability measures (AMs).
   (a) * * *
      (1) * * *
      (ii) * * *
         (A) * * *
         (1) If the sum of the commercial and recreational landings, as estimated by the SRD, reaches or is projected to reach the stock ACL, as specified in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial and recreational sectors for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale and purchase of Gulf migratory group Spanish mackerel is prohibited and the harvest and possession limit of this species in or from the Gulf EEZ is zero.
   (e) * * *
      (1) * * *
         (i) If the sum of all cobia landings, as estimated by the SRD, reaches or is projected to reach the stock quota (stock ACT), specified in § 622.384(d)(1), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to prohibit the harvest of Gulf migratory group cobia in the Gulf zone for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale and purchase of Gulf migratory group cobia in the Gulf zone is prohibited and the possession limit of this species in or from the Gulf EEZ is zero.

DISTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT FISHING FUNDS
   The AA also 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 closure of other hook-and-line fishery by C/Vs in the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), December 15, 2015, until 2400 hours A.l.t., December 31, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Josh Keaton, 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 Gulf of Alaska (FMP) prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (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.

The Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the other hook-and-line fishery by C/Vs in the GOA is 145 metric tons as established by the final 2015 and 2016 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (80 FR 10250, February 25, 2015).

In accordance with § 679.21(d)(6)(ii), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the other hook-and-line fishery by C/Vs in the GOA has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for groundfish, other than demersal shelf rockfish, by C/Vs using hook-and-line gear in the GOA.

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 delay closure of other hook-and-line fishery by C/Vs in 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 December 11, 2015.

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

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

Dated: December 14, 2015.

Galen R. Tromble,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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