relevant data only became available as of March 28, 2016. 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 northern rockfish in 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 April 19, 2016. 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 30, 2016.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Josh Keaton, 907–586–7228.


The A season allowance of the 2016 Pacific cod total allowable catch (TAC) apportioned to vessels using pot gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA is 8,028 metric tons (mt), as established by the final 2016 and 2017 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (81 FR 14740, March 18, 2016) and reallocation (81 FR 15650, March 24, 2016). In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) has determined that the A season allowance of the 2016 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to vessels using pot gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 8,018 mt and is setting aside the remaining 10 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional Administrator finds that this directed fishing allowance has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific cod by vessels using pot gear in the Central Regulatory Area of 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 the directed fishing closure of Pacific cod for vessels using pot gear in the Central 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 March 29, 2016. 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: March 30, 2016.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

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