

the Regional Administrator projects that 96 percent of the *Illex* DAH is harvested. The closure of the directed fishery shall be in effect for the remainder of that fishing period, with incidental catches allowed as specified at § 648.26.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 220126-0034; RTID 0648-XC249]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Bluefish Fishery; Quota Transfers From MD to RI

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

ACTION: Notification; quota transfers.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the State of Maryland is transferring a portion of its 2022 commercial bluefish quota to the State of Rhode Island. This quota adjustment is necessary to comply with the Atlantic Bluefish Fishery Management Plan quota transfer provisions. This announcement informs the public of the revised commercial bluefish quotas for Maryland and Rhode Island.

DATES: Effective August 8, 2022, through December 31, 2022.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura Deighan, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9184.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Regulations governing the Atlantic bluefish fishery are found in 50 CFR 648.160 through 648.167. These regulations require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned among the coastal states from Maine through Florida. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state is described in § 648.162, and the final 2022 allocations were published on February 2, 2022 (87 FR 5739).

The final rule implementing Amendment 1 to the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) published in the **Federal Register** on July 26, 2000 (65 FR 45844), and provided a mechanism for transferring bluefish quota from one state to another. Two or more states, under mutual agreement and with the concurrence of the NMFS

Greater Atlantic Regional Administrator, can request approval to transfer or combine bluefish commercial quota under § 648.162(e)(1)(i) through (iii). The Regional Administrator must approve any such transfer based on the criteria in § 648.162(e). In evaluating requests to transfer a quota or combine quotas, the Regional Administrator shall consider whether: The transfer or combinations would preclude the overall annual quota from being fully harvested; the transfer addresses an unforeseen variation or contingency in the fishery; and the transfer is consistent with the objectives of the FMP and the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Maryland is transferring 30,000 lb (13,608 kg) to Rhode Island through mutual agreement of the states. This transfer was requested to ensure Rhode Island would not exceed its 2022 state quota. The revised bluefish quotas for 2022 are: Maryland, 70,698 lb (32,068 kg) and Rhode Island, 324,956 lb (147,398 kg).

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR 648.162(e)(1)(i) through (iii), which was issued pursuant to section 304(b), and is exempted from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: August 3, 2022.

Jennifer M. Wallace,

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. 220216-0049; RTID 0648-XC227]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; "Other Rockfish" in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting retention of "other rockfish" in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary

to prevent exceeding the 2022 total allowable catch of "other rockfish" in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), August 6, 2022, through 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 2022.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Obren Davis, 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 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 parts 600 and 679.

The 2022 total allowable catch (TAC) of "other rockfish" in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas of the GOA is 940 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2022 and 2023 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (87 FR 11599, March 2, 2022).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(2), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the 2022 "other rockfish" TAC in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas of the GOA will soon be reached. Therefore, NMFS is requiring that "other rockfish" in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas of the GOA be treated as prohibited species in accordance with § 679.21(b), as described under § 679.21(a), for the remainder of the year, except other rockfish species in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas of the GOA caught by catcher vessels using hook-and-line, pot, or jig gear as described in § 679.20(j).

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR part 679, which was issued pursuant to section 304(b), and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment would be 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 prohibiting retention of "other rockfish" in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas 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 4, 2022.

The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA 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.

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

Dated: August 5, 2022.

Jennifer M. Wallace,

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

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