



BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 200221-0062]

RTID 0648-XA602

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 620 in the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; modification of closure

SUMMARY: NMFS is opening directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to fully use the 2020 total allowable catch of pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1201 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), October 27, 2020, through 1200 hours, A.l.t., October 29, 2020. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., [*insert date 15 days after date of filing for public inspection with the Office of the Federal Register*].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by FDMS

Docket Number NOAA-NMFS-2019-0102 by any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-

NMFS-2019-0102, click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

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

Instructions: 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 by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and NMFS will post the comments for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.*, name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Obren Davis, 907-586-7241.

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 part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

The D season allowance of the 2020 total allowable catch (TAC) of pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the GOA is 6,739 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2020

and 2021 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (85 FR 13802, March 10, 2020).

NMFS closed directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the GOA under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on October 20, 2020 through a separate notice in the **Federal Register**.

As of October 23, 2020, NMFS has determined that approximately 900 metric tons of pollock remain in the D season allowance for pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the GOA. Therefore, in accordance with § 679.25(a)(1)(i), (a)(2)(i)(C), and (a)(2)(iii)(D), and to fully utilize the D season allowance of the 2020 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the GOA, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is reopening directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the GOA, effective 1201 hours, A.l.t., October 27, 2020.

The Administrator, Alaska Region (Regional Administrator) considered the following factors in reaching this decision: (1) the catch of pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the GOA and, (2) the harvest capacity and stated intent on future harvesting patterns of vessels in participating in this fishery.

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 the opening of directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 620 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 October 23, 2020.

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

Dated: October 26, 2020.

Jennifer M. Wallace,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2020-24021 Filed: 10/26/2020 4:15 pm; Publication Date: 10/29/2020]