



## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

#### **50 CFR Part 679**

**[Docket No. 250312-0037; RTID 0648-XE810]**

### **Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Hook-and-Line Gear in the Central Regulatory Area 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 directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher/processors  
using hook-and-line (HAL) gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska  
(GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the A season allowance of the 2025  
Pacific cod total allowable catch (TAC) apportioned to catcher/processors using HAL  
gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), May 8, 2025, through 1200  
hours, A.l.t., June 10, 2025.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Abby Jahn, 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 and recommended by the North Pacific  
Fishery Management Council under authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery  
Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens 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 A season allowance of the 2025 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA is 613 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2025 and 2026 harvest specifications for groundfish in the GOA (90 FR 12468, March 18, 2025).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the A season allowance of the 2025 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA will soon be or has been reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 603 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 will be or has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific cod by catcher/processors using HAL gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA to prevent exceeding this sector's A season allowance of Pacific cod TAC.

While this closure is effective, the maximum retainable amounts at § 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

### **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) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, 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 closure of Pacific cod by catcher/processors using HAL gear in the A season 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 May 7, 2025.

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: May 8, 2025.

**Kelly Denit,**

*Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,*

*National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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