



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[RTID 0648-XF039; Docket No. 250312-0037]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Trawl 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 retention of Pacific cod by catcher/processors using
trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is
necessary because the 2025 total allowable catch of Pacific cod allocated to
catcher/processors using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA has been
or will be reached.

DATES: Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 14, 2025, through 2400
hours, A.l.t., December 31, 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 GOA (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 2025 total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific cod allocated to catcher/processors using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA is 626 metric tons as established by the final 2025 and 2026 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (90 FR 12468, March 18, 2025).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(2), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the 2025 TAC of Pacific cod allocated to catcher/processors using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA has been or will be reached. Therefore, NMFS is prohibiting retention of Pacific cod caught by catcher/processors using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA and requiring that Pacific cod caught by catcher/processors using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA be treated in the same manner as prohibited species in accordance with § 679.21(a)(2) for the remainder of the year. This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2025 TAC of Pacific cod allocated to catcher/processors using trawl gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA.

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 prohibiting the retention of Pacific cod by catcher/processors using trawl 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 on Pacific cod harvest by

catcher/processors in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA only became available as of July 11, 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: July 14, 2025.

Kelly Denit,

Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.