



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 260305-0067; RTID 0648-XF826]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Dusky Rockfish in the West Yakutat District 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 dusky rockfish in the West Yakutat District of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2026 total allowable catch (TAC) of dusky rockfish in the West Yakutat District of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 22, 2026, through 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steve Whitney, 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 2026 TAC of dusky rockfish in the West Yakutat District of the GOA is 204 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2026 and 2027 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (91 FR 11902, March 11, 2026).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) has determined that the 2026 TAC of dusky rockfish in the West Yakutat District of the GOA has been or will be reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 150 mt, and is setting aside the remaining 54 mt as incidental catch 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 or will be reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for dusky rockfish in the West Yakutat District of the GOA to prevent exceeding the dusky rockfish TAC in the West Yakutat District of the GOA.

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 on dusky rockfish catch in a timely fashion and would delay the closure of directed fishing of dusky rockfish in the West Yakutat District of the GOA. NMFS was unable to publish a notice providing time for public

comment because the most recent, relevant data on catch of dusky rockfish in the West Yakutat District of the GOA only became available as of July 21, 2026.

There is good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3) to establish an effective date less than 30 days after date of publication. 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 21, 2026.

Shannon Bettridge,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.