

(4) *Texas zone.* The Texas zone is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	29°09.1'	93°41.4'
B	28°44'	95°15'
C	28°11'	96°17'
D	27°44'	96°53'
E	27°02'	97°11'
F	26°00.5'	96°57.3'
G	26°00.5'	96°35.85'
H	26°24'	96°36'
I	26°49'	96°52'
J	27°12'	96°51'
K	27°39'	96°33'
L	27°55'	96°04'
M	28°21.7'	93°28.4'
A	29°09.1'	93°41.4'

(m)***

The recreational fishery for red snapper in or from the Gulf EEZ is closed from January 1 through May 31 and from October 1 through December 31, each year. * * *

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■ 4. In § 622.37, paragraph (d)(1)(vi) is removed and paragraph (d)(1)(iv) is revised to read as follows:

§ 622.37 Size limits.

* * * * *

(d) * * *

(1) * * *

(iv) Red snapper -16 inches (40.6 cm), TL, for a fish taken by a person subject to the bag limit specified in § 622.39 (b)(1)(iii) and 13 inches (38.1 cm), TL, for a fish taken by a person not subject to the bag limit.

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■ 5. In § 622.39, paragraphs (b)(1)(viii) through (b)(1)(x) are removed, and paragraphs (b)(1)(iii) and (b)(1)(v) are revised to read as follows:

§ 622.39 Bag and possession limits.

* * * * *

(b) * * *

(1) * * *

(iii) Red snapper -2. However, no red snapper may be retained by the captain or crew of a vessel operating as a charter vessel or headboat. The bag limit for such captain and crew is zero.

* * * * *

(v) Gulf reef fish, combined, excluding those specified in paragraphs (b)(1)(i) through (b)(1)(iv) and paragraphs (b)(1)(vi) through (b)(1)(vii) of this section and excluding dwarf sand perch and sand perch -20.

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■ 6. In § 622.41, paragraph (m) is added to read as follows:

§ 622.41 Species specific limitations.

* * * * *

(m) *Required gear in the Gulf reef fish fishery.* For a person on board a vessel to fish for Gulf reef fish in the Gulf EEZ, the vessel must possess on board and such person must use the gear as specified in paragraphs (m)(1) through (m)(3) of this section.

(1) *Non-stainless steel circle hooks.*

Non-stainless steel circle hooks are required when fishing with natural baits.

(2) *Dehooking device.* At least one dehooking device is required and must be used to remove hooks embedded in Gulf reef fish with minimum damage. The hook removal device must be constructed to allow the hook to be secured and the barb shielded without re-engaging during the removal process. The dehooking end must be blunt, and all edges rounded. The device must be of a size appropriate to secure the range of hook sizes and styles used in the Gulf reef fish fishery.

(3) *Venting tool.* At least one venting tool is required and must be used to deflate the swim bladders of Gulf reef fish to release the fish with minimum damage. This tool must be a sharpened, hollow instrument, such as a hypodermic syringe with the plunger removed, or a 16-gauge needle fixed to a hollow wooden dowel. A tool such as a knife or an ice-pick may not be used. The venting tool must be inserted into the fish at a 45-degree angle approximately 1 to 2 inches (2.54 to 5.08 cm) from the base of the pectoral fin. The tool must be inserted just deep enough to release the gases, so that the fish may be released with minimum damage.

■ 7. In § 622.42, paragraphs (a)(1)(v) and (a)(3) are removed, and paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (a)(2) are revised to read as follows:

§ 622.42 Quotas.

* * * * *

(a) * * *

(1) * * *

(i) Red snapper -2.55 million lb (1.16 million kg), round weight.

* * * * *

(2) *Recreational quota for red snapper.* The following quota applies to persons who harvest red snapper other than under commercial vessel permits for Gulf reef fish and the commercial quota specified in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section -2.45 million lb (1.11 million kg), round weight.

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■ 8. In § 622.48, paragraph (i) is revised to read as follows:

§ 622.48 Adjustment of management measures.

* * * * *

(i) *Gulf shrimp.* Closed seasons and areas, target effort and fishing mortality reduction levels, bycatch reduction criteria, BRD certification and decertification criteria, BRD testing protocol, certified BRDs, and BRD specification.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 070213032-7032-01]

RIN 0648-XF34

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; modification of a closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is reopening directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) for 48 hours. This action is necessary to fully use the A season allowance of the 2008 total allowable catch (TAC) of pollock specified for Statistical Area 630 of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), January 25, 2008, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., January 27, 2008. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., February 8, 2008.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by 0648-XF34, by any one of the following methods:

• Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal website at <http://www.regulations.gov>;

• Mail: P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802;

• FAX: (907) 586-7557; or

• Hand delivery to the Federal Building: 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK. Send comments to Sue Salvesson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian.

Instructions: All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (for

example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

NMFS will accept anonymous comments. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jennifer Hogan, 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 part 600 and 50 CFR part 679.

NMFS closed the directed fishery for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA under § 679.20(d)(1)(iii) on January 22, 2008, and which published in the **Federal Register** on January 25, 2008.

NMFS has determined that approximately 3,069 mt of pollock remain in the directed fishing allowance

in Statistical Area 630 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 A season allowance of the 2008 TAC of pollock in Statistical Area 630, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is reopening directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA. In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional Administrator finds that this directed fishing allowance will be reached after 48 hours. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA for 48 hours, effective 1200 hrs, A.l.t., January 27, 2008.

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), finds good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) and 679.25(c)(1)(ii) as such requirement is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. This requirement is 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 pollock in Statistical Area 630 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 January 23, 2008.

The AA 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.

Without this inseason adjustment, NMFS could not allow the fishery for pollock in Statistical Area 630 of the GOA to be harvested in an expedient manner and in accordance with the regulatory schedule. Under § 679.25(c)(2), interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this action to the above address until February 8, 2008.

This action is required by § 679.20 and § 679.25 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: January 24, 2008.

Emily H. Menashes

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

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