

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 071030625-7696-02]

RIN 0648-XK19

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for the State of New York

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the 2008 summer flounder commercial quota allocated to the State of New York has been harvested. Vessels issued a commercial Federal fisheries permit for the summer flounder fishery may not land summer flounder in New York for the remainder of calendar year 2008, unless additional quota becomes available through a transfer from another state. Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery require publication of this notification to advise New York that the quota has been harvested and to advise vessel permit holders and dealer permit holders that no commercial quota is available for landing summer flounder in New York.

DATES: Effective 0001 hours, September 14, 2008, through 2400 hours, December 31, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Emily Bryant, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9244.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery are found at 50 CFR part 648. The regulations require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned on a percentage basis among the coastal states from North Carolina through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state is described in § 648.100.

The initial total commercial quota for summer flounder for the 2008 calendar year was set equal to 9,462,001 lb (4,292 mt) (72 FR 74197, December 31, 2007). The percent allocated to vessels landing summer flounder in New York is 7.64699 percent, resulting in a commercial quota of 723,558 lb (328 mt). The 2008 allocation was reduced to 697,484 lb (316 mt) when research set-aside and 2007 quota overages were deducted.

Section 648.101(b) requires the Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), to monitor state commercial quotas and to determine when a state's commercial quota has been harvested. NMFS then publishes a notification in the **Federal Register** to advise the state and to notify Federal vessel and dealer permit holders that, effective upon a specific date, the state's commercial quota has been harvested and no commercial quota is available for landing summer flounder in that state. The Regional Administrator has determined, based upon dealer reports and other available information, that New York has harvested its quota for 2008.

The regulations at § 648.4(b) provide that Federal permit holders agree, as a condition of the permit, not to land summer flounder in any state that the Regional Administrator has determined no longer has commercial quota available. Therefore, effective 0001 hours, September 14, 2008, further landings of summer flounder in New York by vessels holding summer flounder commercial Federal fisheries permits are prohibited for the remainder of the 2008 calendar year, unless additional quota becomes available through a transfer and is announced in the **Federal Register**. Effective 0001 hours, September 14, 2008, federally permitted dealers are also notified that they may not purchase summer flounder from federally permitted vessels that land in New York for the remainder of the calendar year, or until additional quota becomes available through a transfer from another state.

Classification

This action is required by 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: September 8, 2008.

James P. Burgess,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E8-21347 Filed 9-11-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 071106671-8010-02]

RIN 0648-XK43

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Deep-Water Species Fishery by Amendment 80 Vessels Subject to Sideboard Limits in 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 species that comprise the deep-water species fishery by Amendment 80 vessels subject to sideboard limits in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary because the fourth seasonal apportionment of the 2008 Pacific halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) limit specified for the deep-water species fishery by Amendment 80 vessels subject to sideboard limits in the GOA has been reached.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), September 9, 2008, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., October 1, 2008.

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.

The fourth seasonal apportionment of the 2008 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the deep-water species fishery by Amendment 80 vessels subject to sideboard limits in the GOA is 3 metric tons as established by the 2008 and 2009 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (73 FR 10562, February 27, 2008), for the period 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 1, 2008, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., October 1, 2008.

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(vi)(C)(1), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the third seasonal

apportionment of the 2008 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the deep-water species fishery by Amendment 80 vessels subject to sideboard limits in the GOA has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for the deep-water species fishery by Amendment 80 vessels subject to sideboard limits in the GOA. For the Amendment 80 sideboards, the species and species groups that comprise the deep-water species fishery include sablefish, rockfish, deep-water flatfish, rex sole, and arrowtooth flounder, and do not include northern rockfish, Pacific ocean perch, and pelagic shelf rockfish in the Central GOA.

After the effective date of this closure the maximum retainable amounts at § 679.20(e) and (f) apply at any time during a trip.

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) 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 closure of the deep-water species fishery by Amendment 80 vessels subject to sideboard limits using trawl gear in 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 September 8, 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.

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

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

Dated: September 9, 2008.

James P. Burgess,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E8-21325 Filed 9-9-08; 4:15 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 071106671-8010-02]

RIN 0648-XK44

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Shallow-Water Species by Vessels Using Trawl Gear in 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 opening directed fishing for shallow-water species by vessels using trawl gear in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) for 36 hours. This action is necessary to fully use the fourth seasonal apportionment of the 2008 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl shallow-water species fishery in the GOA.

DATES: Effective 0800 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), September 10, 2008, through 2000 hrs, A.l.t., September 11, 2008. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., September 24, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Sue Salvesson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, Attn: Ellen Sebastian. You may submit comments, identified by "RIN 0648-XK44," 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.
- Hand delivery to the Federal Building: 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK.

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 (e.g., name, address) 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 (enter N/A in the required fields, if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic

comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe portable document file (pdf) 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 prohibited directed fishing for shallow-water species by vessels using trawl gear in the GOA under § 679.21(d)(7)(i) on September 3, 2008 (73 FR 51601, September 4, 2008).

NMFS has determined that approximately 134 mt remain in the fourth seasonal apportionment of the 2008 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl shallow-water species fishery in 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 fourth seasonal apportionment of the 2008 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl shallow-water species fishery in the GOA, NMFS is terminating the previous closure and is opening directed fishing for trawl shallow-water species by vessels using trawl gear in the GOA. In accordance with § 679.21(d)(7)(i), the Regional Administrator finds that the fourth seasonal apportionment of the 2008 Pacific halibut bycatch allowance specified for the trawl shallow-water species fishery in the GOA will be reached after 36 hours. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for shallow-water species by vessels using trawl gear in the GOA, effective 2000 hrs, A.l.t., September 11, 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 50 CFR 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