

reasonable time for reporting if access to these offices is limited due to closure.

(6) *Additional taking authorizations for Tribal employees, State and local law enforcement officers, and State-licensed wildlife rehabilitation facilities.*

(i) Tribal employees and State and local government law enforcement officers. When acting in the course of their official duties, both Tribal employees designated by the Tribe for such purposes, and State and local government law enforcement officers working in the States of Oregon or Washington, may take CWTB for the following purposes:

- (A) Aiding or euthanizing sick, injured, or orphaned CWTB;
- (B) Disposing of a dead specimen; and
- (C) Salvaging a dead specimen that may be used for scientific study.

(ii) Such take must be reported to the Service within 72 hours, and specimens may be disposed of only in accordance with directions from the Service.

(7) *Wildlife rehabilitation facilities licensed by the States of Oregon or Washington.* When acting in the course of their official duties, a State-licensed wildlife rehabilitation facility may take CWTB for the purpose of aiding or euthanizing sick, injured, or orphaned CWTB. Such take must be reported to the Service within 72 hours as required by paragraph (i)(5) of this section, and specimens may be retained and disposed of only in accordance with directions from the Service.

(8) *Take authorized by permits.* Any person with a valid permit issued by the Service under § 17.32 may take CWTB, pursuant to the special terms and conditions of the permit.

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Dated: October 5, 2016.

Stephen Guertin,

Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[Docket No. 101206604-1758-02]

RIN 0648-XE959

Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; 2016-2017 Commercial Accountability Measures and Closure for King Mackerel in Western Zone of the Gulf of Mexico

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

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS implements accountability measures (AMs) for commercial king mackerel in the western zone of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) exclusive economic zone (EEZ) through this temporary rule. NMFS has determined that the commercial quota for king mackerel in the western zone of the Gulf EEZ will be reached by October 14, 2016. Therefore, NMFS closes the western zone of the Gulf EEZ to commercial king mackerel fishing on October 14, 2016. This closure is necessary to protect the Gulf king mackerel resource.

DATES: The closure is effective at noon, local time, October 14, 2016, until 12:01 a.m., local time, on July 1, 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Susan Gerhart, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, telephone: 727-824-5305, email: susan.gerhart@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The fishery for coastal migratory pelagic fish (king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia) is managed under the Fishery Management Plan for the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic (FMP). The FMP was prepared by the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils (Councils) and is implemented by NMFS under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) by regulations at 50 CFR part 622.

The commercial quota for the Gulf migratory group king mackerel in the Gulf western zone is 1,071,360 lb (485,961 kg) for the current fishing year, July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017 (50 CFR 622.384(b)(1)(ii)).

Regulations at 50 CFR 622.388(a)(1)(i) require NMFS to close the commercial sector for Gulf migratory group king

mackerel in the western zone when the commercial quota is reached, or is projected to be reached, by filing a notification to that effect with the Office of the Federal Register. NMFS has determined the commercial quota of 1,071,360 lb (485,961 kg) for Gulf migratory group king mackerel in the western zone will be reached by October 14, 2016. Accordingly, the western zone is closed to commercial fishing for Gulf migratory group king mackerel effective at noon, local time, October 14, 2016, through June 30, 2017, the end of the current fishing year. The western zone of Gulf migratory group king mackerel is that part of the EEZ between a line extending east from the border of the United States and Mexico and 87°31.1' W. long., which is a line extending south from the state boundary of Alabama and Florida.

Except for a person aboard a charter vessel or headboat, during the closure no person aboard a vessel that has been issued a Federal commercial permit for king mackerel may fish for or retain Gulf migratory group king mackerel in the EEZ in the closed zone (50 CFR 622.384(e)(1)). A person aboard a vessel that has a valid Federal charter vessel/headboat permit for coastal migratory pelagic fish may continue to retain king mackerel in or from the closed zone under the recreational bag and possession limits set forth in 50 CFR 622.382(a)(1)(ii) and (a)(2), provided the vessel is operating as a charter vessel or headboat (50 CFR 622.384(e)(2)). A charter vessel or headboat that also has a commercial king mackerel permit is considered to be operating as a charter vessel or headboat when it carries a passenger who pays a fee or when there are more than three persons aboard, including operator and crew.

During the closure, king mackerel from the closed zone, including those harvested under the bag and possession limits, may not be purchased or sold. This prohibition does not apply to king mackerel from the closed zone that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to the closure and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor (50 CFR 622.384(e)(3)).

Classification

The Regional Administrator, Southeast Region, NMFS, has determined this temporary rule is necessary for the conservation and management of Gulf migratory group king mackerel and is consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable laws.

This action is taken under 50 CFR 622.388(a)(1)(i) and 622.384(e), and is

exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

These measures are exempt from the procedures of the Regulatory Flexibility Act because the temporary rule is issued without opportunity for prior notice and comment.

This action responds to the best scientific information available. The Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries (AA) finds good cause to waive the requirements 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 procedures are unnecessary and

contrary to the public interest. Such procedures are unnecessary because the rule implementing the commercial quota and the associated AMs has already been subject to notice and public comment, and all that remains is to notify the public of the closure. Additionally, allowing prior notice and opportunity for public comment is contrary to the public interest because of the need to immediately implement this action to protect the king mackerel stock, because the capacity of the fishing fleet allows for rapid harvest of the commercial quota. Prior notice and opportunity for public comment would

require time and could potentially result in a harvest well in excess of the established commercial quota.

For the aforementioned reasons, the AA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effectiveness of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3).

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

Dated: October 12, 2016.

Emily H. Menashes,

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

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