

issued without opportunity for prior public notice and comment.

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

Dated: August 29, 2003.

Rebecca Lent,

*Deputy Assistant Administrator for
Regulatory Programs, National Marine
Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 03-22669 Filed 9-2-03; 4:58 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 021122286-3036-02; I.D. 082803D]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the C season allowance of the pollock total allowable catch (TAC) for Statistical Area 610 of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), August 30, 2003, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 15, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Josh Keaton, 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 C season allowance of the pollock TAC in Statistical Area 610 of the GOA is 5,500 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2003 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (68 FR 9924, March 3, 2003). In accordance with § 679.20(a)(5)(iii)(B), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, (Regional Administrator) hereby increases the C season pollock TAC by 6 mt, the amount of the A and B season pollock allowance in Statistical Area 610 that was not

previously taken in the A and B seasons and split equally between the C and D seasons. The revised C season allowance of pollock TAC in Statistical Area 610 is therefore 5,506 mt (5,500 mt plus 6 mt).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the revised C season allowance of the pollock TAC in Statistical Area 610 has been reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is establishing a directed fishing allowance of 5,456 mt, and is setting aside the remaining 50 mt as bycatch to support other anticipated groundfish fisheries. In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional Administrator finds that this directed fishing allowance will soon be reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 610 of the GOA.

Maximum retainable amounts may be found in the regulations at § 679.20(e) and (f).

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 contrary to the public interest. This requirement is contrary to the public interest as it would delay the closure of the fishery, lead to exceeding the C season TAC in Statistical Area 610, and therefore reduce the public's ability to use and enjoy the fishery resource.

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: August 28, 2003.

John H. Dunnigan,

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

[FR Doc. 03-22562 Filed 8-29-03; 3:25 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 021122286-3036-02; I.D. 082803B]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock in Statistical Area 620 of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the C season allowance of the pollock total allowable catch (TAC) for Statistical Area 620 of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), August 30, 2003, through 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 15, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Josh Keaton, 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 C season allowance of the pollock TAC in Statistical Area 620 of the GOA is 2,686 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2003 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (68 FR 9924, March 3, 2003). In accordance with § 679.20(a)(5)(iii)(B), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, (Regional Administrator) hereby reduces the C season pollock TAC by 820 mt, the amount of harvest previously taken in excess of the A and B season pollock allowances in Statistical Area 620 and split equally between the C and D seasons. The revised C season allowance of pollock TAC in Statistical Area 620 is therefore 1,866 mt (2,686 mt minus 820 mt).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(i), the Regional Administrator has determined that the revised C season allowance of the pollock TAC in Statistical Area 620 has been reached. Therefore, the Regional Administrator is