

| Species | Area ¹ | ABC | TAC | Overfishing |
|-------------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------------|
| | E | | 5 | |
| Total | | 3,240 | 3,240 | 9,800 |
| * | * | * | * | * |

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*
 Dated: March 5, 1996.
 Gary Matlock,
Program Management Officer, National Marine Fisheries Service.
 [FR Doc. 96-5872 Filed 3-11-96; 8:45 am]
 BILLING CODE 3510-22-W

50 CFR Part 672

[Docket No. 960129018-6018-01; I.D. 030596A]

Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska; Rex Sole in the Western Regulatory Area

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

ACTION: Closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS is closing the directed fishery for rex sole in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska management area (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the rex sole total allowable catch (TAC) in the Western Regulatory Area.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), March 6, 1996, until 2359 hrs, A.l.t., December 31, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrew Smoker, 907-586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The groundfish fishery in the GOA exclusive economic zone is managed by NMFS 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 Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Fishing by U.S. vessels is governed by regulations implementing the FMP at 50 CFR parts 620 and 672.

In accordance with § 672.20 (c)(1)(ii)(B) the rex sole TAC for the Western Regulatory Area was established by the Final 1996 Harvest Specifications of Groundfish (61 FR 4304, February 5, 1996) as 800 metric tons (mt).

The Director, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Director), has determined, in accordance with § 672.20(c)(2)(ii), that the rex sole TAC in the Western

Regulatory Area soon will be reached. Therefore, the Regional Director has established a directed fishing allowance of 700 mt, with consideration that 100 mt will be taken as incidental catch in directed fishing for other species in the Western Regulatory Area. The Regional Director has determined that the directed fishing allowance has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for the rex sole in the Western Regulatory Area.

Maximum retainable bycatch amounts for applicable gear types may be found in the regulations at § 672.20(g).

Classification

This action is taken under § 672.20 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*
 Dated: March 5, 1996
 Richard H. Schaefer
Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-5805 Filed 3-7-96; 11:37 am]
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