

zone is taken until 100 percent of the adjusted quota is taken, Spanish mackerel in or from the EEZ in the southern zone may not be possessed on board or landed from a vessel in a day in amounts exceeding 1,500 lb (680 kg). The southern zone for Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel extends from 30°42'45.6" N. lat., which is a line directly east from the Georgia/Florida boundary, to 25°20.4' N. lat., which is a line directly east from the Dade/Monroe County, FL, boundary.

NMFS has determined that 75 percent of the adjusted quota for Atlantic group Spanish mackerel from the southern zone was taken by February 8, 1999. Accordingly, the 1,500-lb (680-kg) per day commercial trip limit applies to Spanish mackerel in or from the EEZ in the southern zone effective 6:00 a.m., local time, February 10, 1999, through March 31, 1999, unless changed by further notification in the **Federal Register**.

#### Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 622.44(b)(2) and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: February 9, 1999.

**Gary C. Matlock,**

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

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

#### 50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 981222313-8320-02; I.D. 020999B]

### Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pollock by Vessels Catching Pollock for Processing by the Mothership Component in the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area

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

**ACTION:** Closure.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock by vessels catching pollock for processing by the mothership component in the critical habitat/catcher vessel operation area (CH/CVOA) of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary because the A season limit of pollock total allowable catch specified to the mothership component for harvest within the CH/CVOA has been reached.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), February 9, 1999, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., August 1, 1999.

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

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** NMFS manages the groundfish fishery in the BSAI exclusive economic zone according to the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (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.

In accordance with § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(C)(3), and the revised

interim 1999 total allowable catch (TAC) amounts for pollock in the Bering Sea Subarea (64 FR 3437, January 22, 1999), the A season limit of pollock TAC specified to the mothership component for harvest within the CH/CVOA is 16,785 metric tons.

In accordance with § 679.22(a)(11)(iv)(A)&(C) the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the A season limit of pollock total allowable catch specified to the mothership component for harvest within the CH/CVOA has been reached.

Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for pollock by vessels catching pollock for processing by the mothership component within the CH/CVOA conservation zone in the Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI.

Maximum retainable bycatch 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. It must be implemented immediately in order to prevent exceeding the A season limit of pollock total allowable catch specified to the mothership component for harvest within the CH/CVOA. A delay in the effective date is impracticable and contrary to the public interest. Further delay would only result in jeopardizing the recovery of the endangered Steller sea lion. NMFS finds for good cause that the implementation of this action can not be delayed for 30 days. Accordingly, under 5 U.S.C. 553(d), a delay in the effective date is hereby waived.

This action is required by § 679.22 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

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

Dated: February 9, 1999.

**Richard W. Surdi,**

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

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