

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 679****[Docket No. 071106671–8010–02]****RIN 0648–XH00****Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish, Pacific Ocean Perch, and Pelagic Shelf Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area and West Yakutat District of 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 northern rockfish, Pacific ocean perch, and pelagic shelf rockfish for catcher vessels subject to sideboard limits established under the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the Western Regulatory Area and West Yakutat District of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the sideboard limits of northern rockfish, Pacific ocean perch, and pelagic shelf rockfish established for catcher vessels in the Western Regulatory Area and West Yakutat District of the GOA.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 1, 2008, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., July 31, 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 2008 sideboard limits established for catcher vessels subject to sideboard limits in the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the West Yakutat District are 32 mt for Pacific ocean perch and 4 mt for pelagic shelf rockfish. The 2008 sideboard limit established for catcher vessels subject to sideboard limits in the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the Western Regulatory Area are zero mt. The sideboard limits are established by the 2008 and 2009 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (73 FR 10562, February 27, 2008).

In accordance with § 679.82(d)(7)(ii), the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), has determined that the directed fishing sideboard limits have been reached for northern rockfish, Pacific ocean perch, and pelagic shelf rockfish established for catcher vessels subject to sideboard limits in the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the Western Regulatory Area and West Yakutat District of the GOA. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for northern rockfish,

Pacific ocean perch, and pelagic shelf rockfish for catcher vessels subject to sideboard limits in the Central GOA Rockfish Program in the Western Regulatory Area and West Yakutat District of the GOA, effective 1200 hrs, A.l.t., July 1, 2008, through 2400 hrs, A.l.t., July 31, 2008.

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. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 (b)(B), the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA) finds good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment is unnecessary. Notice and comment is unnecessary because the closure is non-discretionary; pursuant to § 679.82(d)(7)(ii), the Regional Administrator has no choice but to prohibit directed fishing once it is determined that the directed fishing sideboard limit has been attained.

This action is required by § 679.82 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: April 3, 2008.

Alan D. Risenhoover

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

[FR Doc. E8–7650 Filed 4–9–08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510–22–S