

**List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 648**

Fisheries, Fishing, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

Dated: July 17, 2024.

**Samuel D. Rauch, III,**

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

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 660**

[Docket No. 221206–0261]

RIN 0648–BN16

**Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2023–2024 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments**

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

**ACTION:** Final rule; inseason adjustments to biennial groundfish management measures.

**SUMMARY:** This final rule announces routine inseason adjustments to management measures in commercial groundfish fisheries. This action is intended to allow commercial fishing vessels to access more abundant groundfish stocks while protecting overfished and depleted stocks.

**DATES:** This final rule is effective July 23, 2024.

**ADDRESSES:****Electronic Access**

This rule is accessible via the internet at the Office of the Federal Register website at <https://www.federalregister.gov>. Background information and documents are available at the Pacific Fishery Management Council's website at <https://www.pcmouncil.org/>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Abbie Moyer, phone: 206–305–9601 or email: [abbie.moyer@noaa.gov](mailto:abbie.moyer@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****Background**

The Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (PCGFMP) and its

implementing regulations at title 50 in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 660, subparts C through G, regulate fishing for over 90 species of groundfish off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) develops groundfish harvest specifications and management measures for 2-year periods (*i.e.*, a biennium). NMFS published the final rule to implement harvest specifications and management measures for the 2023–2024 biennium for most species managed under the PCGFMP on December 16, 2022 (87 FR 77007). In general, the management measures set at the start of the biennial harvest specifications cycle help the various sectors of the fishery attain, but not exceed, the catch limits for each stock. The Council, in coordination with Pacific Coast Treaty Indian Tribes and the States of Washington, Oregon, and California, recommends adjustments to the management measures during the fishing year to achieve this goal.

At its June 2024 meeting, the Council recommended inseason adjustments to commercial non-trawl trip limits for sablefish north of 36° N lat., widow rockfish north of 40°10' N lat., and yellowtail rockfish north of 40°10' N lat. These adjustments are expected to improve attainment of these stocks in the non-trawl fishery. Pacific Coast groundfish fisheries are managed using harvest specifications or limits (*e.g.*, overfishing limits [OFL], acceptable biological catch [ABC], annual catch limits [ACL] and harvest guidelines [HG]) recommended biennially by the Council and based on the best scientific information available at that time (50 CFR 660.60(b)). During development of the harvest specifications, the Council also recommends management measures (*e.g.*, trip limits, area closures, and bag limits) that are meant to mitigate catch so as not to exceed the harvest specifications. The harvest specifications and mitigation measures developed for the 2023–2024 biennium used data collected through the 2021 fishing year. Each of the adjustments to mitigation measures discussed below are based on updated fisheries information that was unavailable when the analysis for the current harvest specifications was completed. As new fisheries data becomes available, adjustments to mitigation measures are projected so as to help harvesters achieve but not exceed the harvest limits.

Sablefish is an important commercial species on the U.S. West Coast with

vessels targeting sablefish with both trawl and fixed gear (longlines and pots/traps). Sablefish is managed with a coast-wide OFL and ABC and ACLs that are apportioned north and south of 36° N lat. In 2024, the ACL for sablefish north of 36° N lat. is 7,730 metric tons (mt) with a fishery HG of 6,919 mt. The fishery HG north of 36° N lat. is further divided between the LE and OA sectors with 90.6 percent, or 6,269 mt, going to the LE sector and 9.4 percent, or 650 mt, going to the OA sector. From the 6,269 mt LE allocation, 395 mt is allocated to the LE fixed gear (LEFG) trip limit fishery.

At the June 2024 Council meeting, the Council's Groundfish Management Team (GMT) received requests from industry members and members of the Council's Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) to examine the potential to increase sablefish trips limits for the LEFG and OA fisheries north of 36° N lat. The intent of increasing trip limits would be to increase harvest opportunities for vessels targeting sablefish. Discussion with GAP and GMT members indicated that sablefish markets continue to be less lucrative than they were prior to 2020 and, consequently, that prices per pound may be a stronger predictor of participation than before, as some vessels opt to target other species instead. Therefore, for both of the northern sablefish sectors, the GMT provided data on 2024 sablefish prices to date, alongside calculated prices, to predict participation for the remainder of the year. This information can help interpret the fleetwide landings projections under each of the low, average, and high price scenarios. Predicted prices for the remainder of the year were calculated using prices in each respective period of recent year(s).

Tables 1 and 2 show projected 2024 landings and attainment under the three modeled price scenarios for status quo and for the new Council recommended trip limits for the LEFG (table 1) and OA (table 2) sectors north of 36° N lat. LEFG landings for the full year are projected to be 55–70 percent of the 2024 landings target under status quo trip limits. So far this year, five LEFG vessels have attained more than 90 percent of the status quo bimonthly limit, indicating that at least some vessels in the fleet would benefit from a trip limit increase. Therefore, the Council recommended Option 1, which projects fleetwide landings at 75–97 percent of the 2024 landings target.

TABLE 1—OPTIONS FOR SABLEFISH TRIP LIMIT INCREASES IN THE LEFG SECTOR NORTH OF 36° N LAT.

Option	Trip limit	Projected landings (rd. wt. mt) under three price scenarios			Target (mt)	Attainment under three price scenarios		
		Low	Average	High		Low (%)	Average (%)	High (%)
SQ .....	4,500 lbs. (2,041.2 kg)/week not to exceed 9,000 lbs. (4,082.3 kg)/2 months.	209	237	265	<sup>a</sup> 380	55	62	70
Council Recommendation .....	7,000 lbs. (3,175.2 kg)/week not to exceed 14,000 lbs. (6,350.3 kg)/2 months.	284	326	367	.....	75	86	97

<sup>a</sup> Landings target is calculated after deducting an amount of assumed discard mortality.

OA landings north of 36° N lat. for the full year are projected to be 79–90 percent of the 2024 landings target under status quo trip limits. So far this year, three OA vessels have attained more than 90 percent of the status quo bimonthly limit, indicating that at least some vessels in the fleet would benefit from a trip limit increase. Therefore, the Council recommended Option 1, which projects fleetwide landings at 88–101 percent of the 2024 landings target.

TABLE 2—OPTIONS FOR SABLEFISH TRIP LIMIT INCREASES IN THE OA SECTOR NORTH OF 36° N LAT.

Option	Trip limit	Projected landings (rd. wt. mt) under three price scenarios			Target (mt)	Attainment under three price scenarios		
		Low	Average	High		Low (%)	Average (%)	High (%)
SQ .....	3,000 lbs. (1,360.8 kg)/week not to exceed 6,000 lbs. (2,721.6 kg)/2 months.	492	527	563	<sup>a</sup> 626	79	85	90
Council Recommendation .....	3,500 lbs. (1,587.6 kg)/week not to exceed 7,000 lbs. (3,175.2 kg)/2 months.	551	592	632	.....	88	95	101

<sup>a</sup> Landings target is calculated after deducting an amount of assumed discard mortality.

Trip limit increases for sablefish are intended to increase attainment of the non-trawl HG. The proposed trip limit increases do not change projected impacts to co-occurring overfished species, compared to the impacts anticipated in the 2023–2024 harvest specifications, because the projected impacts to those species assume that the entire sablefish ACL is harvested. Therefore, the Council recommended and NMFS is implementing the proposed trip limit increases, by modifying table 2 (North) and table 2 (South) to part 660, subpart E, to reflect trip limit changes for the LEFG fishery north of 36° N lat. and increase the limits from “4,500 lb (2,041 kg) per week, not to exceed 9,000 lb (4,082 kg) per two months” to “7,000 lb (3,175 kg) per week, not to exceed 14,000 lb (6,350 kg) per two months”. NMFS is also implementing, by modifying table 3 (North) and table 3 (South) to part 660, subpart F, to reflect trip limit changes for the OA sablefish fishery north of 36° N lat. and increase the limits from “3,000 lb (1,361 kg) per week, not to exceed 6,000 lb (2,722 kg) per two months” to “3,500 lb (1,588 kg) per week, not to exceed 7,000 lb (3,175 kg) per two. These changes will be in effect until further revised.

The GMT also received a request from industry members at the June 2024 Council meeting to increase the yellowtail rockfish and widow rockfish OA and LEFG trip limits for the

remainder of the year. Industry members stated that the abnormally challenging weather conditions have prevented fishing effort that would have typically already occurred this year and, therefore, an increase in trip limits could help make up for lost fishing opportunity once the weather improves.

Currently, between 42° and 40°10' N lat., the non-trawl fleet in Federal waters is only permitted to use non-bottom contact gear within the Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) to access midwater shelf species due to actions taken in September (October 2, 2023, 88 FR 67656) and November (November 29, 2023, 88 FR 83354) of 2023 to mitigate California quillback rockfish encounters. The only current nearshore opportunity off northern California to target midwater rockfish (including yellowtail and widow rockfishes) stocks is with approved non-bottom contact hook-and-line gear configurations. As area closures and gear restrictions have required the fleet to fish offshore, where weather conditions can have a larger impact on smaller vessels typically prosecuting these trip limits, higher trip limits may allow those vessels to land larger volumes across fewer trips, thereby promoting safety at-sea and potentially reducing fuel and operational costs associated with traveling farther offshore.

Widow rockfish is managed with a coast-wide ACL. In 2024, the ACL for widow rockfish is 11,482 mt with a

fishery HG of 11,243.7 mt. The fishery HG is further apportioned between the trawl and non-trawl sectors with 10,843.7 mt going to the trawl sector and 400 mt going to the non-trawl sector. Yellowtail rockfish are managed with stock-specific harvest specifications north of 40°10' N lat. and within the Minor Shelf Rockfish complex south of 40°10' N lat. In 2024, the ACL for yellowtail rockfish north of 40°10' N lat. is 5,291 mt with a fishery HG of 4,263.3 mt. The fishery HG is further apportioned between the trawl and non-trawl sectors with 88 percent (3,751.7 mt) going to the trawl sector and 12 percent (511.6 mt) going to non-trawl.

LEFG and OA vessels currently land less than 0.1 percent of the non-trawl allocations of yellowtail and widow rockfishes. The trip limit increases may help facilitate the attainment of the National Standard 1 objective to attain but not exceed optimum yield, while posing very limited risk to co-occurring stocks. For example, canary rockfish are a co-occurring species of concern but are being attained well under their non-trawl commercial allocation. Therefore, the increase of yellowtail and widow rockfish trip limits would unlikely jeopardize their allocation nor create regulatory discards.

Table 3 below shows status quo and new Council recommend trip limits for widow rockfish north of 40°10' N lat., and table 4 shows the GMT projected landings for 2024 under those limits. To

date, fewer than three vessels operating in the LEFG sector have landed widow rockfish north of 40°10' N lat. in 2024. None of these vessels have come within 50 percent of the trip limit in 2024. Therefore, the projection for the LEFG sector in table 4 does not change under status quo or the Council Recommendation. In the OA sector, there are 12 vessels operating that have landed widow rockfish to date in 2024.

Fewer than 3 of these vessels have come within 50 percent of the trip limit. There would be no conservation risk to the stock if the trip limits increase since it is expected that not many fishery participants would take advantage of the Council's recommended higher trip limits and under both options the sectors would remain well under one percent of the non-trawl allocation of 400 mt. Therefore, the Council recommended and NMFS is implementing higher trip

limits, by modifying table 2 (North) to part 660, subpart E, and table 3 (North) to part 660, subpart F, for LEFG and OA widow rockfish north of 40°10' N lat. as shown in table 3 below. This will allow fishery participants an opportunity to harvest a greater amount in fewer trips, when the weather permits, so as to promote safety at sea and improve attainment of the stock in the non-trawl fishery. These changes will be in effect until further revised.

TABLE 3—STATUS QUO AND COUNCIL RECOMMENDED TRIP LIMITS FOR LEFG/OA WIDOW ROCKFISH NORTH OF 40°10' N LAT.

Option	Sector	Area	Jan–Feb	Mar–Apr	May–Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep–Oct	Nov–Dec
Status Quo .....	LE	N of 40°10' N lat .....	4,000 lbs. (1,814.4 kg)/2 months.					
	OA	N of 40°10' N lat .....	2,000 lbs. (907.2 kg)/2 months.					
Council Recommendation .....	LE	N of 40°10' N lat .....	4,000 lbs. (1,814.4 kg)/2 months.			6,000 lbs. (2,721.6 kg)/2 months.		
	OA	N of 40°10' N lat .....	2,000 lbs. (907.2 kg)/2 months.			3,000 lbs. (1,360.8 kg)/2 months.		

TABLE 4—GMT PROJECTED COASTWIDE WIDOW ROCKFISH LANDINGS FOR 2024

Option	Sector	Projected landings (mt)		Coastwide non-trawl allocation (mt)	% Attainment
		N of 40°10' N lat.	S of 40°10' N lat.		
Status Quo .....	LE	1.0	0.1	400	<0.1
	OA	5.2	1.5		
Council Recommendation .....	LE	1.0	0.1	400	<0.1
	OA	7.1	1.5		

Table 5 below shows status quo and new Council recommended trip limits for yellowtail rockfish north of 40°10' N lat. and table 6 shows the projected landings under those limits. To date in 2024, only three vessels operating in the LEFG sector have landed yellowtail rockfish north of 40°10' N lat. None of these vessels have come within 50 percent of the trip limit. Therefore, the projection of 2.3 mt in landings in the LEFG in 2024 does not change. In the OA sector, there are 44 vessels operating

that have landed yellowtail rockfish to date in 2024, but similarly, none of the vessels have come within 50 percent of the trip limit. Therefore, it is not expected they would attain the limit, as they are still projected at 2.0 mt. regardless of the increase in trip limits. In 2023, fewer than three vessels reached or exceeded their trip limits. There would be no conservation risk to the stock if trip limits increase since it is expected that both sectors would remain under one percent of the non-

trawl allocation. Therefore, the Council recommended and NMFS is implementing, higher trip limits by modifying table 2 (North) to part 660, subpart E, and table 3 (North) to part 660, subpart F, to reflect trip limit changes for LEFG and OA yellowtail rockfish north of 40°10' N lat., as shown in table 5 below, in order to promote safety at sea and increase opportunity for the fishery to achieve its 2024 catch limits. These changes will be in effect until further revised.

TABLE 5—STATUS QUO AND ALTERNATIVE TRIP LIMIT OPTIONS FOR LE/OA YELLOWTAIL ROCKFISH NORTH OF 40°10' N LAT.

Option	Sector	Area	Jan–Feb	Mar–Apr	May–Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep–Oct	Nov–Dec
Status Quo .....	LE	N of 40°10' N lat .....	3,000 lbs. (1,360.8 kg)/month.					
	OA	N of 40°10' N lat .....	1,500 lbs. (680.4 kg)/month.					
Council Recommendation .....	LE	N of 40°10' N lat .....	3,000 lbs. (1,360.8 kg)/month.			4,500 lbs. (2,041.2 kg)/month.		
	OA	N of 40°10' N lat .....	1,500 lbs. (680.4 kg)/month.			2,500 lbs. (1,134 kg)/month.		

TABLE 6—PROJECTED YELLOWTAIL ROCKFISH NORTH OF 40°10' N LAT. LANDINGS FOR 2024

Option	Sector	Projected landings (mt)	Non-trawl allocation (mt)	% Attainment
Status Quo .....	LE OA	2.3 2.0	512	<0.1
Council Recommendation .....	LE OA	2.3 2.0	512	<0.1

**Classification**

This final rule makes routine inseason adjustments to groundfish fishery management measures, based on the best scientific information available, consistent with the PCGFMP and its implementing regulations.

This action is taken under the authority of 50 CFR 660.60(c) and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

The aggregate data upon which these actions are based are available for public inspection by contacting the NMFS West Coast Region (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, above), or view at the NMFS West Coast Groundfish website: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/region/west-coast>.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b), NMFS finds good cause to waive prior public notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest. The adjustments to management measures in this document modify restrictive trip limits to fisheries in Washington, Oregon, and California, which were developed to keep catch within allocations established by the 2023–2024 harvest specifications. Management measures set at the start of a biennial cycle are intended to help the fishery attain, but not exceed, the catch limits for each stock. The adjustments to

commercial non-trawl trip limits for sablefish north of 36° N lat., widow rockfish north of 40°10' N lat., and yellowtail rockfish north 40°10' N lat. implemented through this action will improve attainment of these stocks without exceeding their 2023–2024 catch limits. No aspect of this action is controversial, and changes of this nature were anticipated in the final rule for the 2023–2024 harvest specifications and management measures, which published on December 16, 2022 (87 FR 77007).

Delaying implementation to allow for public comment would likely reduce the economic benefits of this action to the commercial fishing industry and the businesses that rely on that industry, because it would be unlikely that the new regulations would publish and could be implemented before the end of the 2024 calendar year. Therefore, providing a comment period for this action could significantly limit the economic benefits to the fishery, and would hamper the potential to achieve optimum yield from the affected fisheries.

Therefore, the NMFS finds reason to waive the 30-day delay in effectiveness pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(1) so that this final rule may become effective upon publication in the **Federal Register**. The adjustments to management measures in this document affect commercial fisheries by

increasing opportunity and relieving participants of the more restrictive trip limits. These adjustments were requested by the Council’s advisory bodies, as well as members of industry during the Council’s June 2024 meeting, and are recommended by the Council. No aspect of this action is controversial, and changes of this nature were anticipated in the biennial harvest specifications and management measures established through a notice and comment rulemaking for 2023–2024 (December 16, 2022, 87 FR 77007).

**List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 660**

Fisheries, Fishing, Indian fisheries.

Dated: July 18, 2024.

**Lindsay Fullenkamp,**

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

For the reasons set out in the preamble, NMFS amends 50 CFR part 660 as follows:

**PART 660—FISHERIES OFF WEST COAST STATES**

■ 1. The authority citation for part 660 continues to read as follows:

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, 16 U.S.C. 773 *et seq.*, and 16 U.S.C. 7001 *et seq.*

■ 2. Revise table 2 (North) to part 660, subpart E, to read as follows:

**BILLING CODE 3510–22–P**

Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table							7/1/2024
	JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC	
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>							
1	North of 46°16' N lat.		Shoreward EEZ - 100 fm line <sup>1/</sup>				
2	46°16' N lat. - 42°00' N lat.		30 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 75 fm line <sup>1/</sup>				
3	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		Shoreward EEZ - 75 fm line <sup>1/</sup>				
See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Bank, and EFHCAs).							
3	Minor Slope Rockfish <sup>2/</sup> & Darkblotched rockfish		8,000 lb/ 2 months				
4	Pacific ocean perch		3,600 lb/ 2 months				
5	Sablefish		4,500 lb/ week, not to exceed 9,000 lb /2 months		7,000 lb/ week, not to exceed 14,000 lb /2 months		
6	Longspine thornyhead		10,000 lb/ 2 months				
7	Shortspine thornyhead		2,000 lb/ 2 months		2,500 lb/ 2 months		
8	Dover sole, arrowtooth flounder, petrale sole, English sole, starry flounder		10,000 lb/ month				
9	Other Flatfish <sup>3/</sup>						
10	North of 42°00' N lat.		10,000 lb/ month				
11	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		10,000 lb/ month seaward of the non-trawl RCA; 0 lb/month inside the non-trawl RCA				
12	Whiting		10,000 lb/ trip				
13	Minor Shelf Rockfish <sup>2/</sup>		800 lb/ month				
14	Widow rockfish		4,000 lb/ 2 months		6,000 lb/ 2 months		
15	Yellowtail rockfish		3,000 lb/ month		4,500 lb/ month		
16	Canary rockfish		3,000 lb/ 2 months				
17	Yelloweye rockfish		CLOSED				
18	Quillback rockfish						
19	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		0 lb/ 2 months				
20	Minor Nearshore Rockfish, Oregon black/blue/deacon rockfish, & black rockfish <sup>4/</sup>		5,000 lb/ 2 months, no more than 1,200 lb of which may be species other than black rockfish or blue/deacon rockfish <sup>3/</sup>				
21	North of 42°00' N lat.						
22	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat. Minor Nearshore Rockfish		0 lb/ 2 months				
23	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat. Black Rockfish		0 lb/ 2 months				
24	Lingcod <sup>5/</sup>		11,000 lb/ 2 months				
25	North of 42°00' N lat.						
26	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		2,000 lb/ 2 months seaward of the non-trawl RCA; 0 lb/ 2 months inside the non-trawl RCA				
27	Pacific cod		1,000 lb/ 2 months				
28	Spiny dogfish		200,000 lb/ 2 months		150,000 lb/ 2 months		100,000 lb/ 2 months
29	Longnose skate		Unlimited				
30	Other Fish <sup>6/</sup>		Unlimited				
31	Cabezon in California		0 lb/ 2 months				
32	Oregon Cabezon/Kelp Greenling		Unlimited				
33	Big skate		Unlimited				

TABLE 2 (North)

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by the EEZ (exclusive economic zone, i.e., federal waters from 3-200 nautical miles from shore) or lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting. LEFG vessels may be allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using non-bottom contact hook and line only. See § 660.230 (d) of the regulations for more information.

2/ Minor Shelf and Slope Rockfish complexes are defined at § 660.11. Bocaccio, chilipepper and cowcod are included in the trip limits for Minor Shelf Rockfish. Splitnose rockfish is included in the trip limits for Minor Slope Rockfish.

3/ "Other flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

4/ For black rockfish north of Cape Alava (48°09.50' N lat.), and between Destruction Is. (47°40' N lat.) and Leadbetter Pt. (46°38.17' N lat.), there is an additional limit of 100 lb or 30 percent by weight of all fish on board, whichever is greater, per vessel, per fishing trip.

5/ The minimum size limit for lingcod is 22 inches (56 cm) total length North of 42° N lat. and 22 inches (56 cm) total length South of 42° N lat.

6/ "Other Fish" are defined at § 660.11 and include kelp greenling off California and leopard shark.

To convert pounds to kilograms, divide by 2.20462, the number of pounds in one kilogram.

■ 3. Revise table 2 (South) to part 660, subpart E, to read as follows:

Table 2 (South) to Part 660, Subpart E -- Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas and Trip Limits for Limited Entry Fixed Gear South of 40°10' N lat.							7/1/2024
Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table							
	JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC	
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>							
1	40°10' N lat. - 37°07' N lat.		Shoreward EEZ <sup>1/</sup> - 75 fm line <sup>1/</sup>				
2	37°07' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.		50 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 75 fm line <sup>1/</sup>				
3	South of 34°27' N lat.		100 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>1/</sup> (also applies around islands and banks)				
See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Bank, and EFHCAs).							
4	Minor Slope rockfish <sup>2/</sup> & Darkblotched rockfish		40,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 6,000 lb may be blackgill rockfish				
5	Splittnose rockfish		40,000 lb/ 2 months				
6	Sablefish						
7	40°10' N lat. - 36°00' N lat.		4,500 lb/ week, not to exceed 9,000 lb /2 months		7,000 lb/ week, not to exceed 14,000 lb /2 months		
8	South of 36°00' N lat.		2,500 lb/ week				
9	Longspine thornyhead		10,000 lb/ 2 months				
10	Shortspine thornyhead						
11	40°10' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.		2,000 lb/ 2 months		2,500 lb/ 2 months		
12	South of 34°27' N lat.		3,000 lb/ 2 months				
13	Dover sole, arrowtooth flounder, petrale sole, English sole, starry flounder		10,000 lb/ month				
14	Other Flatfish <sup>3/</sup>						
15	40°10' N lat. - 37°07' N lat.		10,000 lb/ month seaward of the non-trawl RCA; 0 lb/month inside the non-trawl RCA				
16	South of 37°07' N lat.		10,000 lb/ month				
17	Whiting		10,000 lb/ trip				
18	Minor Shelf Rockfish <sup>2/</sup>						
19	40°10' N lat. - 37°07' N lat.		6,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 500 lb may be vermilion/sunset				
20	37°07' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.		8,000 lb /2 month period, of which no more than 500 lb may be vermilion/sunset				
21	South of 34°27' N lat.		5,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 3,000 lb may be vermilion/sunset				
22	Widow rockfish						
23	40°10' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.		10,000 lb/ 2 months				
24	South of 34°27' N lat.		8,000 lb/ 2 months				
25	Chillipepper rockfish						
26	40°10' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.		10,000 lb. / 2 months				
27	South of 34°27' N lat.		8,000 lb. / 2 months				
28	Canary rockfish		3,500 lb/ 2 months				
29	Yelloweye rockfish		CLOSED				
30	Quillback rockfish		0 lb/ 2 months				
31	Cowcod		CLOSED				
32	Bronzespotted rockfish		CLOSED				
33	Bocaccio		8,000 lb/ 2 months				
34	Minor Nearshore Rockfish						
35	40°10' N lat. - 36° N lat. Shallow nearshore <sup>4/</sup>		0 lb/ 2 months				
36	South of 36° N lat. Shallow nearshore <sup>4/</sup>		2,000 lb/ 2 months				
37	40°10' N lat. - 36° N lat. Deeper nearshore <sup>5/</sup>		0 lb/ 2 months				
38	South of 36° N lat. Deeper nearshore <sup>5/</sup>		2,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb may be copper rockfish				
39	California Scorpionfish		3,500 lb/ 2 months				
40	Lingcod <sup>6/</sup>						
41	40°10' N lat. - 37°07' N lat.		1,600 lb / 2 months seaward of the Non-Trawl RCA; 0 lb / 2 months inside the non-trawl RCA				
42	South of 37°07' N lat.		1,600 lb / 2 months				
43	Pacific cod		1,000 lb/ 2 months				
44	Spiny dogfish		200,000 lb/ 2 months		150,000 lb/ 2 months		100,000 lb/ 2 months
45	Longnose skate		Unlimited				
46	Other Fish <sup>7/</sup>		0 lb / 2 months				
47	Cabezon in California						
48	40°10' N lat. - 36° N lat.		0 lb/ 2 months				
49	South of 36° N lat.		Unlimited				
50	Big Skate		Unlimited				

TABLE 2 (South)

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting. LEFG vessels may be allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using non-bottom contact hook and line only. See § 660.230 (d) of the regulations for more information.

2/ Minor Shelf and Slope Rockfish complexes are defined at § 660.11. Pacific ocean perch is included in the trip limits for Minor Slope Rockfish. Blackgill rockfish have a species specific trip sub-limit within the Minor Slope Rockfish cumulative limit. Yellowtail rockfish are included in the trip limits for Minor Shelf Rockfish. Bronzespotted rockfish have a species specific trip limit.

3/ "Other Flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

4/ "Shallow Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(1).

5/ "Deeper Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(2).

6/ The commercial minimum size limit for lingcod is 22 inches (56 cm) total length South of 42° N lat.

7/ "Other Fish" are defined at § 660.11 and include kelp greenling off California and leopard shark.

To convert pounds to kilograms, divide by 2.20462, the number of pounds in one kilogram.

■ 4. Revise table 3 (North) to part 660, subpart F, to read as follows:

Table 3 (North) to Part 660, Subpart F -- Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas and Trip Limits for Open Access Gears North of 40°10' N lat.						
Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table						7/1/2024
	JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>						
1	North of 46°16' N lat.		Shoreward EEZ - 100 fm line <sup>1/</sup>			
2	46°16' N lat. - 42°00' N lat.		30 fm line <sup>1/</sup> - 75 fm line <sup>1/</sup>			
3	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		Shoreward EEZ - 75 fm line <sup>1/</sup>			
See §§660.60, 660.330 and 660.333 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Bank, and EFHCAs).						
4	Minor Slope Rockfish <sup>2/</sup> & Darkblotched rockfish		2,000 lb/ month			
5	Pacific ocean perch		100 lb/ month			
6	Sablefish		3,000 lb/ week, not to exceed 6,000 lb/ 2 months		3,500 lb/ week, not to exceed 7,000 lb/ 2 months	
7	Shortspine thornyheads		50 lb/ month			
8	Longspine thornyheads		50 lb/ month			
9	Dover sole, arrowtooth flounder, petrale sole, English sole, starry flounder <sup>7/</sup>		5,000 lb/ month			
10	Other Flatfish <sup>3/</sup>					
11	North of 42°00' N lat.		5,000 lb/ month			
12	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		5,000 lb/ month seaward of the non-trawl RCA; 0 lb/month inside the non-trawl RCA			
13	Whiting		300 lb/ month			
14	Minor Shelf Rockfish <sup>2/</sup>					
15	North of 42°00' N lat.		800 lb/ month			
16	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		600 lb/month			
17	Widow rockfish		2,000 lb/ 2 months		3,000 lb/ 2 months	
18	Yellowtail rockfish		1,500 lb/month		2,500 lb/month	
19	Canary rockfish		1,000 lb/ 2 months			
20	Yelloweye rockfish		CLOSED			
21	Quillback rockfish		0 lb/ 2 months			
22	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		0 lb/ 2 months			
23	Minor Nearshore Rockfish, Oregon black/blue/deacon rockfish, & black rockfish					
24	North of 42°00' N lat.		5,000 lb/ 2 months, no more than 1,200 lb of which may be species other than black rockfish or blue/deacon rockfish <sup>4/</sup>			
25	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat. Minor Nearshore Rockfish		0 lb/ 2 months			
26	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat. Black rockfish		0 lb/ 2 months			
27	Lingcod <sup>5/</sup>		5,500 lb/ month			
28	North of 42°00' N lat.		1,000 lb/ month seaward of the non-trawl RCA; 0 lb/ month inside the non-trawl RCA			
29	42°00' N lat. - 40°10' N lat.		1,000 lb/ 2 months			
30	Pacific cod		1,000 lb/ 2 months			
31	Spiny dogfish		200,000 lb/ 2 months		150,000 lb/ 2 months 100,000 lb/ 2 months	
32	Longnose skate		Unlimited			
33	Big skate		Unlimited			
34	Other Fish <sup>6/</sup>		Unlimited			
35	Cabezon in California		0 lb/ 2 months			
36	Oregon Cabezon/Kelp Greenling		Unlimited			
37	SALMON TROLL (subject to RCAs when retaining all species of groundfish, except for yellowtail rockfish and lingcod, as described below)					
38	North		Salmon trollers may retain and land up to 500 lb of yellowtail rockfish per month as long as salmon is on board, both within and outside of the RCA. Salmon trollers may retain and land up to 1 lingcod per 2 Chinook per trip, plus 1 lingcod per trip, up to a trip limit of 10 lingcod, on a trip where any fishing occurs within the RCA. The lingcod limit only applies during times when lingcod retention is allowed, and is not "CLOSED." These limits are within the per month limits described in the table above, and not in addition to those limits. All groundfish species are subject to the open access limits, seasons, size limits and RCA restrictions listed in the table above, unless otherwise stated here.			
39	PINK SHRIMP NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL (not subject to RCAs)					
40	North		Effective April 1 - October 31: Groundfish: 500 lb/day, multiplied by the number of days of the trip, not to exceed 1,500 lb/trip. The following sublimits also apply and are counted toward the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/trip groundfish limits: lingcod 300 lb/month (minimum 24 inch size limit); sablefish 2,000 lb/month; canary, thornyheads and yelloweye rockfish are PROHIBITED. All other groundfish species taken are managed under the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/trip groundfish limits. Landings of these species count toward the per day and per trip groundfish limits and do not have species-specific limits. The amount of groundfish landed may not exceed the amount of pink shrimp landed.			

TABLE 3 (North)

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by the EEZ (exclusive economic zone, *i.e.*, federal waters from 3-200 nautical miles from shore) or lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting. Open access vessels may be allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See § 660.330 (d) of the regulations for more information.

2/ Minor Shelf and Slope Rockfish complexes are defined at § 660.11. Bocaccio, chilipepper and cowcod rockfishes are included in the trip limits for Minor Shelf Rockfish. Splitnose rockfish is included in the trip limits for Minor Slope Rockfish.

3/ "Other flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

4/ For black rockfish north of Cape Alava (48°09'50" N lat.), and between Destruction Is. (47°40' N lat.) and Leadbetter Pt. (46°38'17" N lat.), there is an additional limit of 100 lbs or 30 percent by weight of all fish on board, whichever is greater, per vessel, per fishing trip.

5/ The minimum size limit for lingcod is 22 inches (56 cm) total length North of 42° N lat. and 22 inches (56 cm) South of 42° N lat.

6/ "Other fish" are defined at § 660.11 and include kelp greenling off California and leopard shark.

7/ Open access vessels may be allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See § 660.330 (d) of the regulations for more information.

To convert pounds to kilograms, divide by 2.20462, the number of pounds in one kilogram.

■ 5. Revise table 3 (South) to part 660, subpart F, to read as follows:

Table 3 (South) to Part 660, Subpart F -- Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas and Trip Limits for Open Access Gears South of 40°10' N lat.						7/1/2024
Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table						
Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) <sup>1/</sup> :	JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC
1 40°10' N lat. - 37°07' N lat.	Shoreward EEZ <sup>2/</sup> - 75 fm line <sup>3/</sup>					
2 37°07' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.	50 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 75 fm line <sup>3/</sup>					
3 South of 34°27' N lat.	100 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>3/</sup> (also applies around islands and banks)					
See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Bank, and EFHCAs).						
4 Minor Slope Rockfish <sup>2/</sup> & Darkblotched rockfish	10,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 2,500 lb may be blackgill rockfish					
5 Splitnose rockfish	200 lb/ month					
6 Sablefish						
7 40°10' N lat. - 36°00' N lat.	3,000 lb/ week, not to exceed 6,000 lb/ 2 months		3,500 lb/ week, not to exceed 7,000 lb/ 2 months			
8 South of 36°00' N lat.	2,000 lb/ week, not to exceed 6,000 lb/ 2 months					
9 Shortpine thornyheads						
10 40°10' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.	50 lb/ month					
11 Longspine thornyheads						
12 40°10' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.	50 lb/ month					
13 Shortpine thornyheads and longspine thornyheads						
14 South of 34°27' N lat.	100 lb/ day, no more than 1,000 lb/ 2 months					
15 Dover sole, arrowtooth flounder, petrale sole, English sole, starry flounder <sup>38/</sup>	5,000 lb/ month					
16 Other Flatfish <sup>3/</sup>						
17 40°10' N lat. - 37°07' N lat.	5,000 lb/ month seaward of the Non-Trawl RCA; 0 lb/month inside the Non-Trawl RCA					
18 South of 37°07' N lat.	5,000 lb/ month					
19 Whiting	300 lb/ month					
20 Minor Shelf Rockfish <sup>2/</sup>						
21 40°10' N lat. - 37°07' N lat.	3,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 300 lb may be vermilion/sunset					
22 37°07' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.	4,000 lb/ 2 month, of which no more than 300 lb may be vermilion/sunset					
23 South of 34°27' N lat.	3,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 900 lb may be vermilion/sunset					
24 Widow rockfish						
25 40°10' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.	6,000 lb/ 2 months					
26 South of 34°27' N lat.	4,000 lb/ 2 months					
27 Chilipepper rockfish						
28 40°10' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.	6,000 lb/ 2 months					
29 South of 34°27' N lat.	4,000 lb/ 2 months					
30 Canary rockfish	1,500 lb/ 2 months					
31 Yelloweye rockfish	CLOSED					
32 Cowcod	CLOSED					
33 Bronzespotted rockfish	CLOSED					
34 Quillback rockfish	0 lb/ 2 months					
35 Bocaccio	6,000 lb/ 2 months					
36 Minor Nearshore Rockfish						
37 40°10' N lat. - 36°00' N lat. Shallow nearshore <sup>4/</sup>	0 lb/ 2 months					
38 South of 36°00' N lat. Shallow nearshore <sup>4/</sup>	2,000 lb/ 2 months					
39 40°10' N lat. - 36°00' N lat. Deeper nearshore <sup>5/</sup>	0 lb/ 2 months					
40 South of 36°00' N lat. Deeper nearshore <sup>5/</sup>	2,000 lb/ 2 months, of which no more than 75 lb may be copper rockfish					
41 California Scorpionfish	3,500 lb/ 2 months					
42 Lingcod <sup>6/</sup>						
43 40°10' N lat. - 37°07' N lat.	700 lb / month seaward of the non-trawl RCA; 0 lb/ month inside the non-trawl RCA					
44 South of 37°07' N lat.	700 lb / month					
45 Pacific cod	1,000 lb/ 2 months					
46 Spiny dogfish	200,000 lb/ 2 months		150,000 lb/ 2 months		100,000 lb/ 2 months	
47 Longnose skate	Unlimited					
48 Big skate	Unlimited					
49 Other Fish <sup>7/</sup>	Unlimited					
50 Cabezon in California						
51 40°10' N lat. - 36°00' N lat.	0 lb/ month					
52 South of 36°00' N lat.	Unlimited					

TABLE 3 (South)



Table 3 (South) Continued		Other limits and requirements apply -- Read §§660.10 through 660.399 before using this table					7/1/2024
		JAN-FEB	MAR-APR	MAY-JUN	JUL-AUG	SEP-OCT	NOV-DEC
<b>Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA)<sup>1/</sup>:</b>							
1	40°10' N lat. - 36°00' N lat.			Shoreward EEZ <sup>2/</sup> - 75 fm line <sup>3/</sup>			
2	36°00' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.			50 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 75 fm line <sup>3/</sup>			
3	South of 34°27' N lat.		100 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>3/</sup> (also applies around islands and banks)				
See §§660.60 and 660.230 for additional gear, trip limit and conservation area requirements and restrictions. See §§660.70-660.74 and §§660.76-660.79 for conservation area descriptions and coordinates (including RCAs, YRCAs, Farallon Islands, Cordell Bank, and EFHCAs).							
59	<b>SALMON TROLL</b> (subject to RCAs when retaining all species of groundfish, except for yellowtail rockfish, as described below)						
60	South of 40°10' N lat.	Salmon trollers may retain and land up to 1 lb of yellowtail rockfish for every 2 lb of Chinook salmon landed, with a cumulative limit of 200 lb/month, both within and outside of the RCA. This limit is within the 4,000 lb per 2 month limit for minor shelf rockfish between 40°10' and 34°27' N lat., and not in addition to that limit. All groundfish species are subject to the open access limits, seasons, size limits and RCA restrictions listed in the table above, unless otherwise stated here.					
61	<b>RIDGEBACK PRAWN AND, SOUTH OF 38°57.50' N lat., CA HALIBUT AND SEA CUCUMBER NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL</b>						
62	<b>NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) for CA Halibut, Sea Cucumber &amp; Ridgeback Prawn:</b>						
63	40°10' N lat. - 38°00' N lat.	100 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 200 fm line <sup>3/</sup>		100 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>3/</sup>			100 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 200 fm line <sup>3/</sup>
64	38°00' N lat. - 34°27' N lat.			100 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>3/</sup>			
65	South of 34°27' N lat.			100 fm line <sup>3/</sup> - 150 fm line <sup>3/</sup>			
66		Groundfish: 300 lb/trip. Species-specific limits described in the table above also apply and are counted toward the 300 lb groundfish per trip limit. The amount of groundfish landed may not exceed the amount of the target species landed, except that the amount of spiny dogfish landed may exceed the amount of target species landed. Spiny dogfish are limited by the 300 lb/trip overall groundfish limit. The daily trip limits for sablefish coastwide and thornyheads south of Pt Conception and the overall groundfish "per trip" limit may not be multiplied by the number of days of the trip. Vessels participating in the California halibut fishery south of 38°57.50' N lat. are allowed to (1) land up to 100 lb/day of groundfish without the ratio requirement, provided that at least one California halibut is landed and (2) land up to 3,000 lb/month of flatfish, no more than 300 lb of which may be species other than Pacific sanddabs, sand sole, starry flounder, rock sole, curlfin sole, or California scorpionfish (California scorpionfish is also subject to the trip limits and closures in line 29).					
67	<b>PINK SHRIMP NON-GROUNDFISH TRAWL GEAR</b> (not subject to RCAs)						
69	South	Effective April 1 - October 31: Groundfish: 500 lb/day, multiplied by the number of days of the trip, not to exceed 1,500 lb/trip. The following sublimits also apply and are counted toward the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/trip groundfish limits: lingcod 300 lb/month (minimum 24 inch size limit); sablefish 2,000 lb/month; canary rockfish, thornyheads and yelloweye rockfish are PROHIBITED. All other groundfish species taken are managed under the overall 500 lb/day and 1,500 lb/trip groundfish limits. Landings of all groundfish species count toward the per day, per trip or other species-specific sublimits described here and the species-specific limits described in the table above do not apply. The amount of groundfish landed may not exceed the amount of pink shrimp landed.					

TABLE 3 (South) Continued

1/ The Rockfish Conservation Area is an area closed to fishing by particular gear types, bounded by lines specifically defined by latitude and longitude coordinates set out at §§ 660.71-660.74. This RCA is not defined by depth contours (with the exception of the 20-fm depth contour boundary south of 42° N lat.), and the boundary lines that define the RCA may close areas that are deeper or shallower than the depth contour. Vessels that are subject to RCA restrictions may not fish in the RCA, or operate in the RCA for any purpose other than transiting. Open access vessels may be allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See § 660.330 (d) of the regulations for more information.

2/ Minor Shelf and Slope Rockfish complexes are defined at § 660.11. Pacific ocean perch is included in the trip limits for minor slope rockfish. Blackgill rockfish have a species specific trip sub-limit within the minor slope rockfish cumulative limits. Yellowtail rockfish is included in the trip limits for minor shelf rockfish. Bronzespotted rockfish have a species specific trip limit.

3/ "Other flatfish" are defined at § 660.11 and include butter sole, curlfin sole, flathead sole, Pacific sanddab, rex sole, rock sole, and sand sole.

4/ "Shallow Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(1).

5/ "Deeper Nearshore" are defined at § 660.11 under "Groundfish" (7)(i)(B)(2).

6/ The commercial minimum size limit for lingcod is 22 inches (56 cm) South of 42° N lat.

7/ "Other fish" are defined at § 660.11 and includes kelp greening off California and leopard shark.

8/ Open access vessels may be allowed to fish inside groundfish conservation areas using hook and line only. See § 660.330 (d) of the regulations for more information.

To convert pounds to kilograms, divide by 2.20462, the number of pounds in one kilogram.

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BILLING CODE 3510-22-C

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**50 CFR Part 679**

[Docket No. 240227-0061; RTID 0648-XE015]

**Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Jig Gear in the Central Regulatory Area 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 Pacific cod by vessels using jig gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the

2024 total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific cod by vessels using jig gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA.

**DATES:** Effective 1200 hours, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), July 19, 2024, through 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 2024.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Adam Zaleski, 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 (Magnuson-Stevens 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 2024 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to vessels using jig gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA is 309 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2024 and 2025 harvest

specifications for groundfish in the GOA (89 FR 15484, March 4, 2024).

In accordance with § 679.20(d)(1)(iii), the Regional Administrator has determined that the 2024 Pacific cod TAC apportioned to vessels using jig gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA has been reached. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific cod by vessels using jig gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the GOA.

**Classification**

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR part 679, which was issued pursuant to section 304(b), and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest, as it would prevent NMFS from responding to the most recent fisheries data in a timely fashion,