

captive individuals are unavailable, and that wild populations can sustain limited taking, and an import permit is issued under § 17.22;

(v) Any permanent exports of such specimens meet the requirements of paragraph (g)(4) of this section; and

(vi) Each person claiming the benefit of the exception in paragraph (g)(1) of this section must maintain accurate written records of activities, including births, deaths and transfers of specimens, and make those records accessible to Service agents for inspection at reasonable hours as set forth in §§ 13.46 and 13.47.

Dated: May 26, 1998.

Donald J. Barry,

Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

[FR Doc. 98-24384 Filed 9-10-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 285

[I.D. 090498A]

Atlantic Tuna Fisheries; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna; Closure

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

ACTION: General category closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS has determined that the 1998 Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) General category subquota for the September period will be attained by September 8, 1998. Therefore, General category fishery for September will be closed effective 11:30 p.m. on September 8, 1998. This action is being taken to prevent overharvest of the adjusted subquota of 201 metric tons (mt) for the September period.

DATES: Effective 11:30 p.m. local time on September 8, 1998, through September 30, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sarah McLaughlin, 301-713-2347, or Pat Scida, 978-281-9260.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Regulations implemented under the authority of the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*) governing the harvest of BFT by persons and vessels subject to U.S. jurisdiction are found at 50 CFR part 285. Section 285.22 subdivides the U.S. quota recommended by the International Commission for the Conservation of

Atlantic Tunas among the various domestic fishing categories.

General Category Closure

NMFS is required, under § 285.20(b)(1), to monitor the catch and landing statistics and, on the basis of these statistics, to project a date when the catch of BFT will equal the quota and publish a **Federal Register** announcement to close the applicable fishery.

Implementing regulations for the Atlantic tuna fisheries at 50 CFR 285.22 provide for a subquota of 194 mt of large medium and giant BFT to be harvested from the regulatory area by vessels permitted in the General category during the period beginning September 1 and ending September 30. Due to an underharvest of 7 mt in the June-August period subquota, the September period subquota was adjusted to 201 mt. Based on reported catch and effort, NMFS projects that this revised subquota will be reached by September 8, 1998. Therefore, fishing for, retaining, possessing, or landing large medium or giant BFT by vessels in the General category must cease at 11:30 p.m. local time September 8, 1998. The General category will reopen October 1, 1998, with a quota of 65 mt for the October-December period. If necessary, the October-December subquota will be adjusted based on actual landings from September. While the General category is open, General category permit holders are restricted from all BFT fishing, including tag-and-release fishing, on restricted-fishing days. However, for the remainder of September, previously designated restricted-fishing days are waived; therefore, General category permit holders may tag and release BFT while the General category is closed prior to the October 1 opening, subject to the requirements of the tag and release program at 50 CFR 285.27.

The intent of this closure is to prevent overharvest of the September period subquota established for the General category.

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 285.20(b) and 50 CFR 285.22 and is exempt from review under E.O. 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*

Dated: September 4, 1998.

Richard W. Surdi,

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

[FR Doc. 98-24405 Filed 9-8-98; 2:00 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 679

[Docket No. 980903229-8229-01; I.D. 051898A]

RIN 0648-AK73

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Stand Down Requirements for Trawl Catcher Vessels Transiting Between the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska

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

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: NMFS issues regulations to implement a stand down requirement for trawl catcher vessels transiting between the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA). This action is necessary to prevent unexpected shifts of fishing effort between BSAI and GOA fisheries that can lead to overharvests of total allowable catch (TAC) in the Western and Central (W/C) Regulatory Areas of the GOA. This action is intended to further the goals and objectives of the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska and the Fishery Management Plan for the Groundfish Fishery of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (FMPs).

DATES: Effective September 8, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (EA/RIR/FRFA) prepared for this action are available from the Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802, Attn: Lori J. Gravel, or by calling the Alaska Region, NMFS, at 907-586-7228.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kent Lind, 907-586-7228 or kent.lind@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The groundfish fisheries off Alaska are managed by NMFS under the FMPs. The FMPs were prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Federal regulations governing the groundfish fisheries appear at 50 CFR parts 600 and 679.

Background and Need for Action

In recent years, management of the inshore pollock and Pacific cod fisheries