

TABLE 1.—2003 BERING SEA SUBAREA INSHORE COOPERATIVE ALLOCATIONS—Continued

Cooperative name and member vessels	Sum of member vessel's official catch histories ¹ (mt)	Percentage of inshore sector allocation	Annual co-op allocation (mt)
PACIFIC VIKING, PEGASUS, PEGGY JO, PERSEVERANCE, PREDATOR, RAVEN, ROYAL AMERICAN, SEEKER, SOVEREIGNTY, TRAVELER, VIKING EXPLORER <i>Arctic Enterprise Association</i>	36,807	4.210%	27,410
BRISTOL EXPLORER, OCEAN EXPLORER, PACIFIC EXPLORER <i>Northern Victor Fleet Cooperative</i>	73,656	8.425%	54,852
ANITA J, COLLIER BROTHERS, COMMODORE, EXCALIBUR II, GOLDRUSH, HALF MOON BAY, MISS BERDIE, NORDIC FURY, PACIFIC FURY, POSEIDON, ROYAL ATLANTIC, SUNSET BAY, STORM PETREL <i>Peter Pan Fleet Cooperative</i>	18,693	2.138%	13,921
AMBER DAWN, AMERICAN BEAUTY, ELIZABETH F, MORNING STAR, OCEAN LEADER, OCEANIC, PROVIDIAN, TOPAZ, WALTER N <i>Unalaska Cooperative</i>	106,737	12.209%	79,488
ALASKA ROSE, BERING ROSE, DESTINATION, GREAT PACIFIC, MESSIAH, MORNING STAR, MS AMY, PROGRESS, SEA WOLF, VANGUARD, WESTERN DAWN <i>UniSea Fleet Cooperative</i>	201,566	23.056%	150,107
ALSEA, AMERICAN EAGLE, ARGOSY, AURIGA, AURORA, DEFENDER, GUN-MAR, NORDIC STAR, PACIFIC MONARCH, SEADAWN, STARFISH, STARLITE <i>Westward Fleet Cooperative</i>	189,942	21.727%	141,451
A.J., ALASKAN COMMAND, ALYESKA, ARCTIC WIND, CAITLIN ANN, CHELSEA K, DONA MARTITA, FIERCE ALLEGIANCE, HICKORY WIND, OCEAN HOPE 3, PACIFIC CHALLENGER, PACIFIC KNIGHT, PACIFIC PRINCE, STARWARD, VIKING, WESTWARD I Open access AFA vessels	1,309	0.150%	975
Total inshore allocation	874,238	100%	651,047

¹ According to regulations at § 679.62 the individual catch history for each vessel is equal to the vessel's best 2 of 3 years inshore pollock landings from 1995 through 1997 and includes landings to catcher/processors for vessels that made 500 or more mt of landings to catcher/processors from 1995 through 1997.

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), finds good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(3) as such requirement is contrary to the public interest. This requirement is contrary to the public interest as it would delay the implementation of these measures in a timely fashion in order to allow full utilization of the pollock TAC, and therefore reduce the public's ability to use and enjoy the fishery resource.

The AA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effective

date of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3). This finding is based upon the reasons provided above for waiver of prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

This action is taken under 50 CFR 679.20, and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: August 25, 2003.

Bruce C. Morehead,

Acting 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. 021212307-3037-02; I.D. 081403C]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

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

ACTION: Inseason adjustment; request for comments; openings and closures.

SUMMARY: NMFS issues an inseason adjustment opening the B season for Atka mackerel with gears other than jig in the Eastern Aleutian District (area 541) and the Bering Sea subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI) for 12 hours, from 2400 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), September 1, 2003, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 2, 2003. This action is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2003 total allowable catch (TAC) of Atka mackerel in these areas and to allow the harvest limit area (HLA) fisheries in the Central (area 542) and Western (area 543) Aleutian Districts, which are by regulation scheduled to open 48 hours after the closure of the Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea subarea fishery, to begin at 1200 hrs. NMFS is also announcing the opening and closure dates of the first and second directed fisheries within the HLA in areas 542 and 543. These actions are necessary to prevent exceeding the B season HLA limits established for area 542 and area 543.

DATES: Opening of directed fishing for Atka mackerel with gears other than jig in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea: Effective 2400 hrs, A.l.t., September 1, 2003, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 2, 2003. The first directed fisheries in the HLA in area 542 and area 543 open effective 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 4, 2003. The first HLA fishery in area 542 and area 543 will remain open until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 10, 2003. The second directed fisheries in the HLA in area 542 and area 543 open effective 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 12, 2003. The second HLA fishery in area 542 and area 543 will remain open until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 18, 2003. Comments must be received at the following address no later than 4:30 p.m., A.l.t., September 12, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be mailed to Sue Salvesson, Assistant Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668, Attn: Lori Durall. Hand delivery or courier delivery of comments may be sent to NMFS at the Federal Building, 709 West 9th Street, Room 453, Juneau, AK 99801. Comments also may be sent via facsimile (fax) to (907) 586-7557. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or Internet.

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.

The 2003 TAC of Atka mackerel for gears other than jig in the Eastern Aleutian District and the Bering Sea subarea is 9,753 metric tons (mt) as established by the final 2003 harvest specifications for Groundfish of the BSAI (68 FR 9907, March 3, 2003).

As of August 7, 2003, 2,100 mt remain in the 2003 Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea subarea TAC of Atka mackerel for gears other than jig. Current information shows the catching capacity of vessels expected to fish Atka mackerel in Statistical Area 541 of the BSAI is about 2,500 mt per day. Regulations at § 679.23(b) specifies that the time of all openings and closures of fishing seasons, other than the beginning and end of the calendar fishing year, is 1200 hrs, A.l.t. However, the Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS, has determined that the B season allowance of the Atka mackerel TAC could be exceeded if a 24-hour fishery were allowed to occur. NMFS intends that the seasonal allowance not be exceeded and, therefore, cannot allow a 24-hour directed fishery.

NMFS, in accordance with § 679.25(a)(1)(i) and § 679.25(a)(2)(i)(A), is adjusting the B season for Atka mackerel in the Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea subarea by opening the fishery at 2400 hrs, A.l.t., September 1, 2003, and closing the fishery at 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 2, 2003, at which time directed fishing for Atka mackerel will be prohibited. This action has the effect of opening the fishery for 12 hours.

Regulations at § 679.20(a)(8)(iii)(C) require the HLA fisheries in areas 542 and 543 open 48 hours after the seasonal closure of area 541. To provide for openings in the subsequent HLA fisheries at 1200 hrs, A.l.t., the fishery in the Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea subarea is being opened at 2400 hrs, A.l.t., September 1, 2003, and closed at 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 2, 2003.

In accordance with § 679.25(a)(2)(iii), NMFS has determined that prohibiting directed fishing at 1200 hrs, A.l.t., September 2, 2003, after a 12-hour opening is the least restrictive management adjustment to achieve the 2003 Atka mackerel TAC in Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea subarea and will allow other fisheries to

continue in noncritical areas and time periods. Pursuant to § 679.25(b)(2), NMFS has considered data regarding catch per unit of effort and rate of harvest in making this adjustment.

In accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii)(C), the Regional Administrator is opening the first directed fisheries for Atka mackerel within the HLA in areas 542 and 543. These regulations require the opening to occur 48 hours after the closure of the area 541 Atka mackerel directed fishery. The Regional Administrator has established the opening date for the second HLA directed fisheries in areas 542 and 543 as 48 hours after the closure of the first HLA fisheries. NMFS is opening directed fishing for Atka mackerel in the HLA of areas 542 and 543 in accordance with the periods listed under the DATES section of this notice and as justified below.

In accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii), vessels using trawl gear for directed fishing for Atka mackerel have previously registered with NMFS to fish in the HLA fisheries in areas 542 and/or 543. NMFS has randomly assigned each vessel to the directed fishery or fisheries for which they have registered. NMFS has notified each vessel as to which fishery each vessel has been assigned by NMFS. A notification of vessel assignments was published elsewhere in this issue.

In accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(ii)(C)(1), the B season harvest limit of the seasonal TAC in areas 542 and 543 are 8,147 mt and 5,547 mt, respectively. Based on those seasonal apportionments and the proportion of the number of vessels in each platoon compared to the total number of vessels participating in the HLA directed fishery for area 542 or 543 during the B season, the harvest limit for each HLA directed fishery for areas 542 and 543 are as follows: For the first directed fishery in area 542, 4,074 mt; for the first directed fishery in area 543, 2,774 mt; for the second directed fishery in area 542, 4,074 mt; for the second directed fishery in area 543, 2,774 mt.

In accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii)(E), the Regional Administrator has established the closure dates of the Atka mackerel directed fisheries in the HLA for areas 542 and 543 based on the amount of the harvest limit and the estimated fishing capacity of the vessels assigned to the respective fisheries. Consequently, NMFS is prohibiting directed fishing for Atka mackerel in the HLA of areas 542 and 543 in accordance with the periods listed under the DATES section of this notice.

Classification

This action responds to the best available information recently obtained from the fishery. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA), finds good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) as such requirement is contrary to the public interest. This requirement is contrary to the public interest as it would delay the closure of these fisheries, lead to exceeding the TAC, and therefore reduce the public's ability to use and enjoy the fishery resource.

The AA for Fisheries, NOAA also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effective date of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3). This finding is based upon the reasons provided above for waiver of prior notice and opportunity for public comment.

Without this inseason adjustment, NMFS could not allow the Atka mackerel TAC in the Eastern Aleutian District and Bering Sea subarea of the BSAI to be harvested in an expedient manner and in accordance with the regulatory schedule. Under § 679.25(c)(2), interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this action to the above address until September 12, 2003.

This action is required by §§ 679.20 and 679.25 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: August 25, 2003.

Bruce C. Morehead,

Acting 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. 021212307-3037-02; I.D. 081403D]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel Harvest Limit Area Fisheries in Areas 542 and 543

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

ACTION: Notification of Atka mackerel assignments.

SUMMARY: NMFS is notifying registered vessels of their assignments for the 2003 B season Atka mackerel fishery in harvest limit areas (HLA) 542 and/or 543 of the Aleutian Islands subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI). This action is necessary to allow the harvest of the B season HLA limits established for area 542 and area 543.

DATES: Effective 1200 hrs, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), August 28, 2003, until 1200 hrs, A.l.t., November 1, 2003.

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)(8)(iii)(A), 10 vessels using trawl gear for directed fishing for Atka mackerel have registered with NMFS to fish in the 2003 B season HLA fisheries in areas 542 and/or 543. In accordance with § 679.20(a)(8)(iii)(B) the Administrator, Alaska Region, has randomly assigned each vessel to the HLA directed fishery for Atka mackerel for which they have registered and is

now notifying each vessel of its assignment.

Vessels assigned to participate in the first HLA directed fishery in area 542 and/or the second HLA directed fishery in area 543 in accordance with the vessel's registration under § 679.20(a)(8)(iii)(A) are as follows: Federal Fishery Permit number (FFP) 3423 Alaska Warrior, FFP 3819 Alaska Spirit, FFP 2134 Ocean Peace, FFP 3835 Seafisher, and FFP 2800 U.S. Intrepid.

Vessels assigned to participate in the first HLA directed fishery in area 543 and/or the second HLA directed fishery in area 542 in accordance with the vessel's registration under § 679.20(a)(8)(iii)(A) are as follows: FFP 2443 Alaska Juris, FFP 2733 Seafreeze Alaska, FFP 4093 Alaska Victory, FFP 3400 Alaska Ranger, and FFP 1879 American No. 1.

Classification

This action responds to the best available information. The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, finds that the need to immediately implement this action that notifies each vessel of their fishery assignment to allow the harvest of the B season HLA limits established for area 542 and area 543 constitutes good cause to waive the requirement to provide prior notice and opportunity for public comment pursuant to the authority set forth at 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B) and 50 CFR 679.20(a)(8)(iii), as such procedures would be unnecessary and contrary to the public interest. Similarly, the need to implement these measures in a timely fashion that notifies each vessel of their fishery assignment to allow the harvest of the B season HLA limits established for area 542 and area 543 constitutes good cause to find that the effective date of this action cannot 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 § 679.20 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: August 25, 2003.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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