

INFORMATION BULLETIN (99-69)
Sustainable Fisheries Division
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NMFS EXTENDS STELLER SEA LION PROTECTION MEASURES
FOR THE POLLOCK B AND C SEASON FISHERIES OFF ALASKA

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has extended emergency Steller sea lion protection measures for the pollock fisheries off Alaska, according to Steven Pennoyer, Administrator, Alaska Region, NMFS. This emergency rule extension was recommended by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council). The emergency rule extension was filed for public inspection at the Office of the Federal Register on July 15, 1999 and will be effective July 19, 1999, through December 31, 1999. The purpose of this bulletin is to provide additional notice of the emergency rule extension. This bulletin is for informational purposes only. Do not rely on it to guide you in compliance with the regulatory changes.

ORIGINAL EMERGENCY RULE

NMFS published an emergency interim rule implementing reasonable and prudent alternatives in the Federal Register on January 22, 1999 (64 FR 3437), amended on February 17, 1999 (64 FR 7814) and February 25, 1999 (64 FR 9375), and effective through July 19, 1999. The preamble to the original emergency interim rule provides a detailed description of the purpose and need for the action. This emergency rule extension revises the original emergency rule and amends the 1999 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) final harvest specifications (64 FR 12103) published on March 11, 1999. This extension does not revise conservation measures implemented for the pollock fishery in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas of the Gulf of Alaska (W/C GOA).

REVISIONS TO THE EMERGENCY RULE

This action makes the following two changes to the original emergency rule: (1) a correction to the mothership B/C season dates, and (2) the addition of spatial dispersion measures to limit critical habitat/catcher vessel operation area (CH/CVOA) catch. The original emergency rule contained incorrect B and C season harvest dates for the mothership sector. The emergency rule has been corrected to comport with the

Council's December 1998 recommendation for a combined B/C season from September 1 through November 1. This emergency rule extension also revises the original rule to include overall CH/CVOA catch limits of 25% in the B season and 35% in the C season. These catch percentages are achieved using an allocation formula recommended by the Council that excludes the catcher/processor (C/P) and mothership sectors from the CH/CVOA during the B and C seasons, and proportionally reduces the CH/CVOA catch percentages for the inshore and CDQ sectors to achieve the overall B and C season catch objectives. The inshore sector has a CH/CVOA limit of 45 percent during the B season and 63 percent during the C season. The CDQ sector has a CH/CVOA limit of 56 percent for its combined B/C season.

POLLOCK SEASON DATES AND CH/CVOA SECTOR ALLOCATIONS FOR THE SECOND HALF OF 1999

The emergency rule as extended provides the following season dates and CH/CVOA limits for the second half of 1999.

INSHORE (BSAI)

B season: Aug. 1 - Sep. 15 (45% inside CH/CVOA)
C season: Sep. 15 - Nov. 1 (63% inside CH/CVOA)

C/P SECTOR (BSAI)

B season: Aug. 1 - Sept. 15 (no fishing in CH/CVOA)
C season: Sep. 15 - Nov. 1 (no fishing in CH/CVOA)

MOTHERSHIP (BSAI)

B/C season: Sept. 1 - Nov. 1 (no fishing in CH/CVOA)

CDQ SECTOR (BSAI)

B/C season: Apr. 15 - Dec. 31 (56% inside CH/CVOA)

W/C GOA (Areas 610 - 630)

C season: Sep. 1 - TAC attainment
D season: 5 days after C season closure - Nov. 1

Note that the D season for 610, 620, and 630 will likely start on different dates because the start date of the D season in

each area is a sliding date that is 5 days after the closure of the C season in that area.

REVISED 1999 SPECIFICATIONS

The specification of CH/CVOA catch limits in the B and C seasons in the extension of this emergency rule require revision of the 1999 final harvest specifications of pollock TAC for the Bering Sea Subarea. Table 3 of the 1999 BSAI final harvest specifications (64 FR 12103, March 11, 1999) listed CH/CVOA catch limits for the A1 and A2 seasons. However, CH/CVOA catch limits were not specified for the B and C seasons. To accommodate these new CH/CVOA limits for Bering Sea Subarea pollock under the revised emergency rule, the 1999 BSAI final harvest specifications were amended by adding the following table 3A.

Table 3A. FINAL 1999 TAC AMOUNTS FOR B AND C SEASON POLLOCK IN THE BERING SEA SUBAREA

Sector	B Season		C Season	
	Total	CH/CVOA Limit	Total	CH/CVOA Limit
Bering Sea Subarea				
Inshore	125,885	56,648	125,885	79,307
Offshore C/Ps	100,708	0	100,708	0
Catch by C/Ps	92,148	0	92,148	0
Catch by C/Vs	8,560	0	8,560	0
Sec. 208(e)(21) vessels	504	0	504	0
Mothership ¹	50,354	0	n/a	n/a
Incidental Catch	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
CDQ ¹	54,560	30,554	n/a	n/a

¹The mothership and CDQ sectors have a combined B/C season and CH/CVOA catch limit.