

Pacific Ocean Perch Closure

NMFS · NOAA · Western Gulf of Alaska

Directed fishing closed through Dec 31, 2026

Magnuson-Stevens inseason TAC action

NMFS Closes Directed Pacific Ocean Perch Fishing in the Western Gulf of Alaska Through December 31, 2026

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National Marine Fisheries Service prohibited directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska effective October 1 through December 31, 2026 after the 2026 TAC was reached or projected reached. Magnuson-Stevens inseason action.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), published a temporary rule in the Federal Register on October 5, 2026 prohibiting directed fishing for Pacific ocean perch in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). The closure is necessary to prevent exceeding the 2026 total allowable catch (TAC) for that stock in that area.

Clock and numbers from the notice

- Effective: 1200 hours, Alaska local time, October 1, 2026, through 2400 hours, A.l.t., December 31, 2026.
- 2026 TAC for Pacific ocean perch in the Western Regulatory Area of the GOA: 1,688 metric tons, as set in the final 2026 and 2027 GOA groundfish harvest specifications (91 FR 11902, March 11, 2026).
- Regional Administrator established a directed fishing allowance of 1,508 mt and set aside 180 mt as incidental catch for other groundfish fisheries, then found the directed fishing allowance will be or has been reached.

While the closure is in effect, maximum retainable amounts at 50 CFR 679.20(e) and (f) still apply during a trip.

Why NMFS can close mid-season

NMFS manages the GOA groundfish fishery under the Fishery Management Plan prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. When catch data show a TAC will be or has been reached, regulations at § 679.20 require NMFS to shut down directed fishing so the TAC is not exceeded.

The notice states NMFS waived prior notice and comment because waiting would have delayed the closure after catch data became available on September 28, 2026.

How to read this for the fishing community

- This is a directed fishing closure for Pacific ocean perch in the Western GOA regulatory area — not a blanket ban on all GOA groundfish.
- Incidental catch limits and retainable amounts still matter; operators should read the temporary rule and current retainable-amount tables.
- Authority cited: Magnuson-Stevens Act section 305(d); regulations at 50 CFR part 679.

Sources

1. Federal Register (Oct. 5, 2026), Document 2026-20338, 91 FR 63166: Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/10/05/2026-20338/fisheries-of-the-exclusive-economic-zone-off-alaska-pacific-ocean-perch-in-the-western-regulatory>
2. Final 2026 and 2027 harvest specifications for groundfish of the GOA (91 FR 11902, March 11, 2026), as cited in the temporary rule.

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Notes

- Author: Ryan Standley / Record of Sale, LLC / Notice Nearby.
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