

ALEUTIAN ISLANDS MANAGEMENT AREA
HERRING FOOD AND BAIT MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1993

By

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and

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INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide commercial herring fishermen and buyers with management information and guidelines for participating in the Aleutian Islands Management Area herring food and bait fishery.

The Aleutian Islands Management Area (Figure 1) is described as part of Management Area "M" and consists of Bering Sea waters extending west of Unimak Pass and Pacific Ocean waters extending west of 163°30' W.long. (the south side of Unimak Island near Cape Lazaref) to the United States - Russian Convention Line of 1867 (Figures 2-3).

As a result of Alaska Board of Fisheries action during the November 1991 meeting, only the Aleutian Islands Management Area will be open to commercial herring food and bait fishing. South and North Peninsula herring were allocated to sac roe fisheries.

The "Dutch Harbor" food and bait fishery continues to be an open-to-entry fishery; occurring annually since 1981 (Tables 1-2; McCullough and Stopha 1992). During the 1990 and 1991 fishing seasons, the fishery was open less than one day. In 1992, the fishery was open for five days (2 periods on July 16 were general openings, after July 16 a co-op was formed to harvest the balance of the quota).

The commercial fisheries are intended to occur with minimal waste of the resource and within conservation limits as determined by Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). ADF&G will manage the fisheries per the Bering Sea Herring Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 27.060; ADF&G 1993). Permit holders are encouraged to check with their markets prior to fishing to determine which products are acceptable to the industry.

Local offices of the ADF&G for Aleutian Islands herring food and bait information are:

Sand Point:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 129
Sand Point, AK 99661

phone (907) 383-2066
fax (907) 383-2606
record (907) 383-2334
VHF 6
Single Side Band 3230

Dutch Harbor:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 308
Dutch Harbor, AK 99692

phone (907)581-1219
phone (907)581-1239
fax (907)581-1572
VHF 6
Single Side Band 4125

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Registration Requirements for Fishing Vessels, Tenders, and Processors

Each fishing vessel CFEC permit holder, tender operator, and buyer must register at the ADF&G office in Sand Point or Dutch Harbor prior to catching, buying, tendering, or processing herring (Appendix A). If registering in person causes undue inconvenience, other arrangements may be possible, but ADF&G in Sand Point or Dutch Harbor must be contacted.

Fishing Periods

Fishing periods will be during daylight hours and of about 2 hour duration per period. A catch report from each fishing vessel CFEC permit holder and tender operator will be required, whether or not herring were caught, before the next fishing period will be announced. Adequate time (at least 24 hours unless all fishermen and ADF&G agree during each closure to a shorter time period) between fishing periods will be given to allow for accurate catch reports, transfer of herring to tenders, or fleet movement.

Catch Reporting

If monitoring of the Aleutian Islands Management Area food and bait fishery becomes impossible due to late catch reporting or excessive gear levels, stringent in-season measures will occur to prevent excessive harvests. Such measures may include but will not be limited to: frequent closures to assess fish tickets information, followed by at least 24 hour notice of the next fishing period. Failure to adhere to the reporting requirements specified on the tender and fishing vessel registration form will result in a citation. Timely and accurate catch information provided by the fishing fleet, tender operators, and processors will be essential in managing the fisheries. Fishermen, tender operators, and processors will be required to provide tallies of herring activities after each fishing period, even if no herring were caught or purchased. Permit holders must provide an accurate estimate of herring aboard the fishing vessel as well as an estimate of what may be in the fishing net. Tender operators must provide accurate estimates of herring onboard tenders. Processors must provide accurate estimates of delivered herring. Individual codes will be provided for each permit holder, tender, or processor that will be involved in the fishery. Catch reporting instructions will be explained in detail during registration.

Fish Tickets

Fishermen must provide specific catch locations to buyers so that it can be recorded on fish tickets. Fish tickets must, if mailed, arrive in the Sand Point ADF&G office within ten days of the close of the fishery or be hand delivered within ten days of the close of the fishery to the

Sand Point ADF&G office. All fish tickets must be received in the Sand Point ADF&G office before completing operations and leaving Management Area M. If delivering fish tickets within ten days to ADF&G personnel in Sand Point causes undue inconvenience, other arrangements may be possible, but processors must contact ADF&G in Sand Point.

Gill Net And Seine Specifications (5 AAC 27.631 and 5 AAC 27.632 in part)

There are no restrictions during the herring food and bait season to gill net length nor depth, however, no purse seine may be more than 250 fathoms in length.

Aircraft

There is no restriction on the use of aircraft.

Industry and ADF&G Cooperation

Fishermen, tender operators, and processors' cooperation will be appreciated when ADF&G personnel request herring samples from the commercial catch, or from juvenile or other schools inadvertently seined. These samples will be used for monitoring age composition, which assists in determining the health of a stock and in forecasting next years run strength. ADF&G will also be soliciting information on commercial herring sightings to supplement information gathered by ADF&G. Fishermen and spotter pilots are encouraged to provide biomass information to ADF&G; these reports will be treated confidentially. Past cooperation has been excellent and has proven valuable in evaluating stock status and in gaining management information.

Aleutian Islands Commercial Food and Bait Fishery

During the March, 1991 Board of Fish meeting, 5 AAC 27.610 Fishing Seasons And Periods was amended in regards to the opening date of the Aleutian Islands "Dutch Harbor" food and bait fishery. The food and bait season is from July 16 through February 28. During the March, 1991 Board of Fish meeting, 5 AAC 27.060 Bering Sea Herring Fishery Management Plan was also amended in regards to biomass threshold levels. The threshold was lowered to 2,000 short tons at Nelson Island for the "Dutch Harbor" fishery to occur, and ADF&G was instructed to develop a threshold level for Port Clarence. If any Bering Sea herring stock is below its threshold, then the "Dutch Harbor" food and bait fishery will be closed for that season. ADF&G will not be able to advise fishermen and processors until late-June or early-July whether the Aleutian Islands food and bait fishery will occur because biomass estimates for each Bering Sea herring stock must be made in-season during the spawning period. Currently, the biomass of all stocks are forecast above their respective threshold levels (Hamner and Kerkvliet 1992). The Nelson Island District 1993 biomass forecast is 3,514 tons (C. Burkey, Alaska Department of Fish and Game,

Bethel, personal communication). This is above the 2,000 ton threshold required to open the "Dutch Harbor" food and bait fishery. Therefore the outlook for a 1993 Aleutian Islands "Dutch Harbor" food and bait fishery is favorable. However, processors and fisherman are advised that management of the 1993 fishery will be based on the observed spawning biomass for each Bering Sea herring stock. ADF&G will update biomass estimates for each stock as herring stocks move into coastal waters during spawning migrations.

In-season emergency orders will be broadcast on the single side band radio on 4125 and 3230 Khz and on the VHF radio on channel 6 and 70, or other channels if arrangements are made with the local representative of ADF&G. Current announcements will be available on the ADF&G record-a-phone at 383-2334.

Harvest Projection For The 1993 Fishery

The estimated quota for the 1993 "Dutch Harbor" food and bait herring fishery is 1,978 tons (K.A. Rowell, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Anchorage, personal communication). This number is derived using the Bering Sea Herring Management Plan (5 AAC 27.060) and the projected 1993 Togiak herring spawning biomass of 148,786 tons. The actual quota will be established when the 1993 Togiak herring spawning biomass is determined.

Harvest Methods In 1993

The "Dutch Harbor" food and bait herring fishery implemented the following changes in 1992 to slow down the rate of harvest.

1. fishing restricted to daylight hours, and
2. fishing periods of two hours.

These changes worked very well during the 1992 season. After the initial openings of July 16 a fishery co-op was formed to harvest the remaining 290 tons. The 1992 changes were successful, and if necessary another co-op could be formed in 1993 to harvest any remaining quota after general fishing periods.

LITERATURE CITED

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Table 1. Aleutian Islands "Dutch Harbor" area herring food and bait fisheries historical industry summary, 1929-92.

Year	Harvest In Short Tons	No. Processors	No. Permits	No. Landings	Tons Per Boat	Tons Per Landing	\$ Per Ton	\$ Value (Thousands)	\$ Per Vessel (Thousands)
1929	1,259	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1930	1,916	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1931	1,056	12	26	*	*	*	*	*	*
1932	2,510	12	30	*	*	*	*	*	*
1933	1,585	12	38	*	*	*	*	*	*
1934	1,533	9	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1935	2,412	10	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1936	1,379	8	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1937	579	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1938	513	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1939-44					NO FISHERY				
1945	75	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
1946-80					NO FISHERY				
1981	704	a	a	16	352	44	300	211	a
1982	3,565	6	7	95	509	38	300	1,020	146
1983	3,567	5	8	96	446	37	232	828	104
1984	3,578	5	9	61	398	59	210	751	83
1985	3,480	3	6	78	560	45	162	564	94
1986	2,394	4	7	53	342	45	254	600	86
1987	2,503	4	8 ^b	45	373	56	300	751	94
1988	2,004	6	8 ^b	59	251	34	252	505	63
1989	3,081	5	9 ^b	69	342	45	283	873	97
1990	820	5	7	8	117	103	350	287	41
1991	1,325	5	8	18	166	74	300	398	50
1992	1,949	5	11	26	177	75	300	573	52
1929-38 Average	1,474	11	31	*	*	*	*	*	*
1982-92 Average	2,570	5	8	55	335	56	268	650	83

-Continued-

Table 1. (page 2 of 2)

* Data not available.

^a The number of processors, fishing vessels, and catch by gear type can not be released due to state confidentiality requirements.

^b The catch by gear type can not be released due to state confidentiality requirements.

Table 2. Aleutian Islands " Dutch Harbor" commercial herring food and bait catch, in short tons, 1981-92.

Year	Landing Date		Days Fished	Preseason Togiak Spawning Biomass	Harvest Quota	Food and Bait Harvest	% Togiak Spawning Biomass Harvested	Number Permit Holders Fishing
	First	Last						
1981	8/03	8/23	21	159,000	NONE	704	0.4	a
1982	8/05	9/12	39	98,000	NONE	3,565	3.6	6
1983	7/23	9/06	46	142,000	3,525 ^b	3,567	2.5	5
1984	7/17	7/27	11	115,000	3,525 ^b	3,578	3.1	5
1985	7/17	8/11	26	132,000	3,525 ^b	3,480	2.6	3
1986	7/16	7/28	13	96,000	2,453 ^c	2,394	2.5	4
1987	7/16	7/23	4 ^d	88,000	2,332 ^c	2,503	2.8	9
1988	7/16	9/18	21	132,000	3,100 ^e	2,004	1.6	8
1989	7/16	8/05	19 ^f	100,108	3,100 ^e	3,081	3.2	9
1990	8/15	8/15	<1	72,000	903 ^e	820	1.1	7
1991	7/17 ^g	7/17	<1	83,229	931 ^e	1,325	1.6	8
1992	7/16	7/28 ^h	5	60,214 ⁱ	1,940 ⁱ	1,949	1.3	11
Average			16	106,463	2,413	2,414	2.2	7

a Number can not be released due to state confidentiality requirements.

b Harvest ceiling of 3,525 established by Board of Fisheries.

c Harvest quota set by ADF&G. Reduced proportionate with the drop from the 1985 Togiak spawning biomass level.

d Closed 7/19, reopened for 14 hours on 7/23.

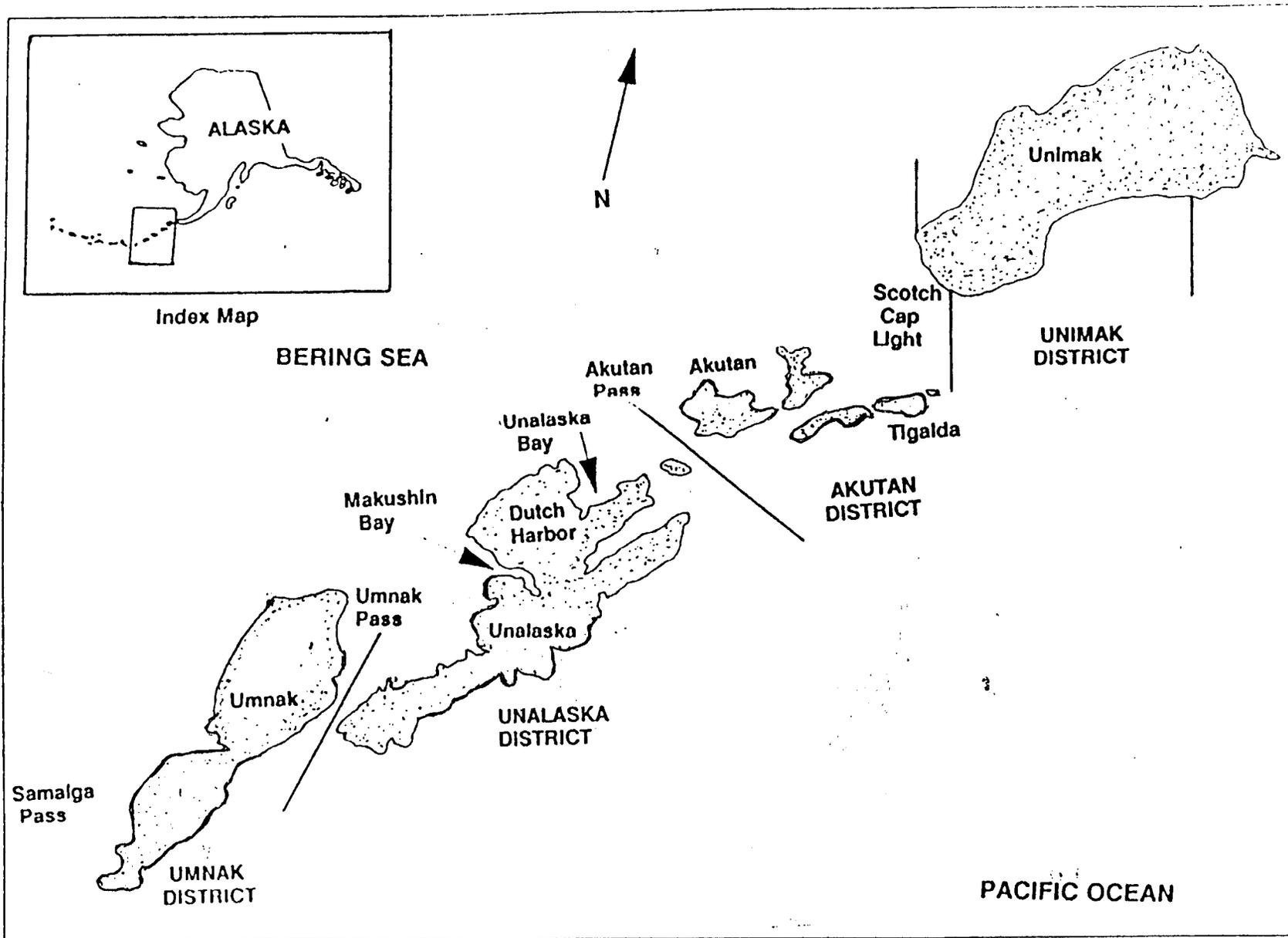
e Harvest quota set under provisions of the Bering Sea Herring Fisheries Management Plan.

f Closed 7/26, reopened 7/27 through 8/5.

g Fishery opened for six hours on 7/16; weather prevented any fishing effort.

h Fishery co-op after 7/16.

i The preseason forecasted biomass was adjusted by ADF&G. The final estimate for Togiak was 146,037 tons and the harvest quota was revised to 1,940 tons.



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Figure 1. Map of the Eastern Aleutian Islands, the study area includes the Unimak, Akutan, and Unalaska Districts and that portion of the Umnak District east of Samalga Pass.

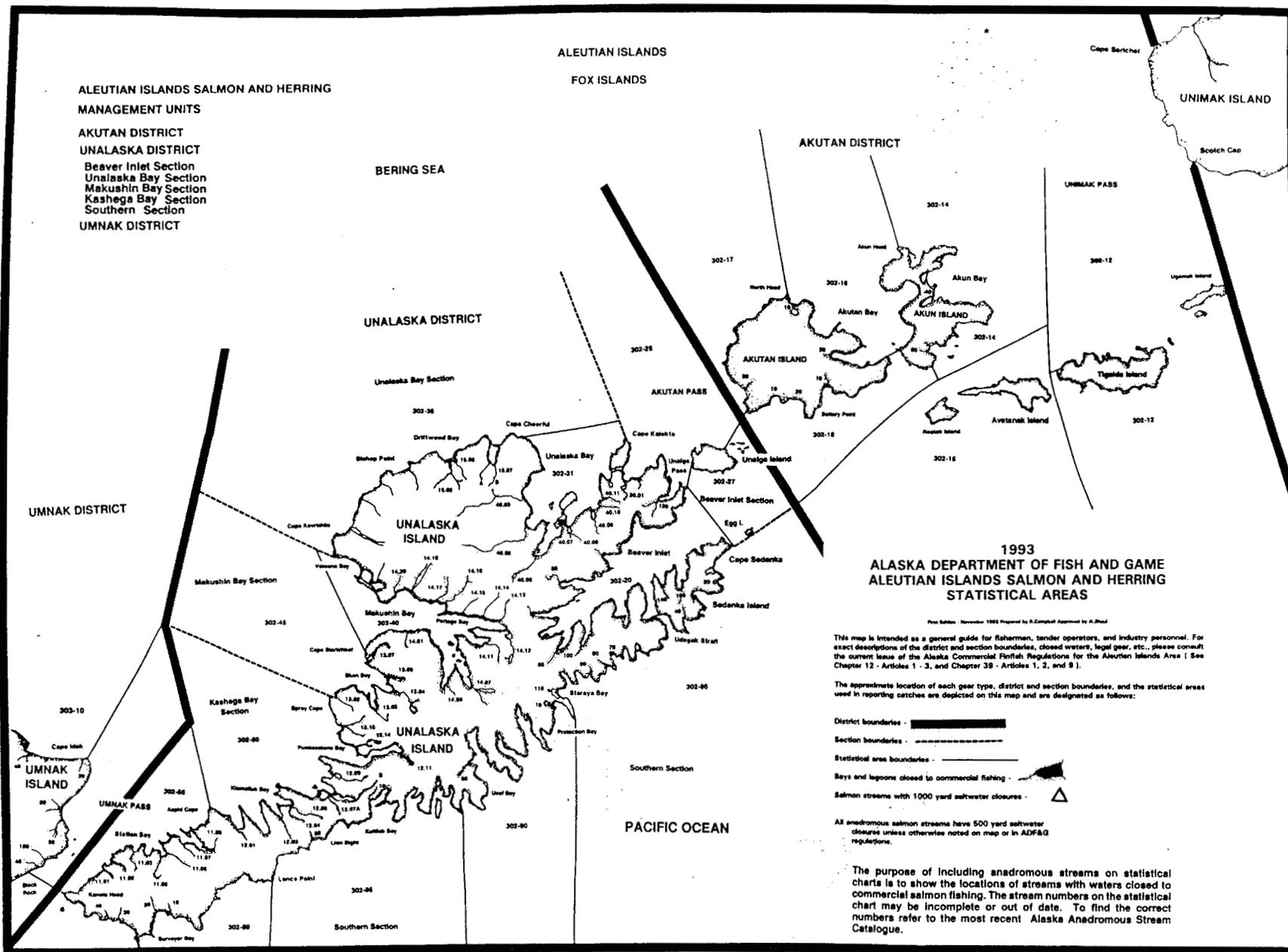


Figure 2. Map of Aleutian Islands Area from Tigalda Island to Umnak Island and the statistical herring fishing areas shown.

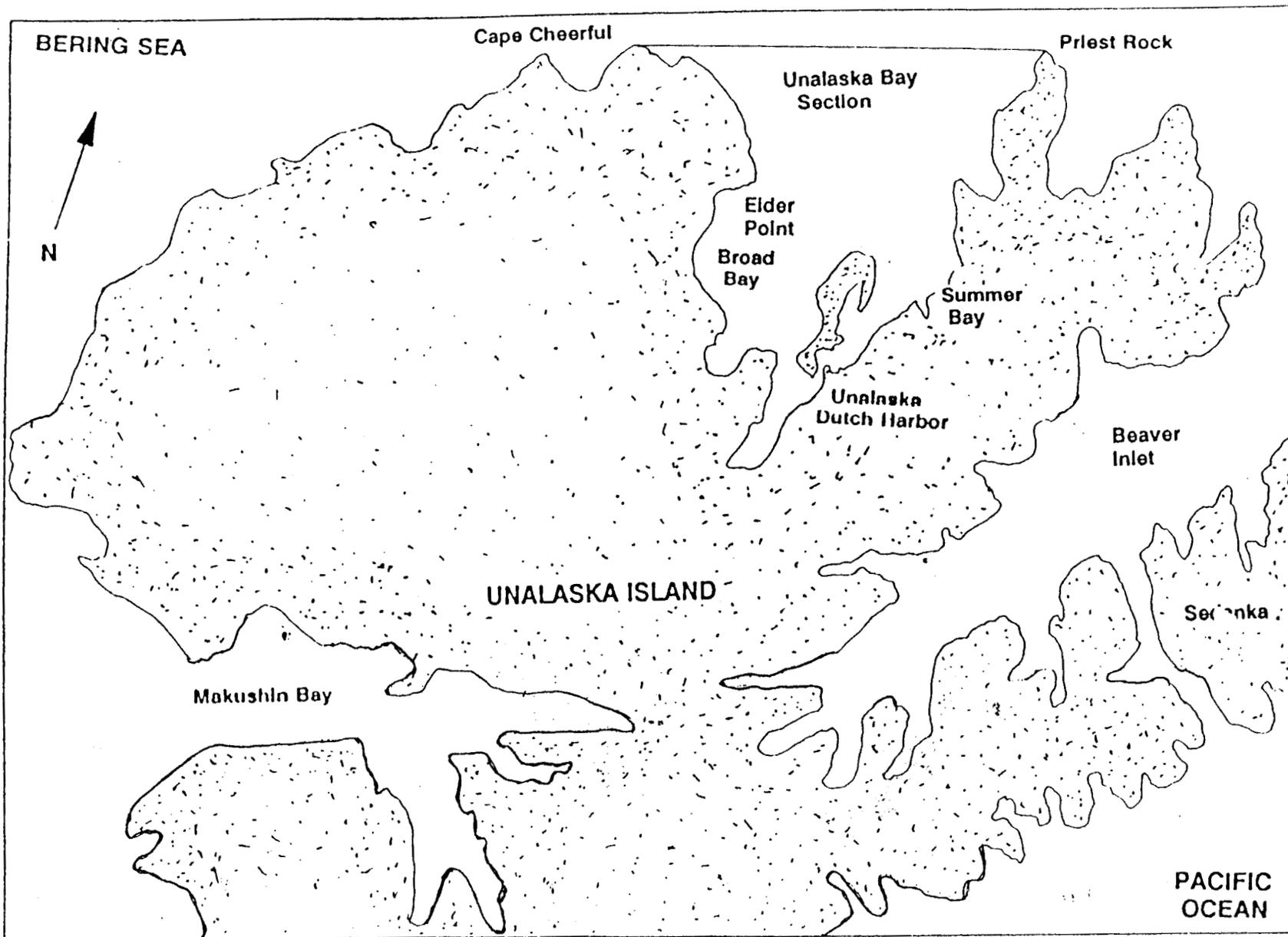


Figure 3. Map of Northern Unalaska Island with the Unalaska Bay Section shown.

APPENDIX

5 AAC 27.662 BUYER AND TENDER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

In addition to the requirements of 5 AAC 39.130(f) each tender operator and each buyer or his agents shall report in person to and register with a local representative of the department upon arrival in the statistical area before commencing operations and before changing location of the operation. Each buyer shall:

- (1) identify all vessels to be employed in transporting or processing herring and shall register such vessels with a local representative of the department located in the statistical area before transporting or processing of herring;
 - (2) make daily reports of all herring purchased from fishermen, and other processing records as specified by local representative of the department; and
 - (3) submit fish tickets before departure from the area and no later than 10 days after termination of buying operations in the area, or as otherwise specified by a local representative of the department.
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Appendix B. Forecasted harvest allocation for Togiak sac roe and " Dutch Harbor" food and bait fisheries, 1993.

"Dutch Harbor" allocation

	Biomass (short tons)	Harvest (short tons)
Forecasted Total Biomass:	148,786	
Exploitation at maximum 20% for Total Allowable Harvest:		29,757
Togiak Spawn-on-kelp Fishery (Fixed Allocation):		1,500
Remaining Allowable Harvest:		28,257
Dutch Harbor Food and Bait Fishery at 7.0%:		1,978
Remaining Allowable Harvest for Togiak District Sac Roe Fishery:		26,279
Purse Seine Allocation 75.0%:		19,709
Gill Net Allocation 25.0%:		6,570

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