

CRAIG/KLAWOCK
HERRING SPAWN-ON-KELP POUND FISHERY
2000 MANAGEMENT PLAN



By

Ketchikan Commercial Fisheries Management Staff

Regional Information Report No.¹ 1J00-02

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Commercial Fisheries
Juneau, Alaska

January 2000

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INTRODUCTION

This plan provides an overview of the management approach and regulations for the 2000 spawn-on-kelp pound fishery on the west coast of Prince of Wales Island near the communities of Craig and Klawock in Southeast Alaska. Staff biologists listed at the end of this document are available to answer questions regarding this plan. Pound operators are also advised to review the section of this plan that describes requirements of other agencies.

A closed-pound fishery involves releasing sexually mature herring into a net impoundment in which kelp is suspended. The herring are released from the pound after they spawn on the kelp, and the kelp with eggs are then sold. An open pound has suspended kelp attached to the floating structure, but does not impound herring. The floating structure and kelp are placed in areas of active herring spawn.

STOCK STATUS AND GUIDELINE HARVEST LEVEL

Winter food and bait herring fisheries have occurred in District 3 (Meares Passage and in the Bocas de Finas area) since the 1960s. Seasonal landings from the 1960s through 1985 were small, averaging approximately 210 tons. From 1987-1991 the herring population grew dramatically in Section 3-B with annual guideline harvest levels (GHL) averaging approximately 2,220 tons (Table 1). The herring population has declined in abundance since 1992 with an average GHL of 740 tons. This will be the ninth year that the Craig/Klawock herring spawn-on-kelp fishery has occurred. Fishing effort, harvest, spawning and fishery dates, and product values are summarized in Tables 2 and 3.

The estimated size of the Craig/Klawock herring population is based upon an age structured analysis (ASA) model. This model incorporates information on spawning biomass and escapement in prior years, annual mortality, growth, fecundity, and recruitment.

Annual harvest levels are based on a graduated scale that allows for higher harvest rates as the herring population increases relative to the threshold level (Figure 1). The established threshold level for the Craig/Klawock stock is 5,000 tons. No harvest is allowed if the biomass estimate for the stock is less than the threshold level. The harvest rate is allowed to increase from 10% at the threshold level to a maximum of 20%. The spawning biomass forecast for the 2000 season is 6,013 tons. This allows for a guideline harvest level of 626 tons for the Craig/Klawock herring spawning stock.

The Board of Fisheries in January of 1997 increased the allocation of herring to the Craig/Klawock spawn-on-kelp pound fishery from an 85/15 allocation between the winter bait fishery and the spring pound fishery to an allocation of 60/40. Therefore, for the 2000 season, **the guideline harvest level for the Craig/Klawock Pound Fishery will be approximately 250 tons of herring plus an unharvested 30 tons from the winter food and bait herring fishery for a total pound fishery GHL of 280 tons.** For the 1999/2000 winter food and bait herring fishery approximately 345 tons of the available 375 tons of herring were harvested.

Herring spawning normally occurs in the Craig/Klawock area in mid to late March or early April. The earliest observed spawn since the mid-1970s was March 9 and the latest date of initial spawning has occurred as late as April 3. Traditionally, herring spawn on Fish Egg, Wadleigh, Clam, and Abbess Islands. However, spawning has also been recorded in the area of Portillo Channel, Port Real Marina, the northern shore of San Fernando Island, the Blanquizal Island area, and along the Prince of Wales Island shore at San Christoval Channel and Shinaku Inlet.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The following is a calendar of events for the 2000 fishing season:

- December 15 - Department of Fish and Game pound permit applications were made available.
- January 31 - Deadline for submitting a pound permit application to the department.
- February 25 - The department will make available in the Ketchikan or Craig office a permit to each applicant that has met the January 31 deadline. A separate permit will be issued for a single-closed pound, multiple-closed pound, single-open pound, and multiple-open pound.
- March 15 - Kelp permits will be available.
- March 17 - The pound area will be open to the seining of herring effective 12:00 noon.
- May 29 - Pounds must be completely removed from the waters of the herring pound fishing area. This includes the area covered by extreme high tides.

REGULATIONS

The Alaska Board of Fisheries met in Sitka in January 1997 and modified the existing regulations for the Section 3-B herring spawn-on-kelp in pounds fishery and approved the following regulations creating the pound fishery in Section 3-B [see 5 AAC 27.110. FISHING SEASONS (f) and 5 AAC 27.185. MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR HERRING SPAWN-ON-KELP IN POUNDS. (a), (b), and (c)(1) through (6), and 5 AAC 27.130 (c), (d), and (e)]. These regulations will be implemented this season as permit requirements. All pound operators and processors should obtain copies of the 1999-2000 Commercial Herring Fishing Regulation book to become familiar with the current regulations.

LIMITED ENTRY

In 1998 the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission placed all of Southeast Alaska's herring spawn-on-kelp pound fisheries under limited entry. For the Craig/Klawock fishery 229 permits were issued. Questions regarding eligibility for this fishery should be directed at the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission.

PERMIT APPLICATION PROCEDURES

To establish eligibility for the 2000 fishery, a pound operator must submit an application for a Craig/Klawock pound permit to any Southeast Alaska Department of Fish and Game office by **January 31, 2000**. Applications sent by mail must be postmarked no later than January 31. Applications received after this date will be subject to a \$45 late fee (SEC 16.05.065). Permit applications were made available on December 15, 1999 at any department area office, or they can be obtained by writing the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, 2030 Sea Level Drive #205, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901. **Original applications are required.**

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game will make available spawn-on-kelp permits to pound operators by February 25, 2000. The permit will specify the following:

- 1) the size of, identification requirements for, and the methods of operation of a closed or open pound;
- 2) methods of taking, retainment, and release of herring;
- 3) the harvest reporting requirements for pound operators; and
- 4) any other guidelines determined by the department to be necessary for the conservation and management of herring and kelp, and public health and safety.

KELP HARVEST AND ALLOCATION

A separate permit is required to harvest kelp to be used in the pounds (5 AAC 37.900). Kelp permits may be pooled and one or more individuals can harvest for a group of pound operators. **Kelp permits may be obtained from the department's office in Ketchikan or in Craig and must be completed and returned to the department within 30 days after the harvest.**

The department will manage the fishery based on a division of kelp blades between permit holders. Current regulations call for setting a herring harvest objective based on one ton of spawn-on-kelp for each 12.5 tons of herring allocated to the fishery. The department will manage the fishery to achieve the harvest objective by restricting permit holders to a specified number of kelp blades annually. However, the department recognizes that kelp management alone has not been effective in limiting the harvest of herring and staying within the herring GHL set for the fishery. The department has attempted to rectify this problem by allowing the use of multiple-permit pounds thereby reducing the number of pounds on the grounds. This should lead to the reduction in the harvesting, impounding, and the associated mortality of herring. This is especially true when stock levels are at low levels such as the 2000 Craig/Klawock stock. The department's method of encouraging multiple permit pounds and open pounds has been a kelp incentive, that is allowing a greater number of kelp blades per permit holder for multiple permit pounds and open pounds. In order to maintain the incentive to operate multiple pounds or open pounds the department, in 2000, will limit the amount of kelp allocated to a single closed pound and increase the kelp allocation to multiple-permit pounds and open pounds.

The kelp allocation plan for the 2000 season is as follows:

Single permit closed pounds – 70 blades of *Macrocystis* kelp.

Multiple permit closed pound – 110 blades of *Macrocystis* kelp per permit holder.

Single open pound – 220 blades of *Macrocystis* kelp.

Multiple permit open pound – 240 blades of *Macrocystis* kelp per permit holder.

Small adjustments to the kelp allocation may be made prior to the fishery based on the number of applications received.

FISHERY CONDUCT AND MANAGEMENT

Suitable sites for pounds in the Craig/Klawock area are limited. To avoid herring mortality and damage to the pounds, operators should locate their pounds in an area with minimal exposure to wind and wave action, and with a relatively deep bottom. The distance from where the herring are captured and the pound site should also be considered since long towing distances can cause considerable stress and mortality of herring.

In past years a completed closed pound had to be on the grounds by mid-March in order for the permit holder to participate in the fishery. For the 2000 season there will not be a deadline when pounds have to be placed on the grounds and inspected. Pounds must be operational by the time herring and kelp are introduced.

All permit holders involved in the operation of a pound, whether single or multiple-permit pound, must be physically present at their pound fishing site at all times during the *operation of the pound*. *Operation of the pound* is defined as 1) the placement of kelp into the pound structure, 2) the capture and transfer of herring into the pound, and 3) the collection and sale of herring spawn-on-kelp product produced in the pound.

For multiple-permit closed pounds all permit holders assigned to the pound must be present at their pound site when kelp and herring are introduced into the pound. If only one permit holder is present at this time then that pound must be operated for the remainder of the season as a single permit closed pound and no more than the number of blades of kelp allocated to a single closed pound maybe harvested.

All pounds must be marked with all of the permit holders' first and last names operating the pound and all of the department registration numbers and letters designating the type of pound being operated. A permanent upright, vertical sign must identify each pound operation. The pound numbers must also be permanently affixed to the top surface of the pound. Pounds shared by multiple permit holders must be marked with the names and numbers of each permit holder operating that pound. Identification signs on pounds that are rafted together must be positioned so that lettering and numbering are clearly visible.

The department will be closely monitoring herring activity in the Craig/Klawock area by vessel and aerial surveys. Kelp permits will be available starting Wednesday, March 15, 2000. **Herring for placement in closed pounds may be captured starting at 12:00 noon on March 17 in Section 3-B (Figure 2).** Daily fishing periods will be announced on the fishing grounds. The department will give sufficient notice of the open fishing time so that all fishers are given a fair opportunity to capture herring. Due to the fact that most of the winter food and bait herring GHJ was harvested the department will approach the spawn-on-kelp fishery from a conservative point of view. Limiting seining to daylight hours may be necessary to control the amount of herring available for harvest and reduce the amount of improper handling of herring that may occur during nighttime seine operations. The department recommends that the size of the sets should be small and usually no more than 10 tons of herring should be harvested at one time.

In 2000, fishers can add herring to the pound multiple times, but once herring have been released from a pound or product has been harvested from a pound, no further herring fishing, kelp additions, or transfer of herring to that pound is allowed.

In order to reduce stress and mortality in the captured herring, **herring may only be retained in closed pounds for six days.** The six days commence with the first introduction of herring into the pound.

This is the second year multiple entries of herring into closed pounds will be allowed in the Craig/Klawock fishery. This is being done to encourage fishers to make small sets on herring, while still allowing enough herring to be harvested in order to reach the GHJ. If the department determines that allowing multiple entries becomes unmanageable or causes excessive mortality then it will be discontinued for the 2000 season.

The department may, under emergency order authority, allow closed-pound permit holders to operate their pounds as open pounds after the area has been closed to the purse seining of herring. If this is allowed, all nets used to enclose the pound must be dropped in such a manner that the net remains in the water to allow the hatching of any spawn, which may be on the web. Removal of nets from the water will be identical to the removal date of pounds from the water.

Pound operators are advised to use extreme caution when towing herring from the capture site to the pound site since towing can be a source of significant mortality if not conducted properly. To avoid mortality, the transport of herring to the pound site must be done with the pound itself or a towable net pen. Towable net pens used only for transporting herring must be marked "Tow Pound." **Transporting herring with a purse seine will not be allowed.** Pound operators are also advised to **push** pounds or to tow alongside of the transfer pound to avoid crushing herring against the net in the prop wash.

Each pound operator must attach a tag to each individual line holding the kelp blades that has listed the exact number of blades on that line. **In closed pounds in which multiple permit holders are involved, each line must have a tag that states the permit holders name responsible for the kelp blades as well as number of kelp blades on that line.** Pound operators will only be allowed to harvest their spawn-on-kelp from their pounds.

Pound operators may change the type of pound they are using up to the time herring or kelp is introduced into the pound. They must inform the department of the type of change and obtain the proper permit prior to introducing herring or kelp into the pound.

All fishery announcements, including updates of herring activities and fishery openings, will be broadcast by VHF radio, Channel 10. Fishers are strongly encouraged to have a VHF radio.

HARVEST AND PRODUCTION

Each permit holder's spawn-on-kelp blades must remain separate from other permit holder's spawn-on-kelp blades until after processing. Permit holders will be allowed to harvest **all** of their herring spawn-on-kelp product produced in their pounds. A permit holder's fish ticket must report only their spawn-on-kelp harvested from their pound.

REQUIREMENTS FOR BUYERS

Operators of floating processing vessels will be required to report in person or by telephone, to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in Ketchikan before the start of processing operations in the Craig/Klawock fishery. These reporting requirements are specified by regulation 5 AAC 39.130 (g).

Processors are reminded that as per 5 AAC 39.130 (c) **fish tickets must be submitted to the department within seven days after landing.** Fish tickets for the 2000 season should indicate the total poundage delivered, whether the product was fresh or brined when the weight was taken, and the total number of blades harvested by each permit holder. Fish tickets should be sent to the Alaska Department of Fish and

Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, 2030 Sea Level Drive #205, Ketchikan, Alaska 99901, or submitted to a representative of the department before leaving the fishing area.

Fishers and processors are advised that they must submit fish tickets with estimated weights to satisfy this requirement and then when accurate weighing, grading, and processing has been completed they must update the department with this information using a logbook supplied by the department. **Processors will be required under 5 AAC 39.130 (c) (1) “other information the department may require” to provide the delivered weight and exvessel value by grade of landed spawn-on-kelp product.** This information is crucial so the department can provide the Alaska Board of Fisheries a comprehensive outlook on the spawn-on-kelp fisheries for their consideration of proposals during their next herring meeting.

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to ADF&G permits required to operate a pound and harvest kelp for transport into a pound, operators must also obtain a 2000 entry permit (L21C) from the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission. Individuals who do not have pound permits, but are assisting in the operation of the fishery in any manner, must have a 2000 crew member license. All commercial vessels used in the fishery (including skiffs) are required to have a 2000 vessel license with the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission. Fishers are required to display the permanent vessel license plate (ADF&G number) on both sides of the hull, cabin, or mast in permanent symbols at least 12-inches high and with lines at least one-inch wide that contrast with the background.

Applications for vessel and interim use permits are available from all offices of ADF&G or they can be obtained by writing the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, 8800 Glacier Hwy #109, Juneau, Alaska 99801-8079. **Fishers are reminded to apply for all licenses well in advance of the fishery since it often takes up to three to four weeks to obtain them.** Crew member licenses may be obtained from local vendors in most communities.

REQUIREMENTS OF OTHER AGENCIES

Prospective pound operators are advised to consider the requirements that other agencies may have to construct and operate pounds in the Craig/Klawock fishery. Pound operators are urged to contact the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) (907-465-3400), the U.S. Forest Service (907-826-3271), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) (907-747-6940), and the United States Coast Guard (907-228-0340) to determine other requirements or restrictions.

United States Coast Guard

Structures such as floating fish pens are subject to the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 33, Part 64. This regulation requires an owner to apply for a Coast Guard permit and to install and maintain a light or other private aid to navigation if the Coast Guard determines it to be necessary to protect maritime navigation.

The proposed pens of the Craig/Klawock spawn-on-kelp pound fishery do not require permits for private aids to navigation at this time, provided the owners:

1. Place two signs on opposite corners of the structure. These signs will be worded "Danger, Fish Pens" (Figure 5).
2. Place a single, all-points white light on one corner of structures less than 400 square feet in size.
3. Place a single, all-points white light on every corner of structures larger than 400 square feet in size.
4. Anchor fish pens within the boundary area specified by this permit.

If all these conditions are not met, the permit holder must apply to the Coast Guard for an individual "Private Aids to Navigation Permit." If you have questions, call the Coast Guard Aids to Navigation office, at 463-2245.

PRIVATE LANDS

Some of the area in which pounds may be operated is adjacent to privately owned lands. Pound operators should contact the landowners if they intend to use any of that land above mean high tide. Private land owners include the Klawock/Heenya Corporation, Shaan-Seet Corporation, and Sealaska Corporation. Figure 3 shows the approximate areas of privately held lands in the Craig/Klawock area.

Table 1. Craig/Klawock stock size and bait harvests, 1987-1999.

YEAR	MILES OF SPAWN (year)	BIOMASS (TONS)	BAIT QUOTA	BAIT HARVEST
87-88 ^a	5.0 ('87)	3,080	2,200	2,014
88-89	27.0 ('88)	16,350	1,810	1,730
89-90	31.7 ('89)	19,800	3,150	3,221
90-91	30.0 ('90)	18,350	2,841	3,272
91-92	22.0 ('91)	17,800	2,281	2,295
92-93 ^b	23.0 ('92)	12,350	1,362	629
93-94	8.4 ('93)	7,996 (ASA)	760	636
94-95	8.0 ('94)	6,778 (ASA)	617	124
95-96	5.5 ('95)	6,262 (ASA)	558	34
96-97	9.9 ('96)	6,755 (ASA)	615	517
97-98 ^c	13.2 ('97)	7,018 (ASA)	455	254
98-99	11.0 ('98)	6,951 (ASA)	450	254
99-00	15.4 ('99)	6,013 (ASA)	375	350

^a Reduced to 1,600 tons on the grounds.

^b First year bait quota was split between pound fishery 85%:15%.

^c First year bait quota was split between pound fishery 60%:40%.

Table 2. Craig/Klawock herring roe-on-kelp fishery summaries, 1992-1999.

FISHERIES INFORMATION	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1998
Herring quota	403	240	135	109	100	200 ^a	500 ^b	650 ^c	500
Product quota	32.3	19.2	10.8	8.7	8.0	8.0	40	28	40
Total harvest (tons)	25.7	5.7	16.5	25.4	37.25	23	22.4	36	22.4
Exvessel value	\$180,000	\$47,882	\$364,199	\$1,000,000	\$1,490,000	\$270,306	\$152,203	\$212,121	\$152,203
Aver. Price/pound	\$3.50	\$4.17	\$11.00	\$19.00	\$20.00	\$6.00	\$3.39	\$2.94	\$3.39
Aver. Income/landing	\$784.70	\$2,081.00	\$4,388.00	\$5,107	\$9,700	\$1,890	\$1,072	\$2,060	\$1,072
Number of applicants	531	389	257	241	195	218	170	161	170
Number of pounds in fishery	248	209	147	159	162	119	112	70	112
Number of landings	229	23	83	146	154	143	148	103	148
Herring allocation (tons)	1.6	1.15	1	.7	.6	.7	4.46	N/A	4.46
Blade quota (tons)	8.0	6.4	3.75	2.9	2.67	2.6	13	9.1	13
Blade allocation	310	292	233	174	156	^d	^e	^f	^b
Total kelp harvest (tons)	7.8	3.7	3.0	3	2.6	3.2	3.47	2.9	3.47
Herring spawning dates	3/15 - 4/10	3/26 - 4/21	3/23-4/12	3/27-4/9	3/22-4/12	4/7-4/14	3/19-4/8	3/23-3/28	3/19-4/8
Miles of spawn	22.0 ('91)	23.0 ('92)	8.4 ('93)	8.0 ('94)	5.5 ('95)	9.9 ('96)	13.2 ('97)	15.4 ('98)	13.2 ('97)
Stock biomass (tons)	17,800	12,350	7,996	6,778	6,262	6,755	7,018	6,951	7,018
Seining opened/closed	3/18 - 3/23	4/17 - 4/28	4/5-4/18	3/28-4/14	3/28-4/14	3/17-4/20	3/17-4/20	3/17-4/21	3/17-4/20

^a 100 tons added on to original pound GHL from unharvested winter food and bait herring fishery in Section 3-B.

^b 200 tons added on to original pound GHL from unharvested winter food and bait herring fishery in Section 3-B.

^c 350 tons added on to original pound GHL from unharvested winter food and bait herring fishery in Section 3-B.

^d 100 blades for single-closed pound, 150 blades for multiple-pound permit holder, and 300 blades for open-pound permits.

^e 120 blades for a single-closed pound, 180 blades for a multiple-pound permit holder, 360 blades for single-open pound, and 400 blades for a multiple-permit open pound.

^f 155 blades for a single-closed pound, 235 blades for a multiple-pound permit holder, 470 blades for a single-open-pound, 520 blades for a multiple-permit open pound.

Table 3. Summary of harvest by pound type in the 1999 Craig/Klawock pound fishery.

Pound Type	Landings	Average Pounds Landed	Average Value of Landing	Total Pounds Landed	Percent of Total Wt Landed	Total Value	Percent of Total Value
Single Closed	13	737	\$2,465	9,576	13 %	\$32,040	15 %
Multiple Closed	64	752	\$2,615	47,355	66 %	\$164,771	78 %
Single Open	23	54	\$578	12,799	18 %	\$13,299	6 %
Multiple Open	3	767	\$670	2,302	3 %	\$2,011	1%
Total	103	578	\$1,582	72,032		\$212,121	

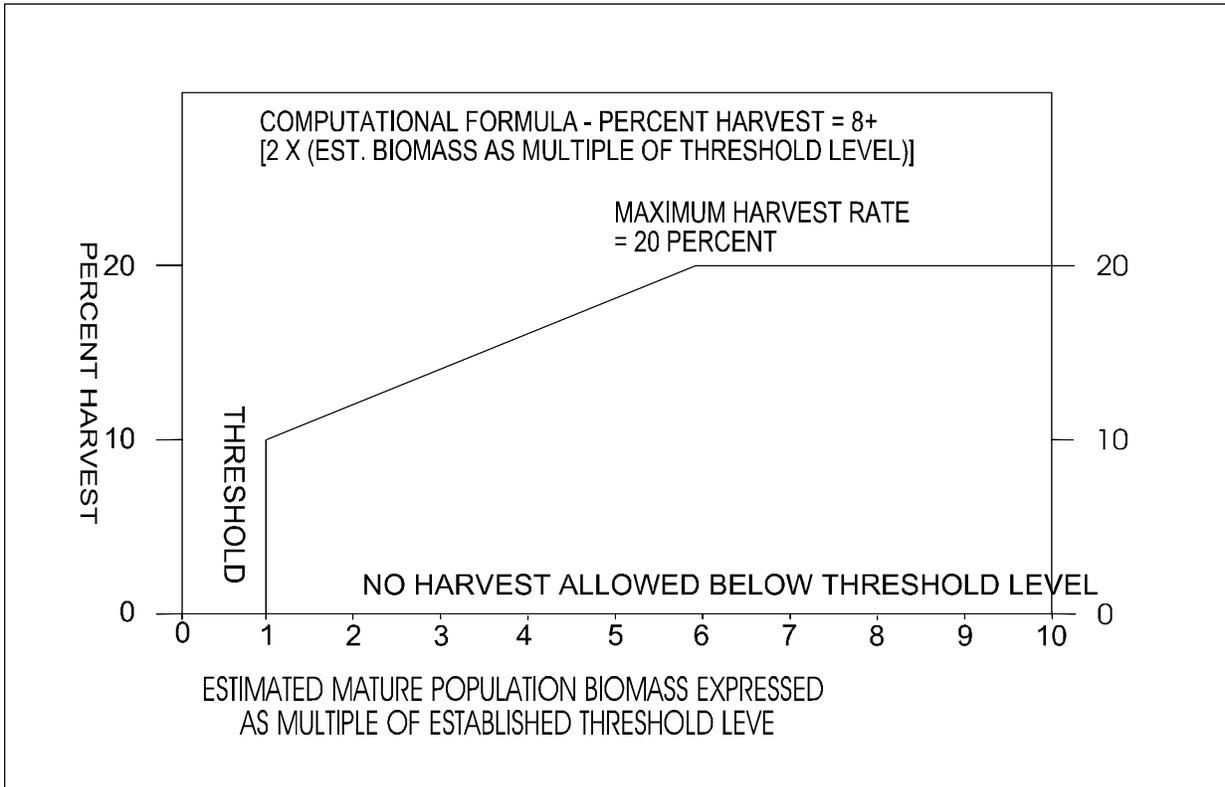


Figure 1. Generalized harvest strategy for Southeast Alaska herring stocks showing allowable percent annual harvest related to estimated biomass of mature stock expressed as a multiple of the established harvest threshold level.

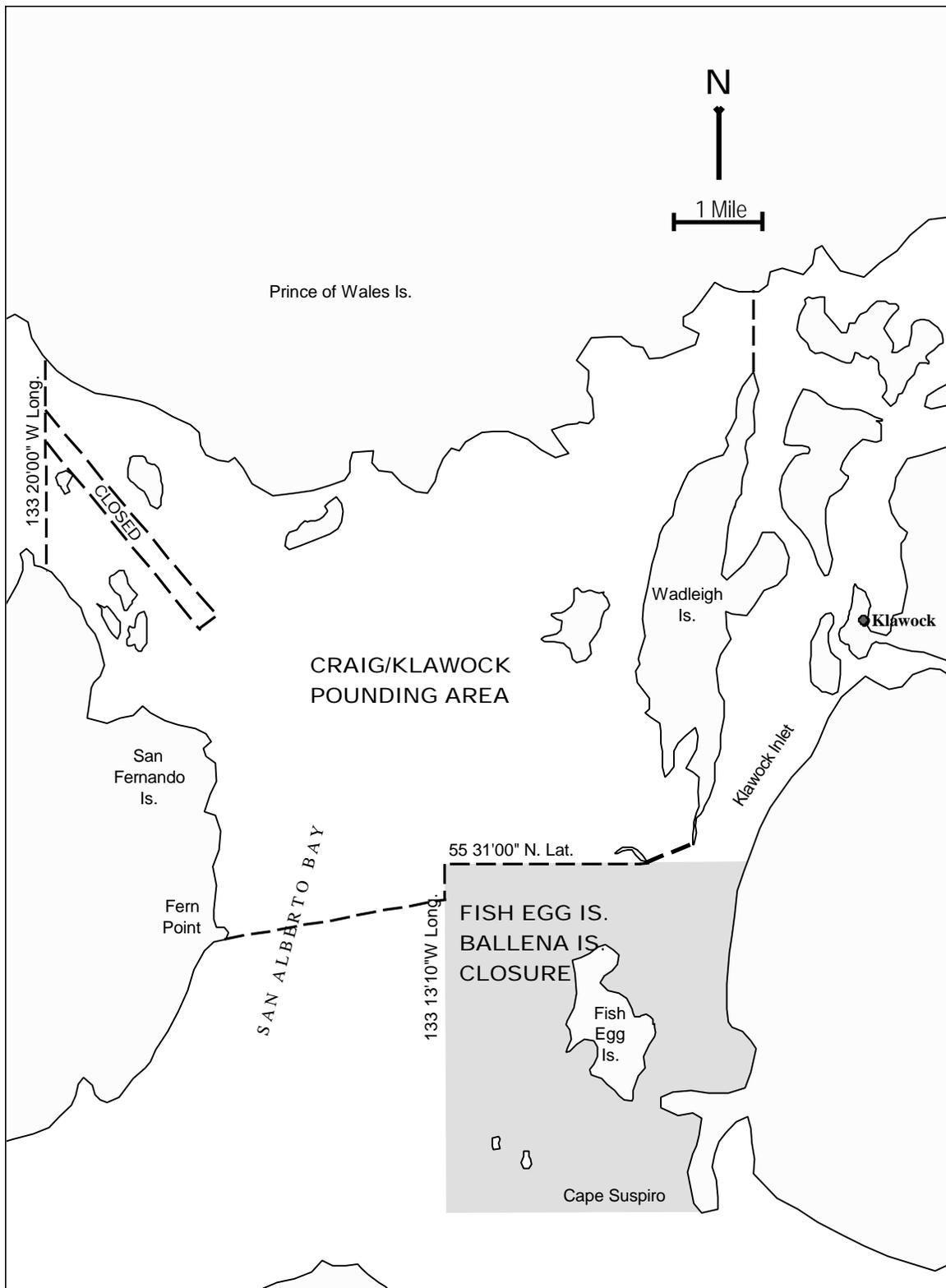


Figure 2. Open area for Craig/Klawock pound fishery.

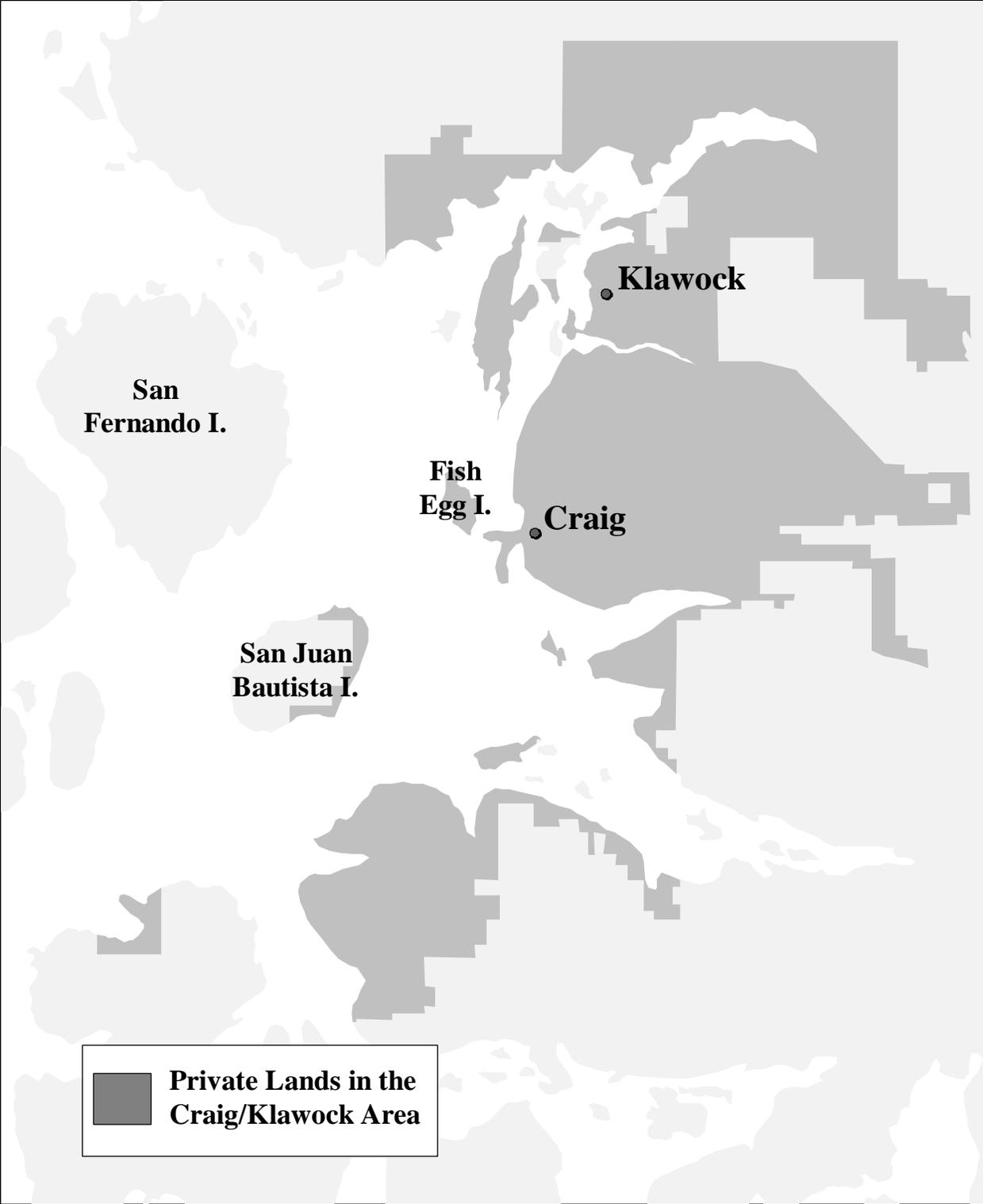


Figure 3. Private lands in the Craig/Klawock area.

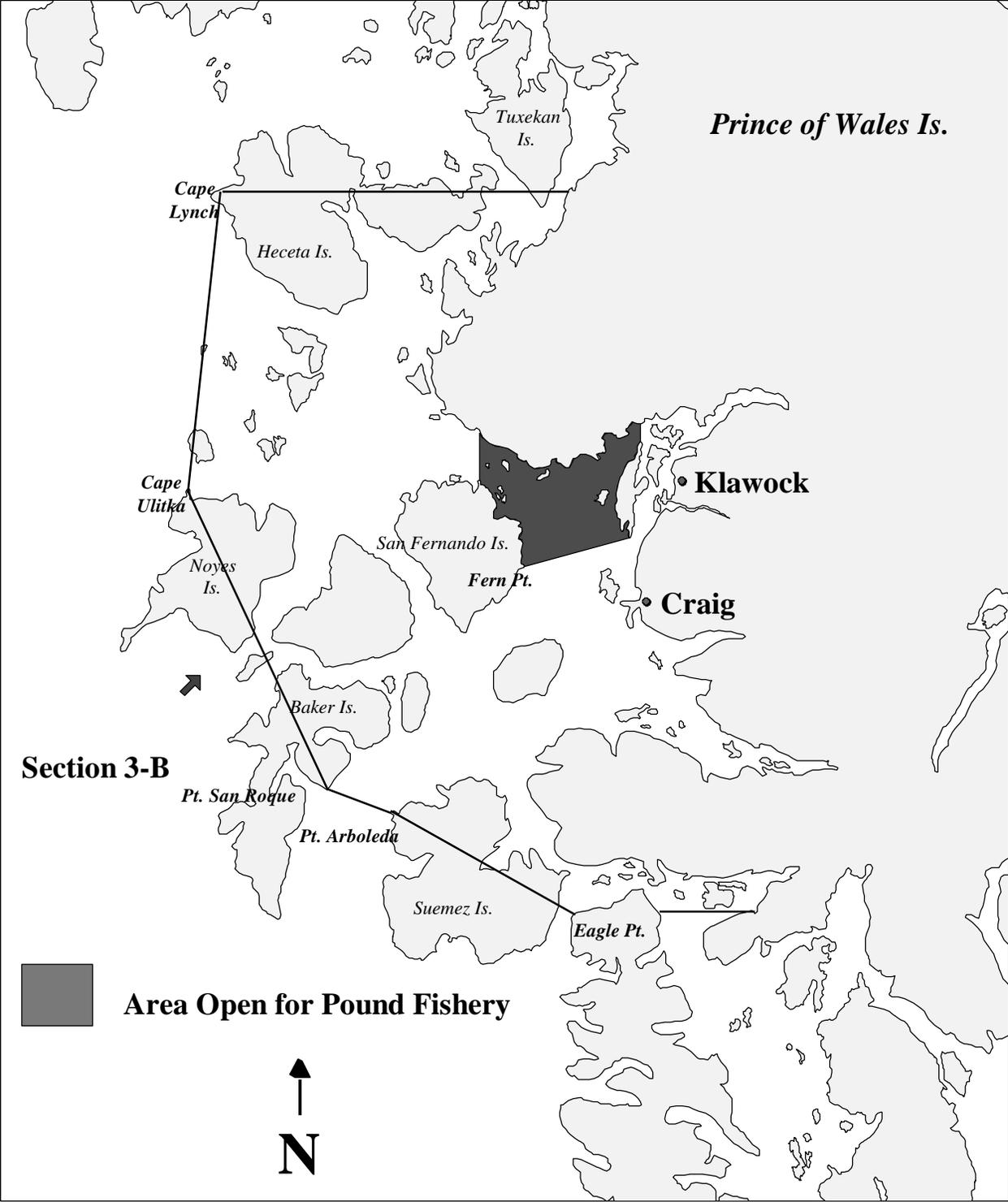
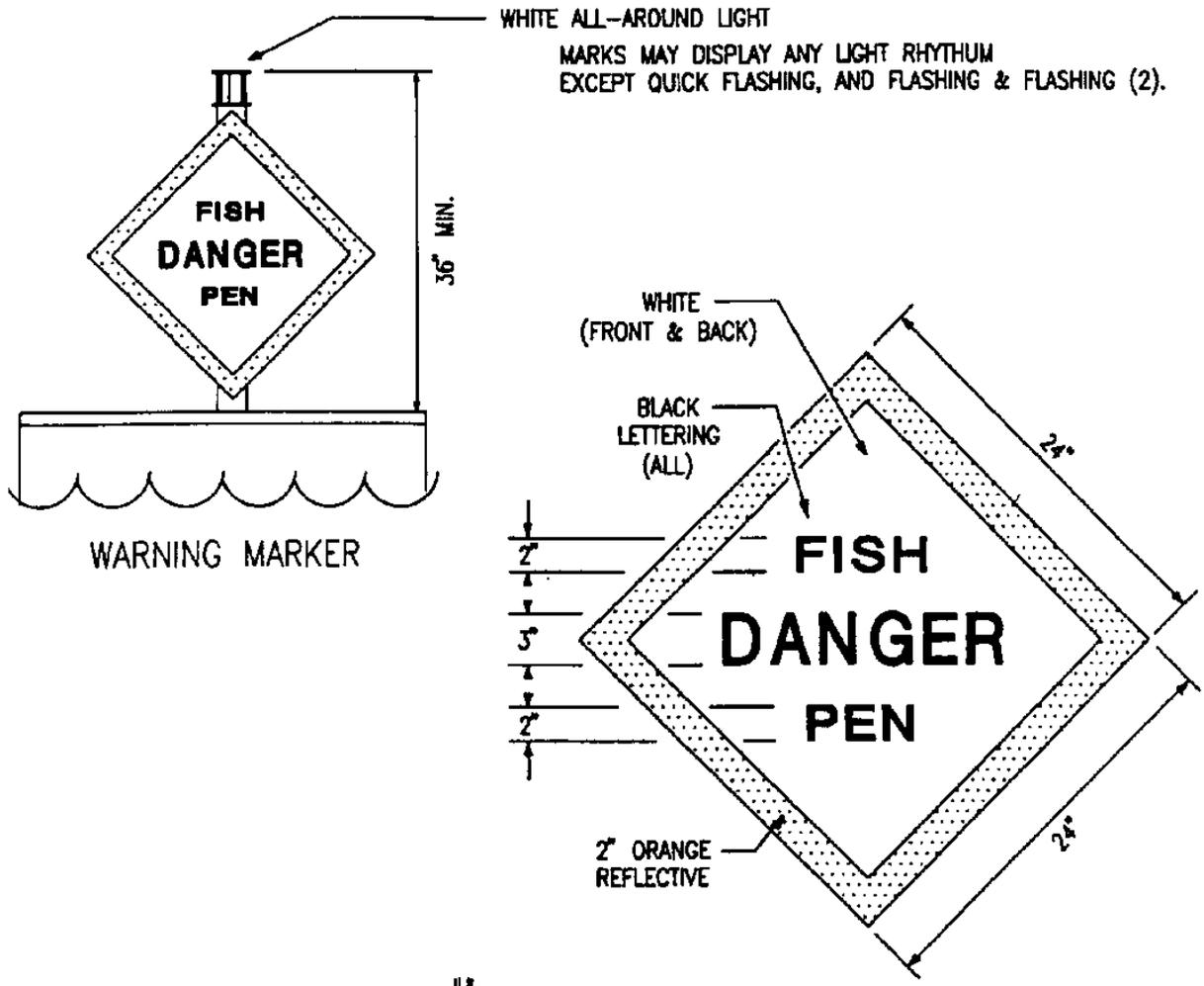
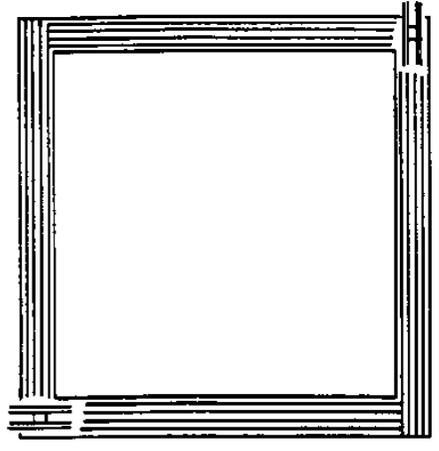


Figure 4. Section 3-B.



WARNING MARKER



MARKING / LIGHTING LOCATIONS

ALL PENS REQUIRE A TWO-SIGN MARKER PLACED ON OPPOSITE CORNERS AS SHOWN.

ALL PENS LESS THAN 400 SQ. FT. REQUIRE AN ALL-AROUND WHITE LIGHT ON ONE CORNER MARKER.

PENS LARGER THAN 400 SQ. FT. ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE AN ALL-AROUND WHITE LIGHT ON EACH MARKER.

Figure 5. Coast Guard requirements for marking pounds.

LIST OF MANAGEMENT CONTACTS

Following are Division of Commercial Fisheries contacts regarding this management plan:

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During the herring spawn-on-kelp pound fishery, information may also be obtained from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Office in Craig, Alaska, located at Suite 302 Westwind Plaza, telephone number 1-907-826-2563.

ADA Publications Statement

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game administers all programs and activities free from discrimination on the basis of sex, color, race, religion, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, or disability. For information on alternative formats available for this and other department publications, contact the department ADA Coordinator at (voice) 907-465-4120, (telecommunication device for the deaf) 1-800-478-3648.