

KODIAK MANAGEMENT AREA  
COMMERCIAL FOOD/BAIT HERRING FISHERY  
HARVEST STRATEGY  
2002

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

The 2002 Kodiak food/bait herring fishery may open as a cooperative fishery on October 1, 2002. The fishery may occur on Kodiak herring stocks in that portion of the Uganik District south of the latitude of Miner's Point with a 72 ton guideline harvest level (GHL) and the Eastside District with a 62 ton GHL. The remaining districts are either closed due to the low Kamishak herring biomass estimates or are areas where the GHL would be less than 10 tons and would not be manageable for the department.

# **KODIAK FOOD/BAIT HARVEST STRATEGY**

## ***Introduction***

The Kodiak Management Area (KMA) commercial food/bait herring fishery has a long history, dating back to 1912. Early harvests were primarily utilized for food and reduction products; these harvests far surpassed current levels. Since the early 1960s the harvest has been utilized mainly as bait for crab and longline fisheries. This harvest strategy will summarize current regulations and the management of the fishery during the 2002 season.

In recent years, the majority of the harvest from the food/bait fishery has occurred in the northeast Shelikof Strait of the KMA (Figure 1) with the fishery targeting a mix of Kodiak and Kamishak herring stocks. The Kamishak Bay District Herring Management Plan (5 AAC 27.465) outlines criteria for the management of the Kamishak sac roe fishery and provides for a harvest allocation for the Kodiak food/bait fishery, based on the Kamishak spawning biomass. The Kamishak spawning biomass has been below the minimum threshold for the last five years. The Kamishak management plan stipulates that when the Kamishak stock herring biomass is below threshold then the Kamishak Bay sac roe fishery and the Kodiak food/bait fishery in Shelikof Strait north of the latitude of Miner's Point will remain closed (Figure 2).

For the remainder of the KMA, the food//bait fishery is allowed to occur in those districts that have strong spawning stocks of Kodiak herring. The management plan that guides the KMA food/bait fishery is described in the Kodiak Area 2002-03 Commercial Herring Fishing Regulation 5 AAC 27.535.

## ***Guideline Harvest Levels and Open Districts***

The food/bait herring fishery guideline harvest levels (GHLs) are based on the preceding sac roe herring fishery season's GHLs, with 10% of this GHL, by district, established for the food/bait fishery.

The 2002 KMA food/bait fishery may occur on Kodiak herring stocks in that portion of the Uganik District south of the latitude of Miner's Point at 57° 54.00' North latitude (Figure 2) with a 72 ton GHL and the Eastside District with a 62 ton GHL (Figure 3). The remaining districts are either closed due to the low Kamishak herring biomass estimates or are areas where the GHL would be less than 10 tons and would not be manageable for the department.

## **LIMITED ENTRY**

In 2001, the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) designated the KMA food/bait herring fishery a limited entry fishery. In July 2002, the CFEC issued limited entry permits to nine individuals based primarily on fishery participation in the 1994-1998 seasons. Five combination purse seine/gillnet and four trawl permits have been issued.

## **2001 CO-OP FISHERY**

For the 2001 season CFEC issued interim use permits to 13 permit holders based on recent years participation in the fishery. These permit holders requested the department allow a cooperative (co-op) fishery to occur due to the relatively small GHLS and to alleviate department concerns of overharvest due to the relatively large fleet. All individuals that were issued interim use permits formed a cooperative arrangement. The department and CFEC agreed to allow a co-op fishery to occur under certain guidelines.

All 13 interim use permit holders had to agree to the proposed co-op fishery before the department would open the food/bait fishery. The department also stipulated that only one fishing vessel would be allowed on the grounds to conduct the co-op harvest, and a department observer would be onboard the fishing vessel to monitor the fishery and collect catch samples. The 13 interim permit holders were fully responsible for determining which vessel would conduct the co-op harvests, all marketing aspects, and all costs associated with harvesting or tendering the herring. The co-op fishery was successfully conducted with 115 tons harvested, slightly exceeding the 107 ton GHLS.

## **2002 CO-OP FISHERY**

Several permit holders have requested that the department allow a co-op fishery for the 2002 season. The department will allow a fishery under the same guidelines as those for the 2001 season.

All nine of the CFEC permit holders must notify the department in writing that they support a co-op fishery before the department will open the food/bait fishery. The department is also considering opening the fishery prior to the regulatory opening date, October 1, to facilitate market needs. This earlier opening will only occur if requested by the permit holders and if it is approved by the Division of Commercial Fisheries director. The department will allow only one catcher vessel on the grounds and will require that a department observer be present onboard the fishing vessel during the fishery. The department observer will also collect commercial catch samples for age composition data.

## **REGULATIONS**

### ***Season Dates***

The fishery will open only if all nine limited entry permit holders agree to conduct a co-op fishery. The fishery will be opened on October 1 or earlier if approved by the director of the Division of Commercial Fisheries. An emergency order and News Release will be issued to announce the fishery opening date and open areas. The department observer will close the fishery on the grounds by field announcement when the GHLS has been harvested for each district. A News Release will also be issued that announces the closure of each district after the GHLS has been harvested.

There will be no restrictions on the duration of fishing periods.

### ***Closed Waters***

Herring may not be taken in the closed waters described in the 2002-05 Kodiak Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations (5 AAC 18.350 ; pages 93-96). These closed waters are in effect for the food/bait herring fishery through October 31, 2002.

### ***Gear Restrictions***

Following are the gear restrictions by type for purse seine/gillnet and trawl permit holders for the Kodiak food/bait fishery. Only one gear type may be fished at a time for the combination permit holders.

#### **Gear Code**

- 01 - Purse Seines
  - Maximum length: 150 fathoms
  - Maximum depth: 1,625 meshes. For Area K there are no web size restrictions.
  
- 34 - Gillnets
  - Maximum length: 150 fathoms; mesh size: 2-1/8" to 2-1/2".
  - No depth restrictions.
  
- 07 - Trawl
  - No restrictions

Consult the 2002-03 Commercial Herring Fishing Regulations for a complete listing of all regulations.

### **FISH TICKETS**

All fish tickets must be completed and sent to the Kodiak Fish and Game office within a week of each landing.

Send to: Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
ATTN: Dennis Gretsch  
211 Mission Road  
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

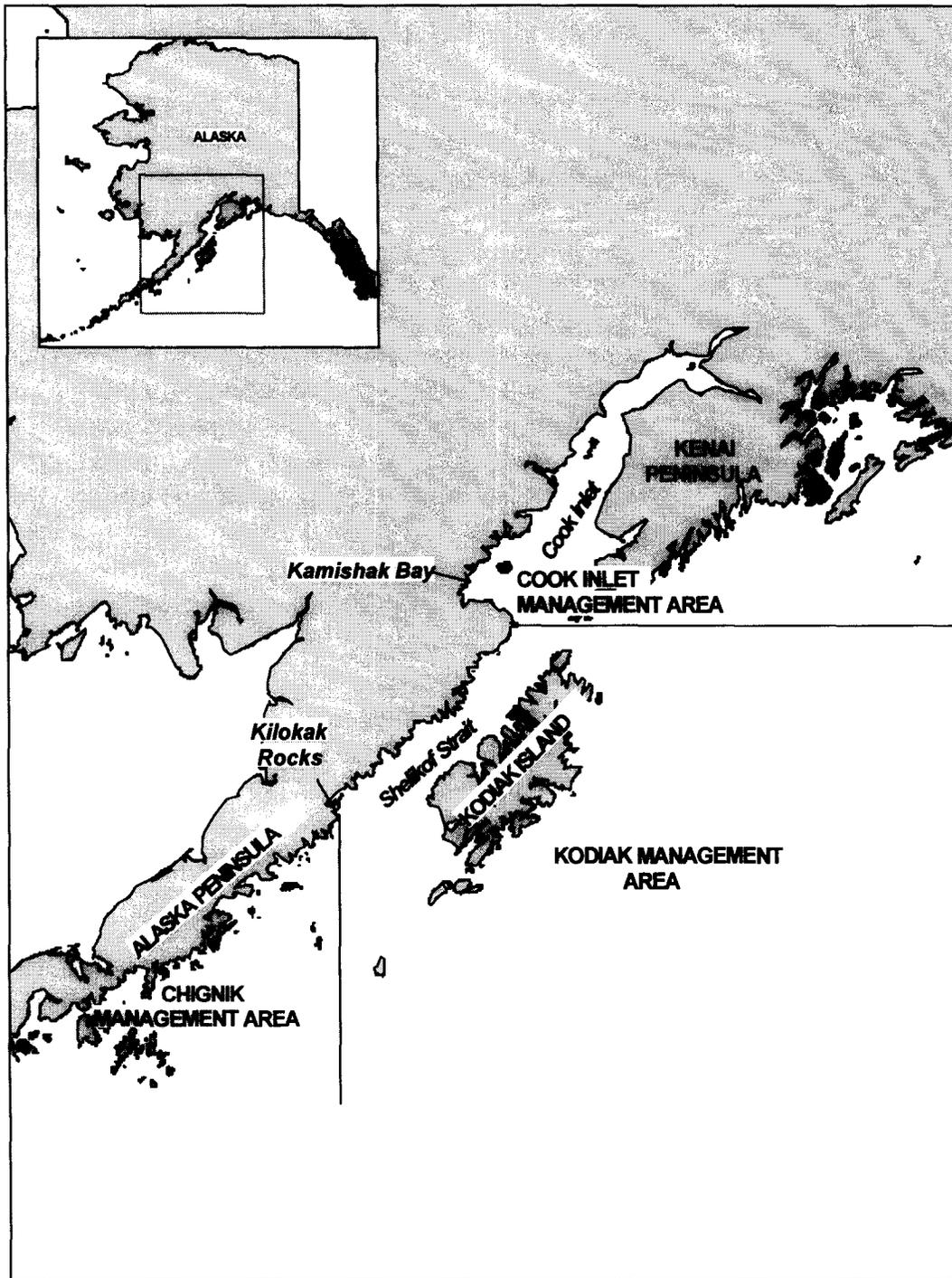


Figure 1. Map of southwestern Alaska emphasizing the Kodiak Management Area and its relationship to surrounding management areas.

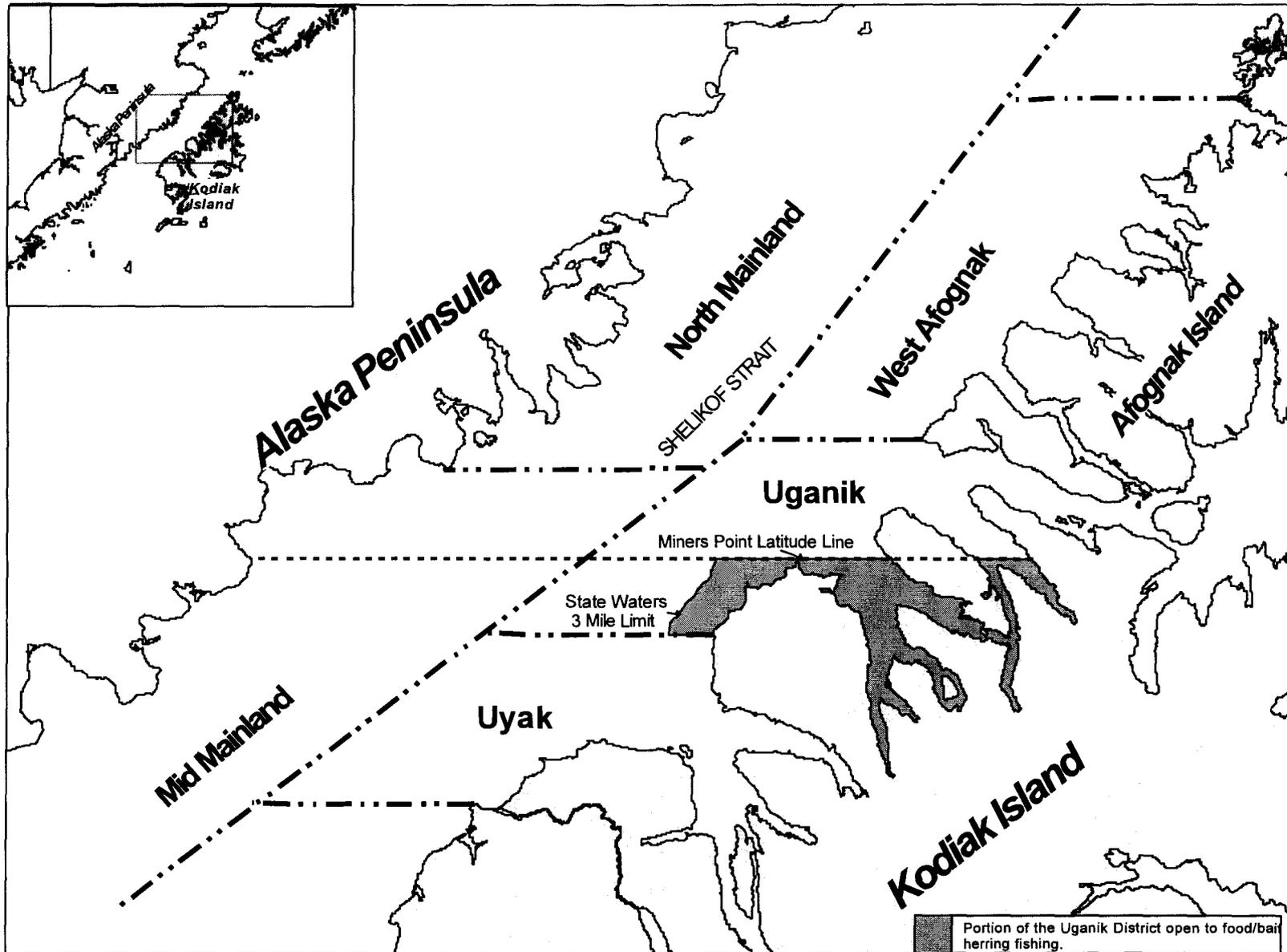


Figure 2. Map of the North Shelikof Strait and the Uganik District showing that portion south of the latitude of Miners Point that is open to food and bait herring fishing for the 2002 season.

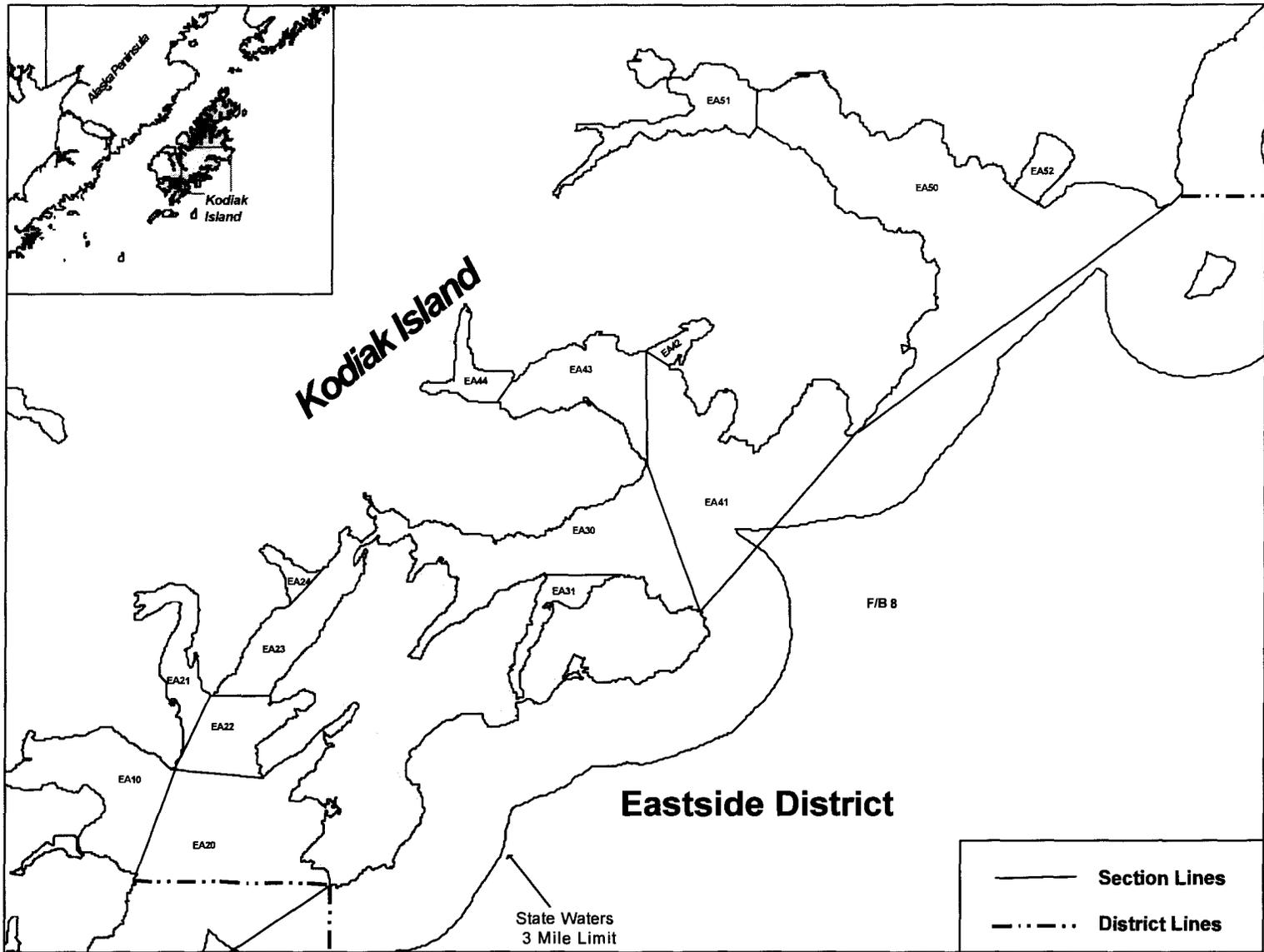


Figure 3. Map showing the Eastside Food and Bait District (F/B 8) and management sections.

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