The Prince William Sound Area (PWS) state-waters Pacific cod season will close to vessels fishing with pot and longline gear effective 12:00 noon September 1 and the parallel Pacific cod season will immediately open to pot and longline gear. The state-waters season will remain open to vessels fishing with jig gear.

The parallel Pacific cod season for pot and longline gear opening at 12:00 noon September 1 is established by emergency order (EO) to coincide with the season dates set by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for the Pacific cod “B” season in the adjacent federal Central Gulf of Alaska Regulatory Area (CGOA). The state-waters season for jig gear has been open since March 13 and will remain open until the GHL is achieved or the end of the regulatory season, December 31. The parallel season will close by EO for pot and longline gear to coincide with federal “B” season closures of the pot gear sector and the less than 50 foot hook and line (<50’ HAL) gear sector in the CGOA, respectively, when gear sector allocations are achieved.

There is a 24-hour delivery time requirement following closure of a groundfish fishery. Vessels participating in the state-waters Pacific cod season for pot gear must deliver all groundfish prior to participating in the parallel Pacific cod season.

Fishermen are reminded: 1) to obtain a PWS parallel Pacific cod season registration from ADF&G prior to fishing; 2) that participants using pot or longline gear in parallel Pacific cod fisheries must have a functioning, NMFS approved, vessel monitoring system (VMS) as described at https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/cwm; and, 3) to adhere to the federal seabird avoidance measures (SAM) which are required in all longline fisheries for groundfish in the Outside District of PWS. Additional information on SAM can be found at: https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/pr/seabird-avoidance-gear.
NMFS continues to prosecute the North Pacific Groundfish and Halibut Observer Program. Vessel operators participating in parallel groundfish and/or directed halibut fisheries are encouraged to become familiar with this federal program. Information on the observer program can be found can be found at: [http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/](http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/) or by contacting the NMFS Sustainable Fisheries Division in Juneau at (907) 586-7228.

Directed fishing for all groundfish species is closed in waters within 3 nautical miles of two Steller sea lion rookeries within PWS and certain waters are closed to fishing with groundfish pot gear (Figure 1; 5 AAC 28.250(a)). For specific regulatory language regarding Stellar sea lion protection areas contact NMFS in Kodiak at (907) 481-1780 or [https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/sslpm](https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/sslpm).

Bycatch limits by species or species aggregate for PWS are set by Emergency Order 2-GF-E-01-19 and may be found in the Central Region Groundfish Fisheries Outlook news release.

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Figure 1. Prince William Sound Area closures to groundfish pot gear, groundfish fishing, and to the state-waters Pacific cod season.