

Division of Commercial Fisheries
Sam Rabung, Director

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Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: July 7, 2021

Time: 2:30 p.m.

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Kuskokwim Bay Salmon Fishery Announcement #4

District 4 Commercial Fishery

Emergency Order 3-S-WB-04-21

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) for commercial fishermen in District W4, Kuskokwim Bay.

There is one commercial processor registered to buy in the Kuskokwim Bay Area; Please contact Jon Saarheim with WildFish Marketing at 907-236-6024 with questions regarding selling your catch. It is the commercial fisherman's responsibility to ensure that they have a market for their catch.

Permit holders must be in possession of a 2021 Kuskokwim Area commercial salmon permit and a government issued i.d. card or driver's license. All crewmembers must have a 2021 commercial crewmember's license or a 2021 State of Alaska commercial fishing permit.

All harvest information concerning this fishery are confidential until the close of the season, 5 AAC 39.135.

Commercial fishermen are encouraged to consult Fish and Game regulations prior to beginning commercial fishing operations.

District 4, Quinhagak:

Commercial fishing will open in District 4, Quinhagak for 2, 12-hour periods with 6-inch or less mesh gillnets that may not exceed 50 fathoms in length and not more than 45 meshes deep:

- 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, July 8
- 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday, July 10

District 4 consists of the Kuskokwim Bay between ADF&G regulatory markers located at the northernmost edge of the mouth of Weelung Creek and at the southernmost edge of the mouth of the Arolik River. Please refer to Figure 1 for a visual of District 4 waters.

Within District 4, the open area for this period has been reduced. The closed waters will be south of a line at lat 59° 45.266' N., north of a line at lat 59° 44.7036' N., and east of a line at long 161° 57.616' W. This will create a closed waters box around the Kanektok River mouth. The box will be approximately 500 yards to the north and south of the river mouth and extend approximately one mile offshore. Please refer to Figure 2 for a visual of the closed waters box. The GPS coordinates will be the legal definition of the closed waters. The remainder of District 4 will be open to commercial salmon fishing.

The fishing area of District 4 is being reduced temporarily for the conservation of Chinook salmon. The department has determined through communication with local fisherman that Chinook salmon mill near the mouth

of the Kanektok River and move with the tides in and out of the river mouth. This closed waters box will provide a sanctuary for Chinook salmon during commercial fishing periods, while still allowing fisherman an opportunity to harvest other salmon species.

In District 4, **Subsistence fishing will be closed during the following times:**

- 12:01 a.m. Thursday, July 8 until 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 9
- 12:01 a.m. Saturday, July 10 until 12:01 a.m. Sunday, July 11

ADF&G will assess the catches from W4 periods before deciding the next commercial fishing period.

Fishermen in Districts 4 are reminded that they may retain any portion of their catch for personal or subsistence use. Fish retained for personal or subsistence use from a commercial fishery must be reported and recorded in the space provided on an ADF&G fish ticket. Fishermen are also reminded that gillnet gear may not be operated in a manner that obstructs more than one half the width of any waterway. In the intertidal zone this restriction applies at all tide stages.

The Department will be closely monitoring commercial fishing periods to assess fishery performance and anticipates announcing additional commercial fishing periods as warranted. Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office, on the state web site (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), and local radio stations. Advisory Announcements will be faxed to area villages and local fish processing companies.

Under Alaska's Health Advisories 1, 2, 3, and 4, subsistence and commercial fishing is considered essential and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Advisories. COVID-19 Health Advisories may be found here: <https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-advisories/>.

For additional information concerning this advisory announcement:

ADF&G Bethel Office: Ben Gray (907) 543-2331 or Nick Smith (907) 543-2709

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District W-4, Kuskokwim Bay

Kuskokwim Management Area

As defined in 5 AAC 07.200, District 4 consists of Kuskokwim Bay between ADF&G regulatory markers located at the northernmost edge of the mouth of Weelung Creek and at the southernmost edge of the mouth of the Arctik River.

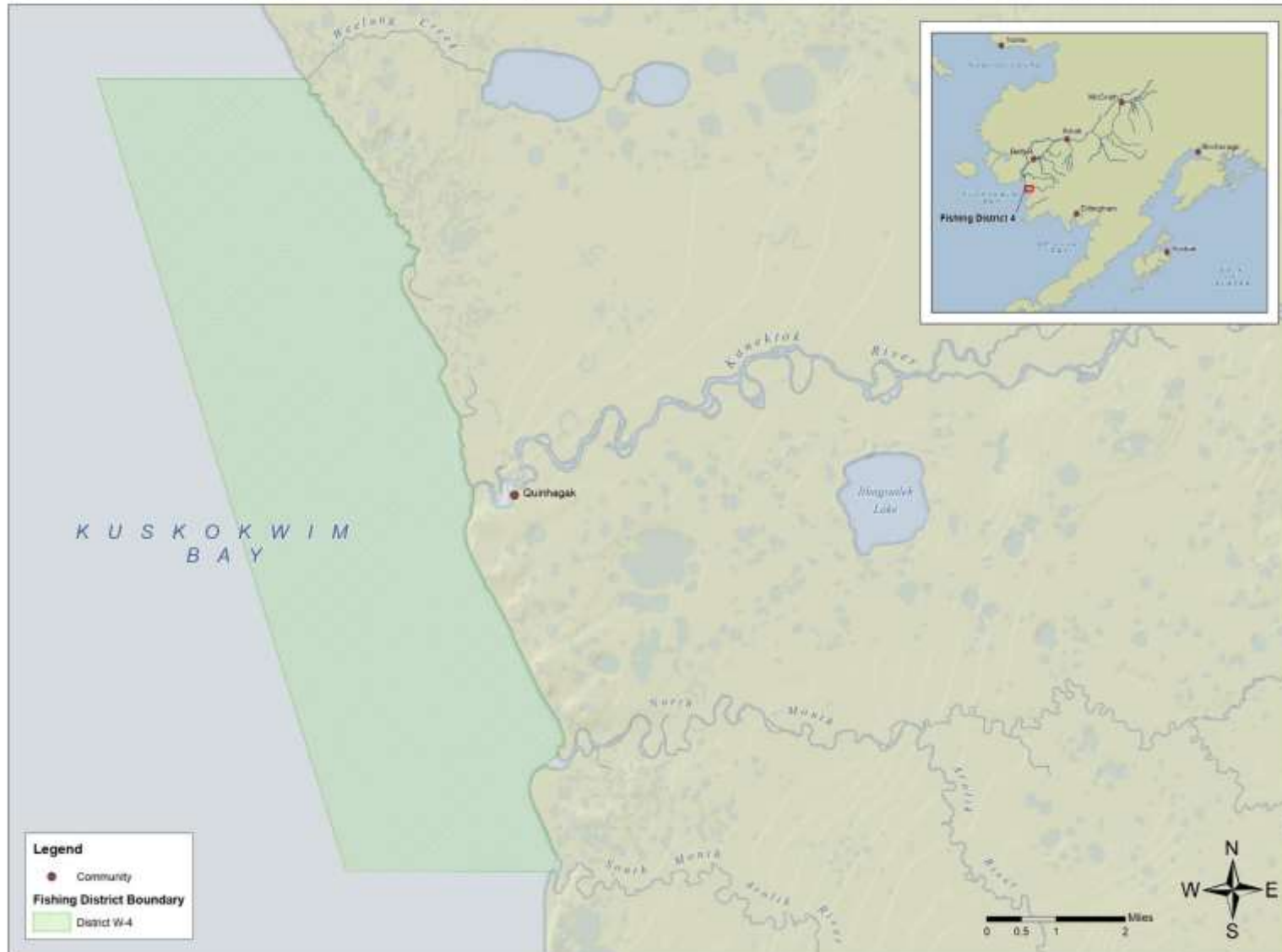


Figure 1. Map of District 4, Quinhagak.



Figure 2. Closed waters for District 4, Quinhagak.