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Advisory Announcement

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Cook Inlet Area

2024 Parallel Pacific Cod Season Opens to Pot and Longline Gear September 1

Emergency Order # 2-GF-H-08-24

The Cook Inlet Area parallel Pacific cod season will open to pot and longline gear effective 12:00 noon September 1.

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 and gear sectors 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).

There is a 24-hour delivery time requirement following closure of a groundfish fishery. Vessels participating in parallel Pacific cod “B” season must deliver all groundfish prior to participating in the parallel Pacific cod “A” season beginning January 1, 2025, unless closed earlier by NMFS.

Fishermen are reminded: 1) to obtain a Cook Inlet Area parallel Pacific cod season registration from ADF&G prior to fishing in state-waters; 2) of the requirement for fishermen using pot or longline gear in parallel Pacific cod fisheries to have a functioning, activated, 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 North Gulf District of the Cook Inlet Area. Additional information describing 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 at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/observers/> or by contacting the NMFS Sustainable Fisheries Division in Juneau at (907) 586-7228.

Regulation 5AAC 28.350 (b) closes certain waters on the west side of Cook Inlet and within Kachemak Bay (Figure 1) to groundfish pot gear.

Two rookeries within the Cook Inlet Area, Outer (Pye) Island and Sugarloaf Island remain closed to fishing with pot or longline gear during a parallel Pacific cod season to protect Steller sea lions. Waters within three

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nautical miles (nmi) of these locations are closed to vessel transit and waters within 10 nmi of these locations are closed to fishing with fixed gear via emergency order. Contact NMFS in Kodiak at ph: (907) 481-1780 or consult the NMFS website at <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/sslpm>.

Bycatch limits by species or species aggregate for the Cook Inlet Area are set by Emergency Order 2-GF-H-01-24 and may be found in the Central Region Groundfish Fisheries Outlook news release.

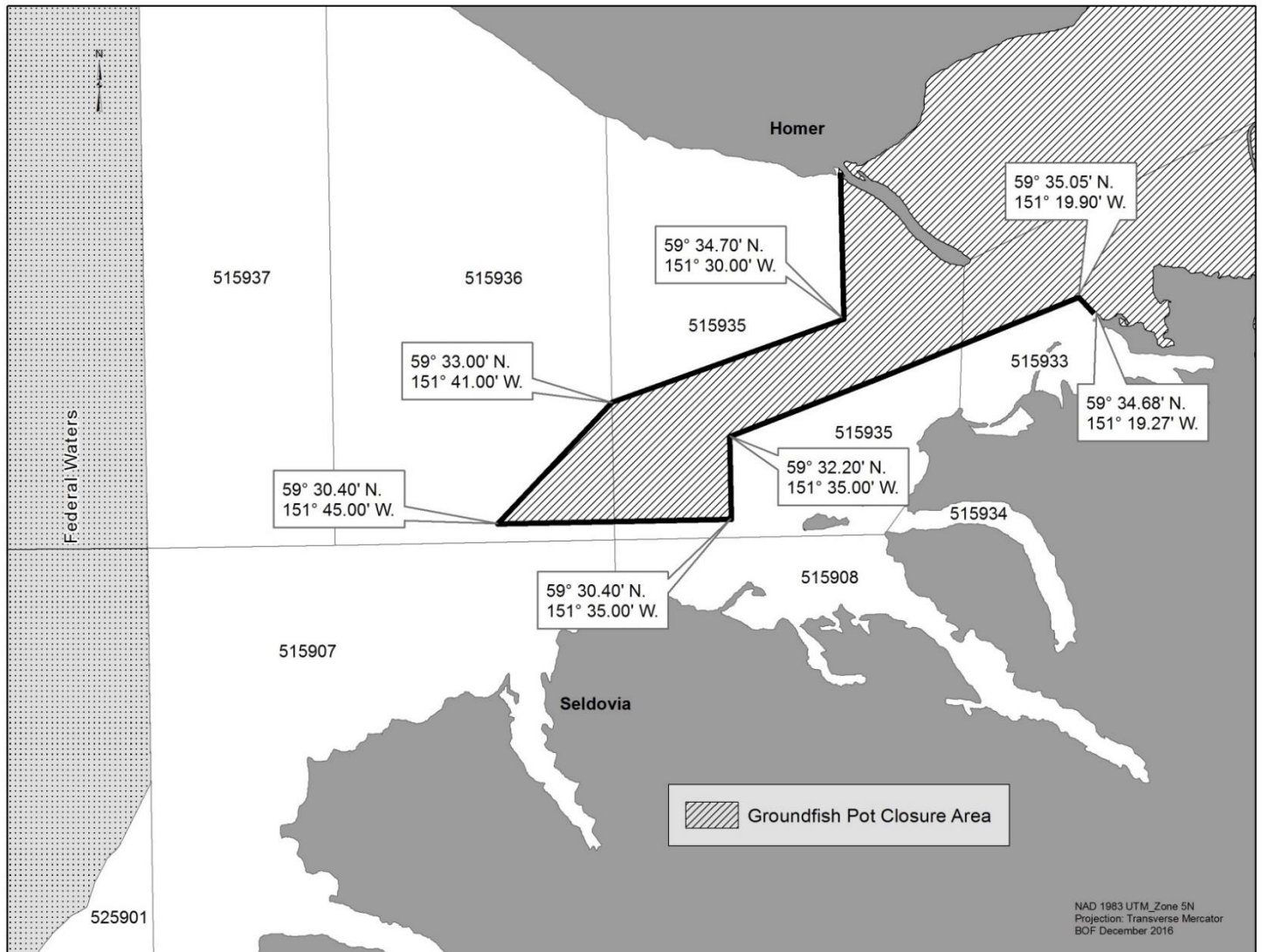


Figure 1. Kachemak Bay groundfish pot closure area with coordinates.

