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## **Advisory Announcement**

*For Immediate Release:*

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### **Cook Inlet Area**

### **2026 Parallel Pacific Cod Seasons Open January 1**

### **Emergency Order # 2-GF-H-02-26**

The 2026 Cook Inlet Area (CI) parallel Pacific cod seasons will open to vessels using pot, jig and longline hook gear at 12:01 a.m. January 1. Parallel Pacific cod seasons are established via emergency order (EO) to coincide with the season dates and gear types set by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for the initial Pacific cod season in the adjacent federal Central Gulf of Alaska Regulatory Area (CGOA). The parallel Pacific cod season will close by EO for each gear type to coincide with respective gear sector closures in the CGOA.

Fishers are reminded: 1) to obtain a 2026 gear specific CI parallel Pacific cod season registration from Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) prior to fishing; 2) of the requirement for fishers using pot or longline hook gear in parallel Pacific cod fisheries to have a functioning, activated, NMFS-approved vessel monitoring system (VMS) as described at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/enforcement/regional-vessel-monitoring-information> 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://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/bycatch/seabird-avoidance-gear-and-methods>.

Registrations are available online on the ADF&G website at:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacookinlet.groundfish> at ADF&G offices in Homer, Cordova, Anchorage, Soldotna and Kodiak and may be completed by fax or e-mail. Contact the Homer ADF&G office with groundfish regulatory and registration questions.

Regulation 5 AAC 28.350 (b) closes certain waters on the west side of CI and within Kachemak Bay to groundfish pot gear (Figures 1 and 2).

Two Stellar sea lion rookeries within CI, Outer (Pye) Island and Sugarloaf Island, remain closed to fishing with pot or longline hook gear during a parallel Pacific cod season (Figure 2). Waters within three nautical miles (nmi) of these locations are closed to vessel transit and waters within 10 nmi of these locations are closed to fishing with pot or longline hook gear by EO. For more information on sea lion closure areas contact NMFS in Kodiak at (907) 481-1780 or consult the NMFS website at <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/sslpm>.

Bycatch limits by species or species aggregate for CI are set by EO 2-GF-H-01-26 and may be found in the Central Region Groundfish Fisheries Outlook Advisory Announcement.

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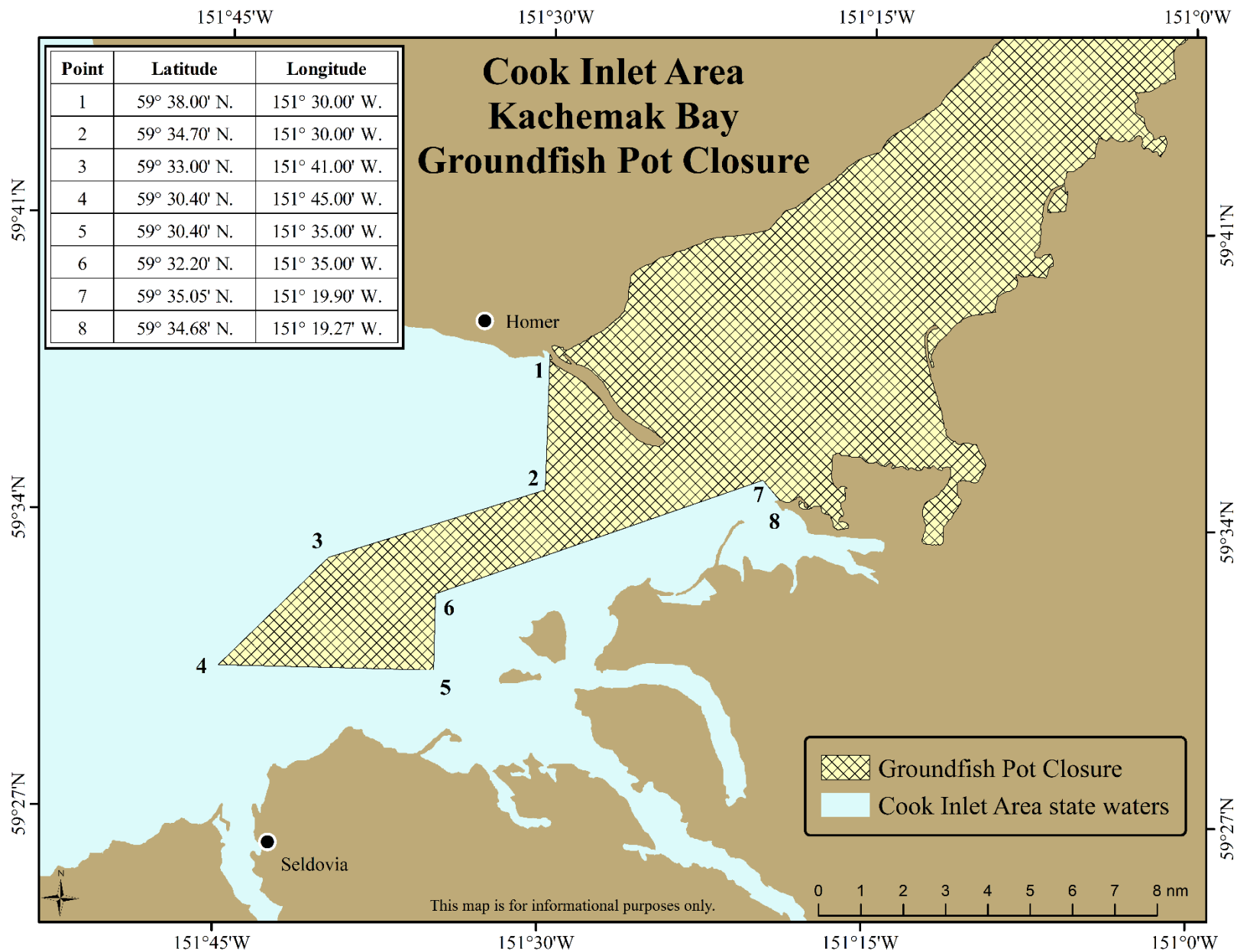


Figure 1. Kachemak Bay groundfish pot closure area with boundary coordinates.

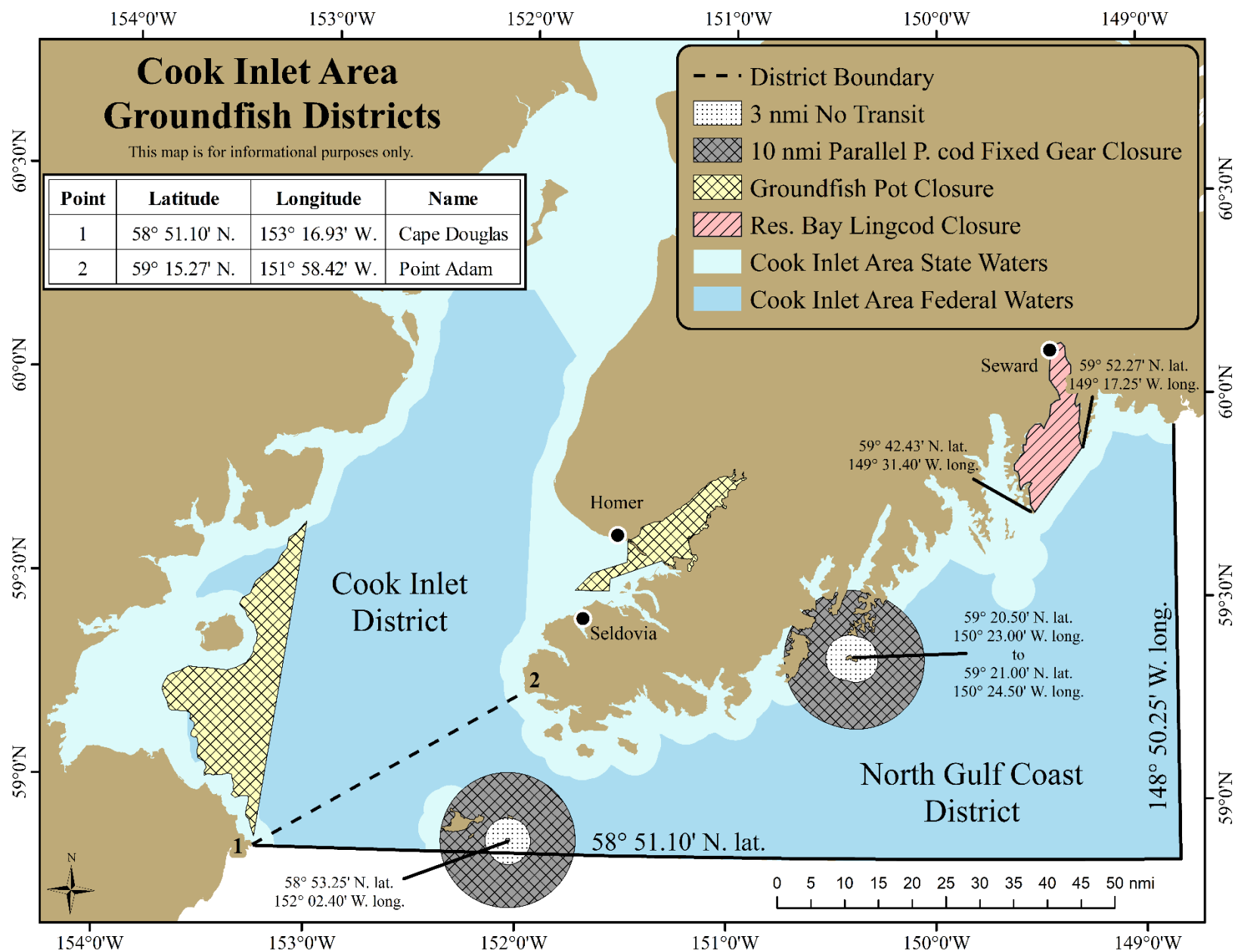


Figure 2.—Cook Inlet districts, groundfish pot closure areas, no transit areas and parallel P. cod fixed gear closure areas.