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## **Advisory Announcement**

*For Immediate Release:*  
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### **2026 Cook Inlet Area State-Waters Pacific Cod Season Opening for Pot Gear Emergency Order # 2-GF-H-03-26**

The Cook Inlet Area (CI) Pacific cod parallel season will close to vessels using pot gear at 12:00 noon on January 20 and the state-waters season will open to vessels using pot gear at 12:00 noon on January 21. The guideline harvest level (GHL) for the CI Pacific cod state-waters pot season is 1,354,000 pounds of which 398,000 pounds is available to vessels greater than 58 feet in length. The parallel season will remain open to jig and longline gear. There is a 24-hour delivery time requirement following closure of a groundfish fishery. All fish harvested in the parallel pot season must be landed prior to participating in the state-waters pot season. All groundfish pot gear must be removed from the water, except as provided in 5 AAC 28.332.

In the state-waters pot season no more than 60 groundfish pots may be operated from a vessel, pots may not be longlined, and each pot must display a buoy identification tag. Bycatch limits by species or species aggregate for CI are set by Emergency Order 2-GF-H-01-26 and may be found in the Central Region Groundfish Fisheries Outlook Advisory Announcement.

Area registration for the state-waters pot season is exclusive and registrations may be obtained through ADF&G offices in Homer, Cordova, Anchorage, Soldotna, and Kodiak or by appointment in Seward (contact Homer ADF&G office) and buoy tags may be obtained at Homer, Anchorage, and Seward ADF&G offices or by mail.

Pot fishing closure areas: Pacific cod may be taken in waters of CI except for groundfish pot closure areas within Kachemak Bay (5 AAC 28.350; Figure 1).

Due to the lapse in federal appropriations during fall 2025, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council will review an updated Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod stock assessment in early February 2026. If federal catch limits are revised, ADF&G will issue updated GHLs in a subsequent advisory announcement.

Two Stellar sea lion rookeries within CI, Outer (Pye) Island and Sugarloaf Island remain closed to fishing (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 FFP holders fishing with pot or longline hook gear. 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/sslpn>.

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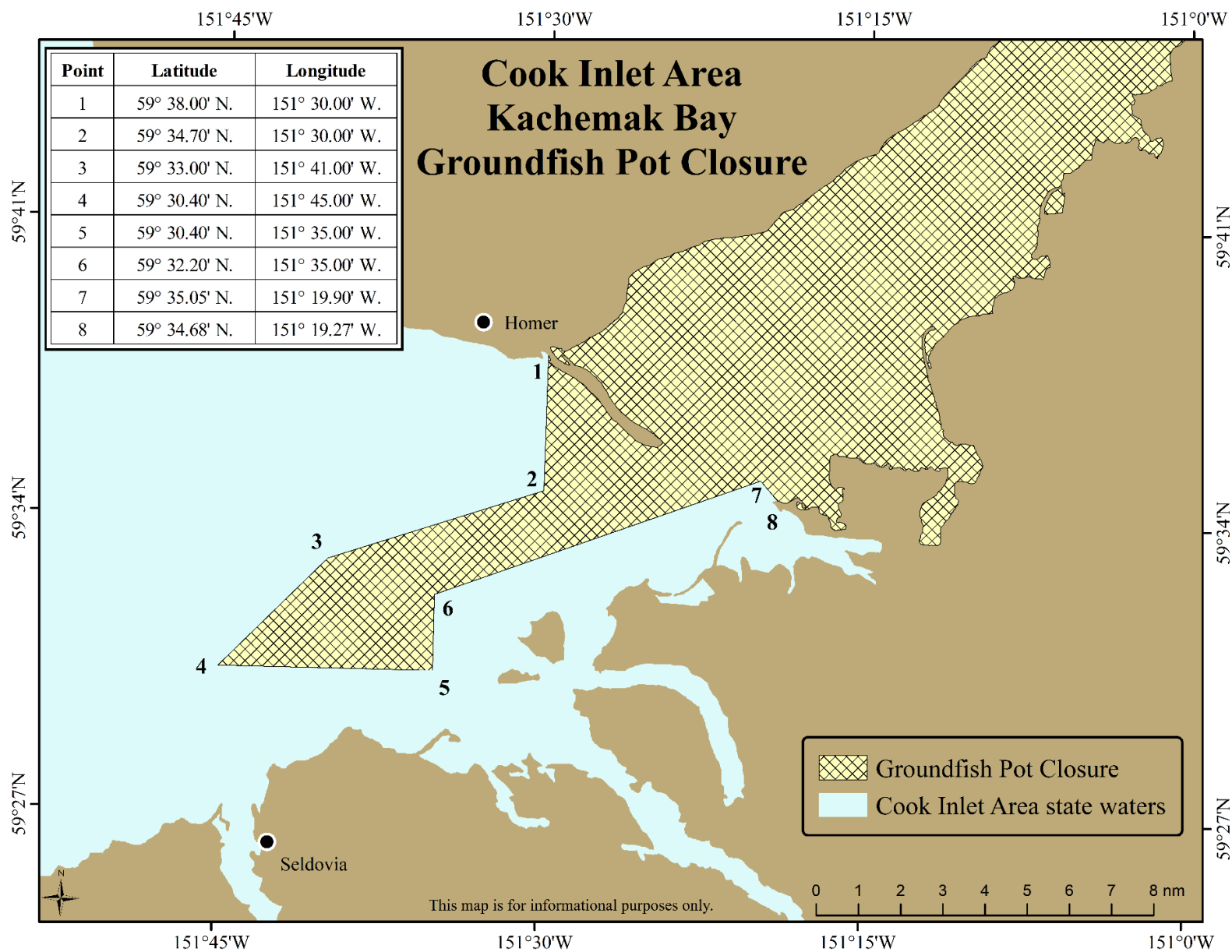


Figure 1. Kachemak Bay groundfish pot closure area with boundary coordinates.

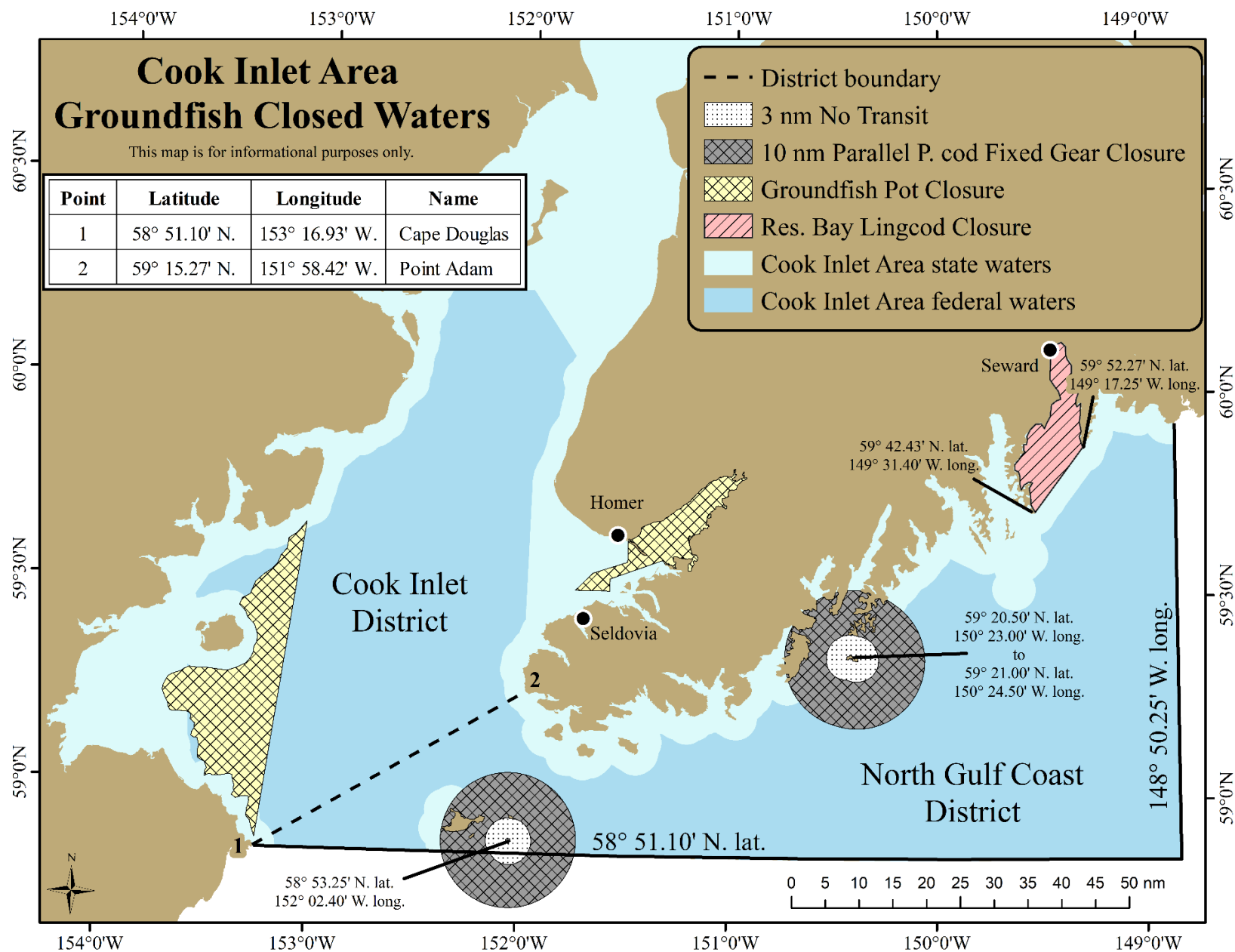


Figure 2.—Cook Inlet districts, groundfish pot closure areas, no transit areas and FFP holder P. Cod fixed gear closure areas.