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Advisory Announcement

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2026 PWS Area State-Waters Pacific Cod Season Opening for Pot Gear **Emergency Order # 2-GF-E-03-26**

The Prince William Sound Area (PWS) 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 PWS Pacific cod state-waters season is 1,500,000 pounds and is allocated 55% to pot and jig gear combined (833,000 pounds) and 45% to longline hook gear (682,000 pounds). The parallel season will remain open to jig and longline hook 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 28.232.

In the state-waters pot season no more than 60 groundfish pots may be operated from a vessel and each longlined pot must display a pot identification tag. If pots are not longlined each buoy must have a tag. Bycatch limits by species or species aggregate for PWS are set by Emergency Order 2-GF-E-01-25 and may be found in the Central Region Groundfish Fisheries Outlook Advisory Announcement.

Area registration for the state-waters 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 and Anchorage ADF&G offices, in Seward by appointment, or by mail.

Fishing area: Pacific cod may be taken in waters of PWS except for those waters of the Outside District east of 146° 15.12' W. long. (the latitude of Hook Point) (Figure 1, 5 AAC 28.267(e)(2))

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 Steller sea lion rookeries within PWS, Wooded Island (Fish Island) and Seal Rocks, remain closed to all FFP holders out to 3 nautical miles (Figure 1). 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>.

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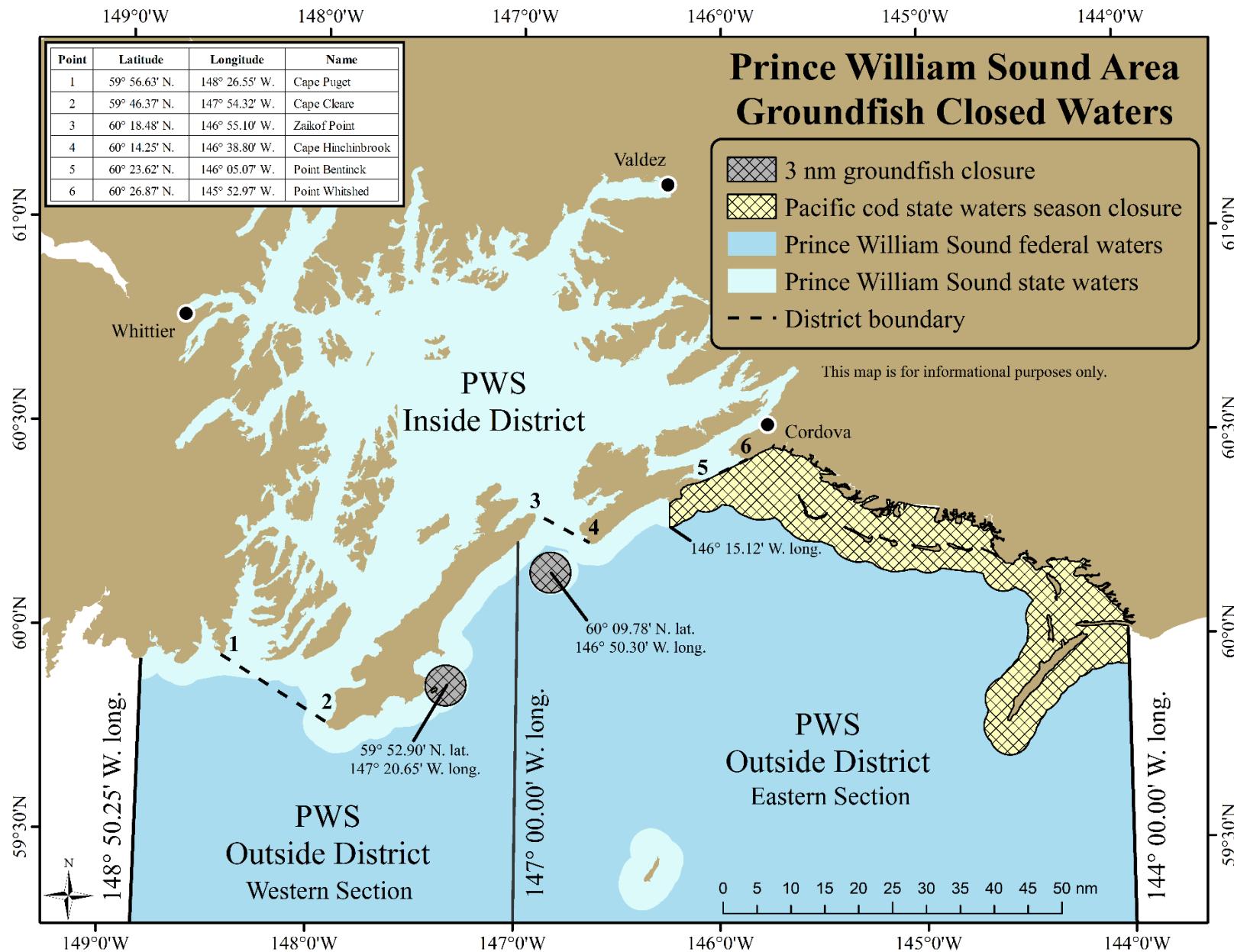


Figure 1. Prince William Sound districts, FFP groundfish closure areas and Pacific cod closed waters.