

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director*



Contact:
Maria Wessel, Shellfish Management Biologist

Cordova Area Office
P.O. Box 669
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Phone: (907) 424-3212
Fax: (907) 424-3235

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**FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND COMMERCIAL
WEATHERVANE SCALLOP FISHERY CLOSURE
EMERGENCY ORDER 2-SF-E-05-14**

The Prince William Sound Area commercial weathervane scallop season will be closed for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 seasons.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) biennially assesses weathervane scallops near Kayak Island. Recent surveys have documented a declining trend in weathervane scallop abundance and biomass in both the West Kayak Subsection (WKS) and the East Kayak Subsection (EKS). Commercial scallop fishing has been closed in the WKS since the 2010/11 season and in the EKS since the 2012/13 season.

The most recent weathervane scallop assessment near Kayak Island was completed in May 2014. The survey of the WKS and the EKS yielded estimated biomasses of 1.3 million and 1.1 million lb whole weight respectively. The age structure data indicates that 60% of the scallops in the WKS and 37% of the scallops in the EKS are aged 7 or less. While this suggests the potential for future recruitment to the fishery, there are currently low numbers of the large, older individuals which are targeted by the fishery. Although the biomass in the WKS has increased since the area was last surveyed in 2012 (0.67 million lb), the biomass in the EKS is at the lowest point in the history of the survey. Closing both Subsections to fishing for two seasons will allow the current biomass to reproduce and generate potential future recruitment and enable younger scallops to grow and recruit to the fishery. The next survey is scheduled for spring 2016.

For additional information contact ADF&G in Cordova.

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