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

Sam Cotten, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director

Contact:
Maria Wessel, Groundfish Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 424-3212
Fax: (907) 424-3235

Cordova Office
P.O. Box 669
Cordova, AK. 99574
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FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND AREA E
STATE-WATERS PACIFIC COD SEASON CLOSING TO JIG GEAR
PARALLEL PACIFIC COD SEASON OPENING TO JIG GEAR
EMERGENCY ORDER # 2-GF–E-08-15

The Prince William Sound (PWS) Area E **state-waters Pacific cod season will close to jig gear effective 12:00 noon June 10, 2015 and a parallel Pacific cod season will immediately open** and close by emergency order when the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) closes the Pacific cod jig season in the federal Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) area. The PWS **state-waters Pacific cod season remains open to vessels fishing with pot gear.**

Fishermen participating in the state-waters Pacific cod fishery with jig gear must deliver their harvest within 24 hours of the closure and prior to participating in the parallel season. In addition, fishermen are reminded that they must possess a PWS 2015 **parallel Pacific cod season registration** in order to participate in the PWS parallel Pacific cod fishery.

Big skate closed to retention on February 11, 2015 as bycatch in PWS waters by EO (#2-GF-E-05-15), and lingcod may not be retained prior to July 1. Detailed bycatch limits are listed below.

Steller Sea Lion rookery closures: Directed fishing for all groundfish species is closed in waters within 3 nautical miles of two Steller sea lion rookeries within PWS (Figure 1). For specific regulatory language contact NMFS in Kodiak at (907) 481-1780 or http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/regs/679b22.pdf.

Bycatch limits: Bycatch limits by species or species aggregate for the Prince William Sound Management Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery are set as follows by Emergency Orders 2-GF-E-01-15 and 2-GF-E-05-15, as round weight of bycatch as a percentage of the round weight of the target species:

(1) may retain 15 percent skate species in aggregate, except that;
  (A) big skate (*Raja binoculata*) may not be retained after noon February 11, 2015;

(2) may retain 15 percent shark species in aggregate (includes spiny dogfish);
(3) must retain all pollock;
(4) must retain all rockfish (and thornyhead) as required by 5 AAC 28.265 and any rockfish in excess of 5 percent in aggregate must be weighed and reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket;
    (A) no rockfish landing or combination of landings may exceed the 5-day trip limit of 3,000 pounds
(5) may retain 20 percent other groundfish in aggregate;
(6) may not retain lingcod prior to July 1; after July 1 may retain 20 percent lingcod.

For additional information, contact ADF&G in Cordova, at 907-424-3212.

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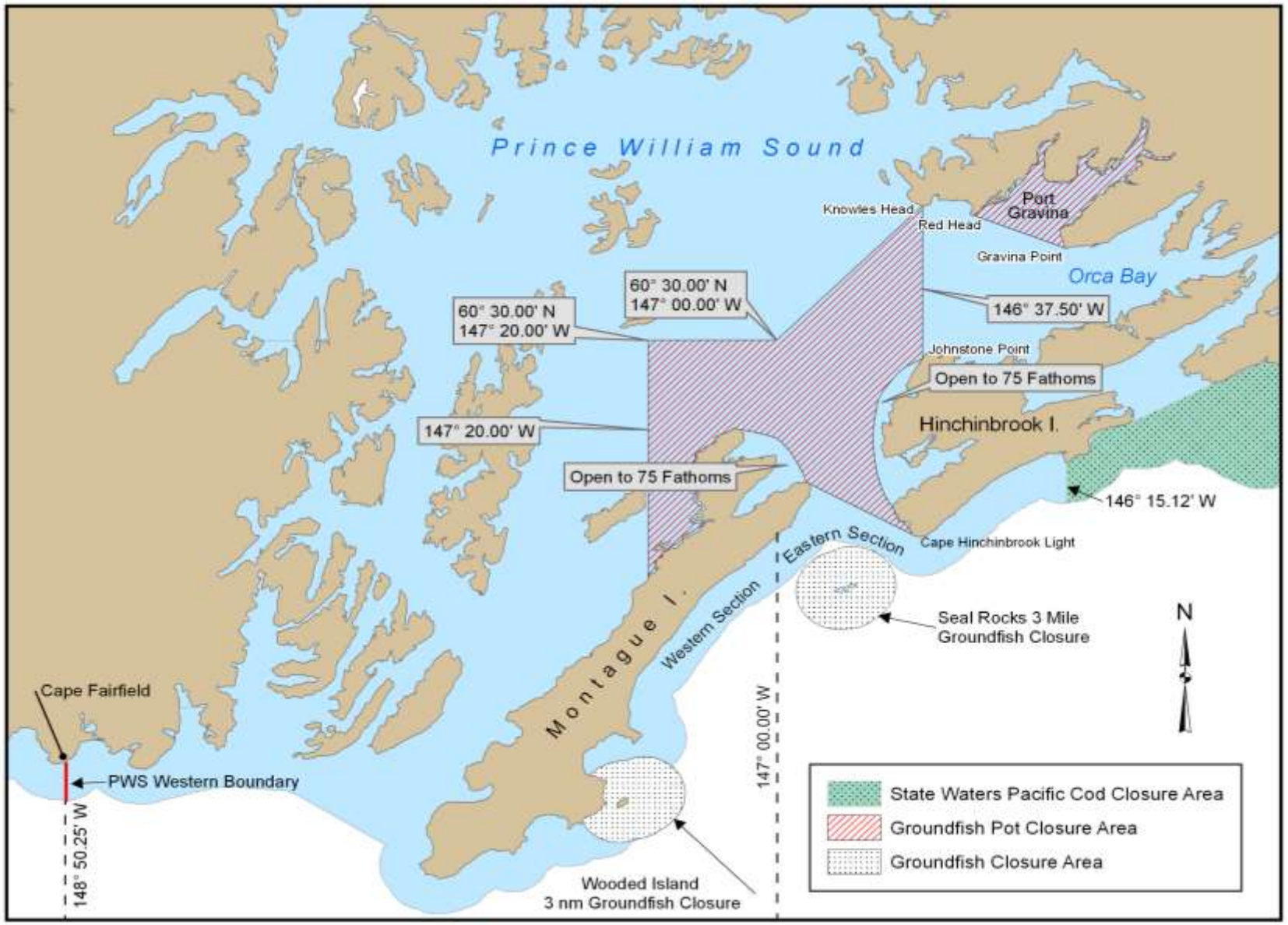

Figure 1. Prince William Sound closures to groundfish pot gear, groundfish fishing, and to the state-waters Pacific cod season.

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