

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 POT AND LONGLINE GEAR
PARALLEL PACIFIC COD SEASON OPENING TO POT AND LONGLINE GEAR
EMERGENCY ORDER # 2-GF-E-10-15

The Prince William Sound (PWS) Area E **state-waters Pacific cod season will close to pot and longline gear effective 12:00 noon September 1, 2015 and a parallel Pacific cod season will immediately open** to pot and longline gear. This season is coordinated with the federal "B" season and gear sector allocations for Pacific cod in the Central Gulf of Alaska Regulatory Area (CGOA), and season closures for pot gear and longline gear will coincide with the federal closures of the pot gear sector and the less than 50 foot hook and line (<50' HAL) gear sector in the adjacent federal CGOA, respectively. Fishermen participating in the state-waters Pacific cod fishery with pot or longline gear must deliver their harvest within 24 hours of the closure and prior to participating in the parallel season.

Fishermen are reminded that they must possess a valid ADF&G PWS 2015 **parallel Pacific cod season registration** in order to participate in the fishery and a vessel may only be registered to fish with a single gear type. Participants using pot or longline gear in parallel Pacific cod fisheries must have a functioning, NMFS approved, vessel monitoring system (VMS) as described at <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/vms/>. In addition, seabird avoidance measures (SAM) must be used in all longline fisheries for groundfish in state waters except the Inside District of PWS (<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seabirds/guide.htm>).

Big skate closed to retention on February 11, 2015 as bycatch in PWS waters by EO (#2-GF-E-05-15). 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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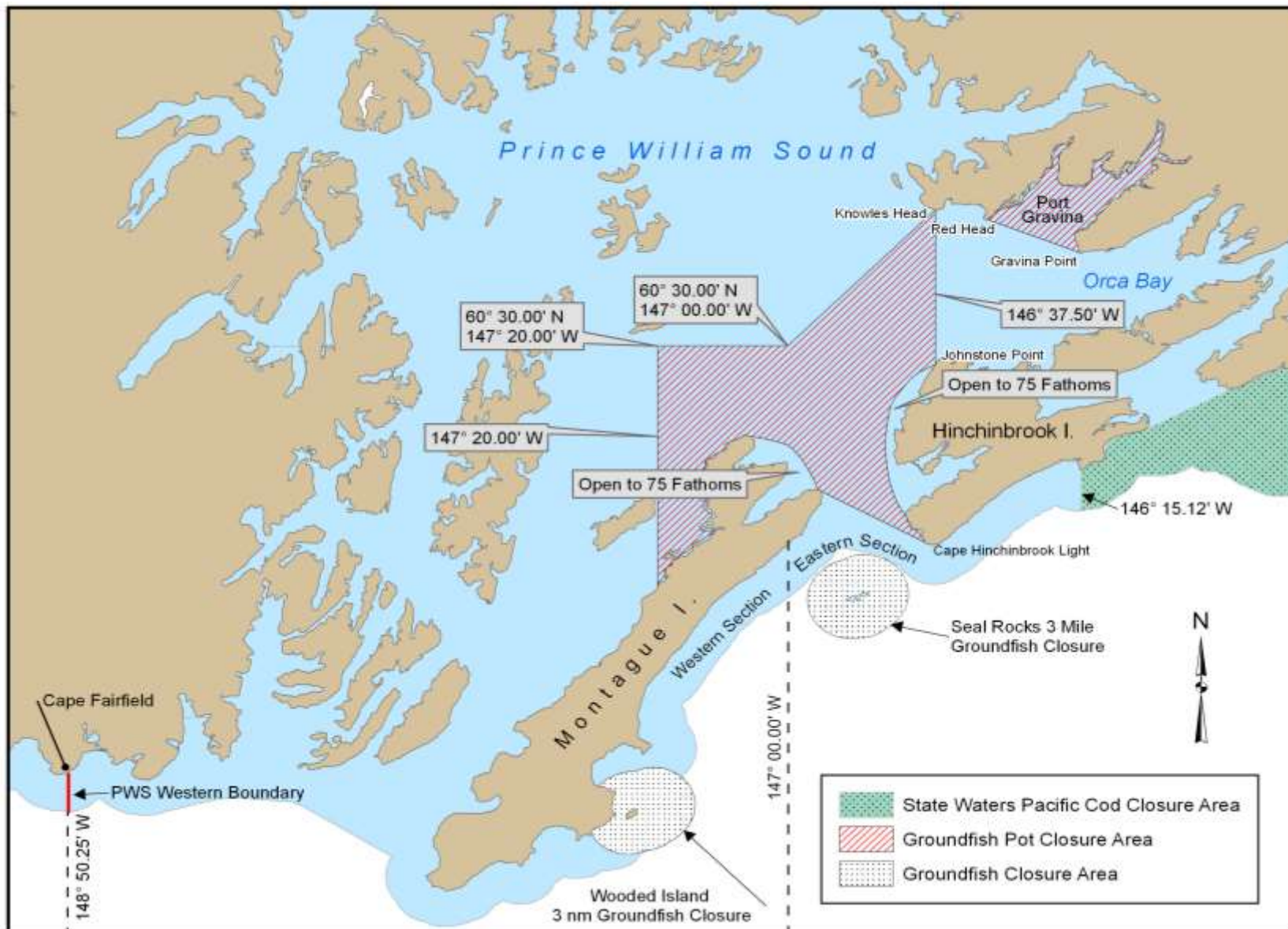


Figure 1. Prince William Sound closures to groundfish pot gear, groundfish fishing, and to the state-waters Pacific cod season.

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