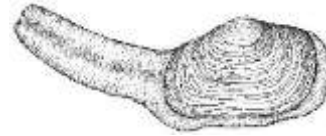

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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Date: September 18, 2015
Time: 1:00 p.m.

2015/16 SOUTHEAST ALASKA COMMERCIAL GEODUCK CLAM FISHERY

Juneau . . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced today the following information concerning the 2015/16 commercial geoduck clam season in Southeast Alaska:

The Southeast Alaska commercial geoduck clam fishery will begin Thursday, October 1, 2015 with a guideline harvest level (GHL) of 534,300 pounds, not including GHLs from harvest areas in the Sitka fishery management area (see explanation below). Fishing areas will be opened based on paralytic shellfish poison (PSP) test results. Weekly PSP results are expected on Monday afternoons or Tuesday mornings. However, if sampling is delayed the fishing period may also be delayed up to one day. Fishing periods will be announced by ADF&G news release, are expected to be between 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and to generally occur on Thursdays.

In the Ketchikan management area, based on the recommendation of the Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fishery Association, weekly harvest periods will be restricted to a total of six hours. ADF&G has the authority to change the weekly fishing hours to more effectively manage the fishery based on the remaining GHL for an area. On Friday, October 16, the Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association will meet to make fishery recommendations for the remainder of the season.

In the Sitka management area (District 13), GHLs and fishery openings for the 2015/2016 season will be announced in a subsequent News Release. It is expected that the 2015/2016 season will be delayed until September 2016.

A valid Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission permit is required prior to commercial harvest of geoduck clams and a separate registration is required for the Ketchikan and Sitka management areas. Harvesters are required to contact ADF&G at least 48 hours prior to fishing in a new registration area.

The geoduck clam fishery will be closed for the week of the Thanksgiving holiday from Friday, November 20, through Wednesday, December 2, 2015, and the Christmas and New Year's Day holiday from Friday, December 18, through Wednesday, January 6, 2016. The Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fishery Association will meet after January 1, 2016 to decide whether to request a voluntary fishery closure in conjunction with the Chinese New Year. State agencies will be closed on the following State holidays so PSP results will not be available until the following day: October 19 (Alaska Day), January 18 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day), February 15 (President's Day), March 28 (Seward's Day), and May 30 (Memorial Day).

The department will continue to implement the overage-underage policy designed to maintain the geoduck average harvest rate at 2% of the estimated biomass, as required by 5 AAC 38.142(g). Harvest from the 2015/16 season that is over or under the specified GHL for each fishery area will be rounded to the nearest 100 pounds. The resulting overage or underage will be subtracted or added, respectively, to the GHL for the next fishery rotation for each area, until such time as the GHL is revised based on a new survey of the area.

The mandatory logbook program for geoduck clams (5 AAC 38.142(m)) will continue for the 2015/16 season. This requires that logbooks be filled out before departing the harvest site and returned to ADF&G within 7 days of delivery. This data provides biologists with information on new and existing geoduck clam beds. Logbooks are available at local ADF&G offices. All logbook information will remain confidential. Logbooks should be turned in with fish tickets or mailed directly to the Petersburg ADF&G office C/O Jeff Meucci at P.O. 667, Petersburg, AK 99833.

Guideline Harvest Levels by Area:

District 1:

Nakat Bay (Subdistrict 101-11-001): will be open for a GHL of 22,200 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters of Nakat Bay, Sitklan Passage, Lincoln Channel, and Tongass Passage east of the longitude of Tree Point Light and south of a line extending from a point on the mainland shore approximately 0.3 nautical miles (nmi) west of the northernmost tip of Slim Island at 54°48.30' N. latitude, 130°47.30' W. longitude, to the northernmost tip of Slim Island, to a point approximately 0.3 nmi north of High Point at 54°47.78' N. latitude, 130°44.28' W. longitude, to a point at the southwestern entrance of Fillmore Inlet at 54°47.60' N. latitude, 130°38.08' W. longitude, to Point Phipp at 54°46.60' N. latitude, 130°37.25' W. longitude, and north of the U.S. Canadian border.

Kelp Island (Subdistrict 101-21-001): will be open for a GHL of 49,400 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters south of the latitude of Duke Point and east of 131°22.63' W. longitude, approximately 1.1 nmi west of Cape Northumberland.

North Kirk Point to Bullhead Cove (Subdistrict 101-23-003): will be open for a GHL of 16,500 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters along the mainland shore north of Kirk Point at 55°00.00' N. latitude and south of a line from Kah Shakes Point at 55°03.23' N. latitude, 131°02.80' W. longitude, to a point west of Bullhead Cove at 55°03.62' N. latitude, 130°59.45' W. longitude.

Percy Islands (Subdistrict 101-25-002): will be open for a GHL of 57,900 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters west of a line from Moss Point on Annette Island, to a point in Sealed Passage at 54°55.80' N. latitude, 131°30.45' W. longitude, north of a line from a point in Sealed Passage at 54°55.80' N. latitude, 131°30.45' W. longitude, to a point in Clarence Strait located at 54°54.63' N. latitude, 131°39.65' W. longitude, and east of 131°39.00' W. longitude, approximately 1.7 nmi east of Point Davison.

Vegas and Hotspur Islands (Subdistrict 101-25-003): will be open for a GHL of 133,700 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters west of a line from a point on the northwest side of Duke Island at 54°57.72' N. latitude, 131°27.42' W. longitude, to a point on the northeast tip of Vegas Island at 54°58.18' N. latitude, 131°27.64' W. longitude, to a point approximately 0.2 nmi southeast of the Ajax Reef Light at 54°59.98' N. latitude, 131°27.53' W. longitude, and east of a line from Point White to a point in Sealed Passage at 54°55.80' N. latitude, 131°30.45' W. longitude to Moss Point on Annette Island.

Southern Gravina Island (Subdistrict 101-29-005): will be open for a GHl of 14,500 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters along the western shore of Gravina Island south of 55°11.65' N. latitude and north of the latitude of Dall Head.

District 3:

Kaigani Strait (Subdistrict 103-30-001): will be open for a GHl of 37,900 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters of Kaigani Strait south of a line from Luke Point to a point on the northwest shore of Long Island at 54°55.52' N. latitude, 132°48.90' W. longitude and north of a line from the southernmost tip of Long Island to the easternmost tip of Cape Muzon.

Tlevak Strait (Subdistricts 103-40-009, 103-50-009): will be open for a GHl of 26,200 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters of Tlevak Strait north of a line from Reef Point on Dall Island at 55°03.63' N. latitude, 132°58.33' W. longitude to a point on Sukkwan Island approximately 2 nmi north of Kellogg Point at 55°08.12' N. latitude, 132°52.91' W. longitude, and west of a line drawn from a point in South Passage on Sukkwan Island at 55°09.26' N. latitude, 132°53.79' W. longitude to a point approximately 1.4 nmi southeast of Halibut Nose on Prince of Wales Island at 55°12.21' N. latitude, 133°0.79' W. longitude, to Natalia Point on Prince of Wales Island at 55°13.41' N. latitude, 133°02.06' W. longitude to a point on Prince of Wales Island at 55°16.49' N. latitude, 133°04.76' W. longitude; and in those waters of Meares Passage and Ulloa Channel north of a line from Eagle Point on Dall Island to a point, on Suemez Island approximately 0.7 nmi west of Eagle Point at 55°14.68' N. latitude, 133°14.45' W. longitude and east of a line from a point on Prince of Wales Island approximately 0.9 nmi southeast of Point San Antonio at 55°16.86' N. latitude, 133°13.00' W. longitude, to the easternmost tip of Suemez Island located at 55°16.51' N. latitude, 133°13.16' W. longitude, then south along the eastern shoreline of Suemez Island to a point on Suemez Island approximately 0.7 nmi west of Eagle Point at 55°14.68' N. latitude, 133°14.45' W. longitude with the following restrictions:

View Cove, Baldy Bay, Coco Harbor, and Windy Cove: all waters of View Cove, Baldy Bay, Coco Harbor, and Windy Cove are closed to the harvest of geoduck clams.

Bucareli Bay and contiguous waters (Subdistrict 103-50-003): will be open for a GHl of 24,700 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters west of a line from Point Cuerdo on the southeast side of San Fernando Island, to Point Eugenia on the north side of San Juan Bautista Island, to the southernmost tip of Point Miliflores on the south side of San Juan Bautista Island, to Tranquil Point on Prince of Wales Island; north of a line extending from a point on the northeastern shore of Suemez Island at 55°20.72' N. latitude, 133°19.75' W longitude, to the northernmost tip of Cape Flores, to the southernmost tip of Joe Island, then due east to Prince of Wales Island; north and east of a line from the westernmost tip of Point Arboleda to the southernmost tip of Point San Roque; south of the northernmost tip of Cristina Island located at 55°22.83' N. latitude, and south and east of a line from Point Amargura to a point on the eastern shore of St. Ignace Island at 55°24.27' N. latitude, 133°24.48' W. longitude with the following restriction:

Port San Antonio: all waters of Port San Antonio are closed to the harvest of geoduck clams.

Portillo Channel (Subdistrict 103-50-008): will be open for a GHl of 31,200 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters south of a line from a point on the northeast side of Lulu Island at 55°30.62' N. latitude, 133°28.08' W. longitude to a point on the northwest side of San Fernando Island at 55°31.53' N. latitude, 133°26.82' W. longitude, east of a line from Point Gorda at 55°25.50' N. latitude, 133°26.20' W. longitude to Arrecife Point at 55°27.07' N. latitude, 133°25.75' W. longitude, and north and west of a line from Point Amargura to a point on the eastern shore of St. Ignace Island at 55°24.27' N. latitude, 133°24.48' W. longitude.

Little Steamboat Bay (Subdistrict 103-70-002): will be open for a GHl of 23,600 pounds of whole geoduck clams only in those waters along the northern shoreline of Noyes Island east of Steamboat

Point located at 133°41.33' W. longitude and west of a point approximately 1.3 nmi west of Steamboat Point at 133°39.04' W. longitude.

Steamboat Bay (Subdistrict 103-70-003): will be open for a GHL of 44,200 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters in Steamboat Bay along the northern shore of Noyes Island south of a line from Steamboat Point at 55°33.10' N. latitude, 133°39.04' W. longitude, to a point approximately 0.3 nmi north of Point Incarnation in Arriaga Passage at 55°33.54' N. latitude, 133°37.30' W. longitude, to a point on the Noyes Island shore near Point Incarnation at 55°33.11' N. latitude, 133°37.29' W. longitude.

District 3 and 4:

Maurelle Islands (Subdistricts 103-70-009, 103-80-009, 104-40-009, 104-50-009): will be open for a GHL of 52,300 pounds of whole geoduck clams in those waters of Bocas de Finas, Gulf of Esquibel and Sonora Passage enclosed by a line from a point on Heceta Island approximately 0.9 nmi southeast of White Cliff at 55°43.35' N. latitude, 133°37.36' W. longitude, to a point approximately 1 nmi northwest of the Timbered Islands at 55°42.10' N. latitude, 133°49.70' W. longitude, to a point 0.5 nmi southwest of the southwestern most tip of St. Joseph's Island in Arriaga Passage at 55°34.47' N. latitude, 133°43.52' W. longitude, to a point in Arriaga Passage approximately 1.1 nmi north of Point Incarnation at 55°34.47' N. latitude, 133°37.29' W. longitude, to a point in the Gulf of Esquibel at 55°37.35' N. latitude, 133°24.70' W. longitude, to the westernmost tip of Blanquizar Point at 55°37.35' N. latitude, 133°23.88' W. longitude, then north along the shoreline of Prince of Wales Island to a point approximately 0.2 nmi east of Bobs Place on St. Philips Island at 55°38.19' N. latitude, 133°23.97' W. longitude, to a point on Heceta Island approximately 1.1 nmi northeast of Point Desconocida at 55°42.13' N. latitude, 133°30.85' W. longitude, then west along the shoreline of Heceta Island to a point approximately 0.9 nmi southeast of White Cliff at 55°43.35' N. latitude, 133°37.36' W. longitude.

The Emergency Order corresponding to this announcement is EO 1M2215.

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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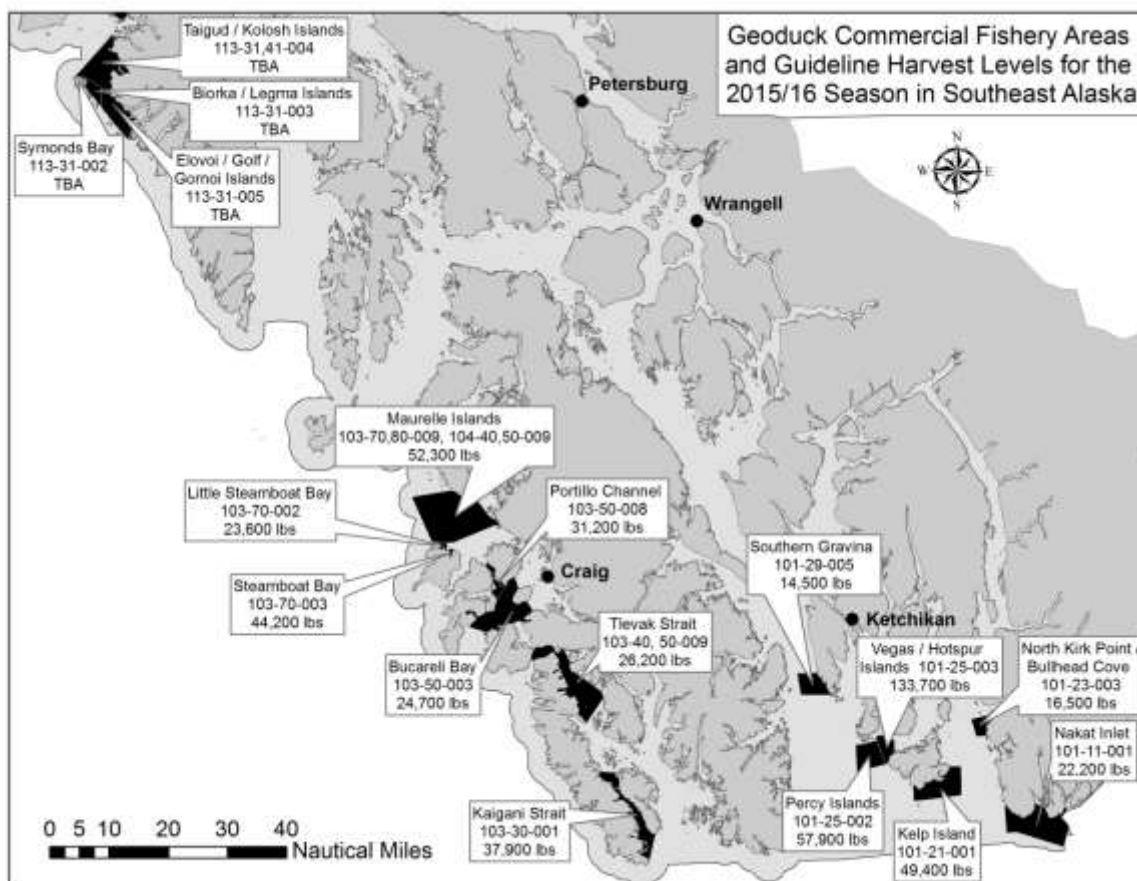


Figure 1. Commercial geoduck open harvest areas and guideline harvest levels for the 2015-16 season. Harvest areas in the Sitka management area are shown for reference only; GHs will not be available for these areas until all harvest data from the 2014-15 fishery, which concludes on September 30, 2015, are received and processed by ADF&G.

Note: This chart is for general reference purposes only and does not identify boundaries of open areas. See written descriptions above for detailed description of open areas.