
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



Sam Cotten, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director



Contact:
Mike Donnellan

Phone: (907) 465-4220
Fax: (907) 465-4944

Southeast Regional Office
P.O. Box 110024
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0024
Date: September 21, 2015
Time: 3:00 p.m.

2015/16 SOUTHEAST ALASKA COMMERCIAL RED SEA URCHIN FISHERY

Juneau.... The Alaska Department of Fish and Game today announced that the 2015/16 commercial red sea urchin fishery will open at 5:00 a.m., Thursday, October 1, 2015. The season will be open for daily fishing periods from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., seven days per week. A total of 3,838,900 pounds of red sea urchins will be available for harvest this season.

The following areas will be open by emergency order effective 5:00 a.m., Thursday, October 1, 2015:

District 1:

Dixon Entrance and Portland Canal - Subdistrict 101-11: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 383,200 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Dixon Entrance and Portland Canal east and south of a line extending three nautical miles from the Foggy Point Light that intersects a line from Foggy Point Light to Duke Point, and then south to intersect a line between Barren Island Light and Lord Rock Light, then to Lord Rock Light, and then to the southern boundary of District 1, and west of a line from a point approximately three nautical miles south of Hidden Inlet at 54°54.23' N. latitude, 130°22.75' W. longitude, to a point on Pearse Island at 54°53.88' N. latitude, 130°21.78' W. longitude, and north of the U.S./Canada border. The following restriction applies:

Portland Canal: will be closed east of a line from the northernmost tip of Phipp Point to a point at the entrance to Willard and Fillmore Inlets located at 54°47.58' N. latitude, 130°38.10' W. longitude.

Revillagigedo Channel and Southern Clarence Strait - Subdistrict 101-21: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 1,082,600 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Clarence Strait south of the latitude of Point White located on the northwestern part of Duke Island at 54°56.00' N. latitude, 131°29.70' W. longitude, and south and west of a line from Duke Point at 54°55.08' N. latitude, 131°11.61' W. longitude, to a point three nautical miles off Foggy Bay Light that intersects a line between Duke Point and Foggy Bay Light, and then south to intersect a line between Barren Island Light and Lord Rock Light, then to Lord Rock Light, and then to the southern boundary of District 1. Note: Bee Rocks (Subdistrict 101-22) is not included in this area.

Bee Rocks - Subdistrict 101-22: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 290,700 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Clarence Strait east of 131°37.00' W. longitude, and south of 54°54.42' N. latitude, and west of 131°30.00' W. longitude, and north of 54°50.00' N. latitude.

Revillagigedo Channel and Felice Strait - Subdistrict 101-23: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 195,000 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Revillagigedo Channel west of a line from Quadra Point located at 55°05.17' N. latitude, 130°59.05' W. longitude, to Kah Shakes Point located at 55°04.22' N. latitude, 130°58.72' W. longitude, and south of a line from Mary Island Light to the northern point of Black Island at 55°08.00' N. latitude, 131°04.80' W. longitude, then due east to the mainland shore and south of a line on the northwestern side of Mary Island at 55°05.95' N. latitude, 131°13.00' W. longitude, to a point on the eastern shore of Annette Island at 55°06.78' N. latitude, 131°21.50' W. longitude, and north of a line from Duke Point at 54°55.08' N. latitude, 131°11.62' W. longitude, to Foggy Point Light, and east of 131°26.60' W. longitude, located on the northwest side of Duke Island.

Percy Islands and southern Gravina Island - Subdistrict 101-25: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 322,500 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Clarence Strait in District 1, south of the latitude of the southernmost tip of Dall Head located on the southern tip of Gravina Island, and south of a line from the southernmost tip of Dall Head to Cedar Point located on Annette Island north of the latitude of the southernmost tip of Point White located on the western side of Duke Island at 54°56.00' N. latitude, 131°29.30' W. longitude and west of 131°26.60' W. longitude located on the northwest side of Duke Island.

West Shore of Gravina Island - Subdistrict 101-29: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 720,800 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Clarence Strait in District 1 south and west of a line from Caamano Point located at 55°29.90' N. latitude, 131°58.13' W. longitude, to Point Higgins at 55°27.43' N. latitude, 131°50.00' W. longitude, to the northernmost tip of Vallenar Point at 55°25.60' N. latitude, 131°51.00' W. longitude, and north of the latitude of the southernmost tip of Dall Head.

District 2:

Lower Clarence Strait - Subdistrict 102-20: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 94,700 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Lower Clarence Strait adjacent to the eastern shore of Prince of Wales Island north of the latitude of 54°54.27' N., located at the northern entrance to Kendrick Bay and south of the latitude of 55°08.25' N., located north of Port Johnson, including all waters of Moira Sound east of a line from 55°05.08' N. latitude, 132°02.50' W. longitude, located two nautical miles east of Point Halliday to 55°02.05' N. latitude, 132°02.03' W. longitude, located west of Menefee Anchorage.

Clarence Strait - Subdistrict 102-50: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 361,600 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters adjacent to the eastern shore of Prince of Wales Island, south of a line from a point on the northeast side of Kasaan Peninsula at 55°28.35' N. latitude, 132°08.83' W. longitude located inside of Streets Island, to Caamano Point located at 55°29.90' N. latitude, 131°58.13' W. longitude, and north of 55°08.25' N. latitude, and east of a line from a point on the southwest side of Kasaan Peninsula at 55°27.93' N. latitude, 132°11.92' W. longitude, to a point near Skowl Point at 55°25.00' N. latitude, 132°15.50' W. longitude, and north and east of a line from a point at 55°15.23' N. latitude, 132°06.82' W. longitude, located at the northeastern mouth of Cholmondeley Sound to a point at 55°14.73' N. latitude, 132°04.50' W. longitude located three nautical miles southwest of Chasina Point in the entrance to Cholmondeley Sound.

Clarence Strait - Subdistrict 102-70: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 70,500 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Clarence Strait adjacent to the eastern shore of Kasaan Peninsula north of a line from a point located inside Streets Island at 55°28.35' N. latitude, 132°08.83' W. longitude, to Caamano Point located at 55°29.90' N. latitude, 131°58.13' W. longitude, and south of a line from Narrow Point located at 55°47.50' N. latitude, 132°28.58' W. longitude, to the northernmost tip of Lemesurier Point located at 55°46.06' N. latitude, 132°16.91' W. longitude.

Clarence Strait - Subdistrict 102-80: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 55,500 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Clarence Strait adjacent to the western shore of Cleveland Peninsula, north of a line from the southernmost tip of Caamano Point located at 55°29.83' N. latitude, 131°58.13' W. longitude.

longitude, to a point located inside of Streets Island at 55°28.40' N. latitude, 132°08.75' W. longitude, and south of a line from the northern tip of Lemesurier Point located at 55°45.92' N. latitude to Narrow Point located at 55°47.50' N. latitude, 132°28.58' W. longitude.

District 3:

Tlevak Strait - Subdistrict 103-40: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 16,100 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of Tlevak Strait north of a line from Rose Point at 54°58.15' N. latitude, 132°56.50' W. longitude, to a point on Sukkwan Island at 55°00.00' N. latitude, 132°45.97' W. longitude, and south of a line through Tlevak Narrows beginning at the easternmost tip of Turn Point located at 55°15.78' N. latitude, 133°07.23' W. longitude, to a point on Prince of Wales Island at 55°15.75' N. latitude, 133°06.43' W. longitude. The following restriction applies:

Tlevak Strait, North Pass, South Pass, Natzuhini Bay: will be closed east of a line from the westernmost tip of Halibut Nose to a point on Sukkwan Island at 55°09.27' N. latitude, 132°53.77' W. longitude.

District 4:

Central Dall Island – Subdistrict 104-20-001: will be open for a guideline harvest level of 245,700 pounds of red sea urchins in those waters of District 4 north of Point Bazan at 55°48.35' N. latitude and south of Juel Point at 55°07.55' N. latitude.

Other Restrictions and Information

The owner or operator of a vessel used in the red sea urchin commercial fishery must register the vessel with the Department before commencing operations. All vessels used in this fishery must have a valid **2015** vessel license obtained from the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC).

Following is a summary of red sea urchin regulations:

1. All vessels, including tenders, must be registered with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game prior to being used in the fishery.
2. All divers must be licensed to harvest red sea urchins by the CFEC (hereafter, “permit holders”).
3. Permit holders participating in the urchin fishery may not use dive gear for subsistence, personal use, or sport dive fishing during a 14-day period before or after the opening of the urchin fishery.
4. No more than three permit holders may be onboard a registered vessel from 24 hours before, during, and for 24 hours after a fishing period, or when commercially harvested urchins are on board; no more than two permit holders may conduct fishing operations or land commercially harvested red sea urchins off of a registered vessel during any open fishing period.
5. There is no size limit for the harvest of red sea urchins.
6. Red sea urchins may be taken only by hand picking.
7. Only one species of miscellaneous shellfish is permitted to be on board a vessel at one time.
8. Prior to processing, urchins harvested from different subdistricts must be kept in separate containers labeled with the subdistrict and permit holder’s name.
9. Floating processors must carry onboard observers. Floating processors, instead of having an onboard observer, may be issued a permit allowing onboard processing under conditions listed in 5 AAC 38.145(n).
10. Permit holders must report dive times in minutes on fish tickets.

All fishermen and processors should consult a current Commercial Shellfish Fishing Regulations Book for complete regulations. These books are available at local Fish and Game offices.

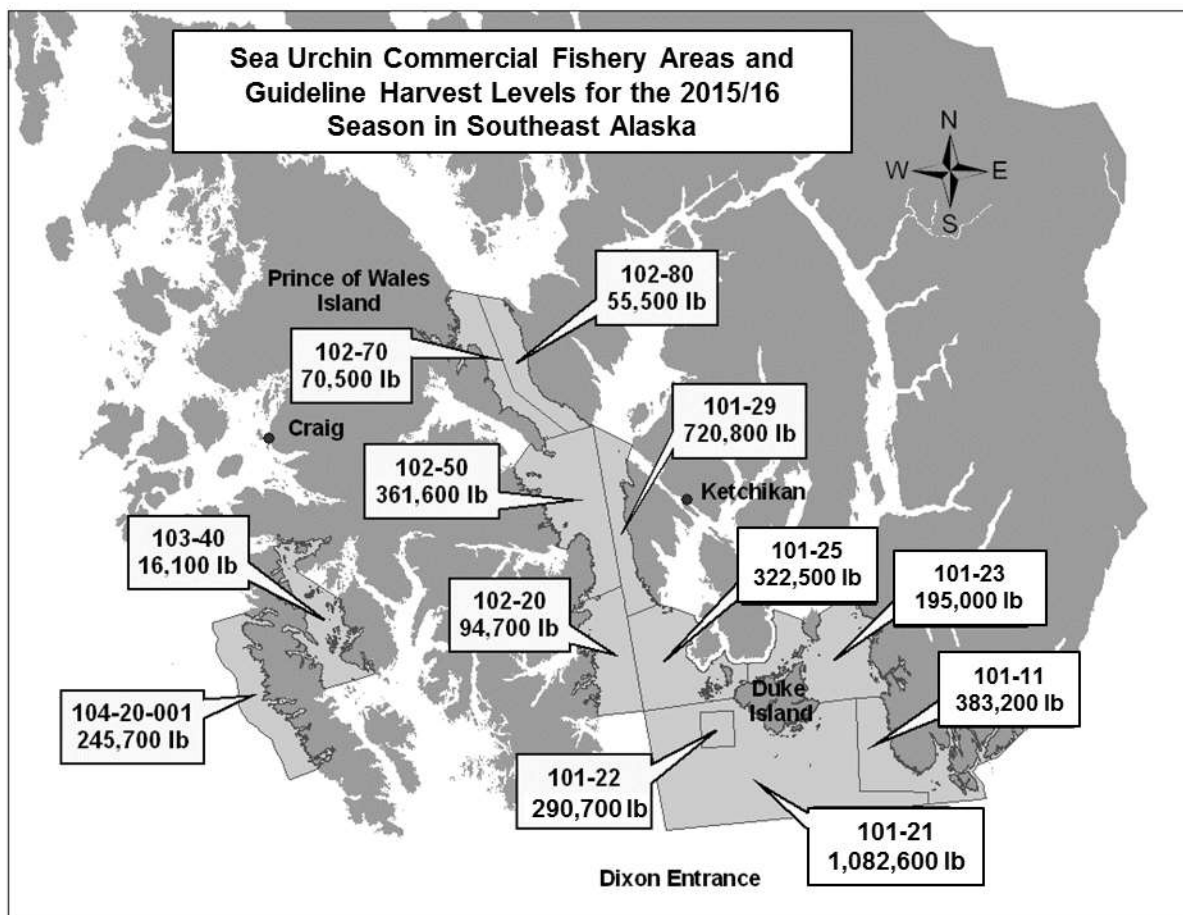


Figure 1. Commercial red sea urchin open harvest areas (shaded) and guideline harvest levels for the 2015-16 season.

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.

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

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