

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



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**FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND AREA-E
PARALLEL PACIFIC COD SEASON CLOSING TO JIG GEAR
STATE-WATERS PACIFIC COD SEASON OPENING TO JIG GEAR
EMERGENCY ORDERS # 2-GF-E-01-16 AND # 2-GF-E-06-16**

The Prince William Sound (PWS) Area E parallel Pacific cod season will **close to jig gear effective 12:00 noon, March 1, 2016**. This coincides with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) closure of the Pacific cod jig gear sector in the federal Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) area.

The PWS **state-waters Pacific cod season will open to jig gear at 12:00 noon, March 2, 2016**, with a total guideline harvest level (GHL) of 4.8 million pounds and will close when 15 percent of the GHL (726,285 pounds) is harvested by either pot or jig gear. The state-waters Pacific cod season opened to pot gear on February 2, 2016, but there has been no participation to date. Lingcod may not be retained prior to July 1. Detailed bycatch limits are listed below.

The PWS parallel Pacific cod season for longline gear will remain open and its closure will coincide with the federal closure for the less than 50 foot hook and line (<50' HAL) gear group in the CGOA. A vessel may not simultaneously participate in a state-waters season and any other concurrent Pacific cod season.

To participate in the PWS state-waters Pacific cod season, fishermen must possess a gear-appropriate Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission miscellaneous finfish permit card and a PWS state-waters Pacific cod season area registration. Registrations can be obtained at department offices in Anchorage, Homer, Soldotna, and Cordova or via Cordova office fax (907-424-3235). Area registration for jig gear in the PWS state-waters Pacific cod season is nonexclusive which means registrants can participate in one other exclusive state-water jig fishery.

Fishermen are reminded that there is a 24-hour delivery time requirement following closure of a groundfish fishery.

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Fishing area: During a state-waters season, Pacific cod may be taken in waters of the PWS Area (5 AAC 28.205) except for those waters of the Outside District east of 146° 15.12' W. long. (the latitude of Hook Point) (5 AAC 28.267. (e) (2)).

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 Order 2-GF-E-01-16 as round weight of bycatch as a percentage of the round weight of the target species:

- (1) may retain 5 percent skate species in aggregate except;
- (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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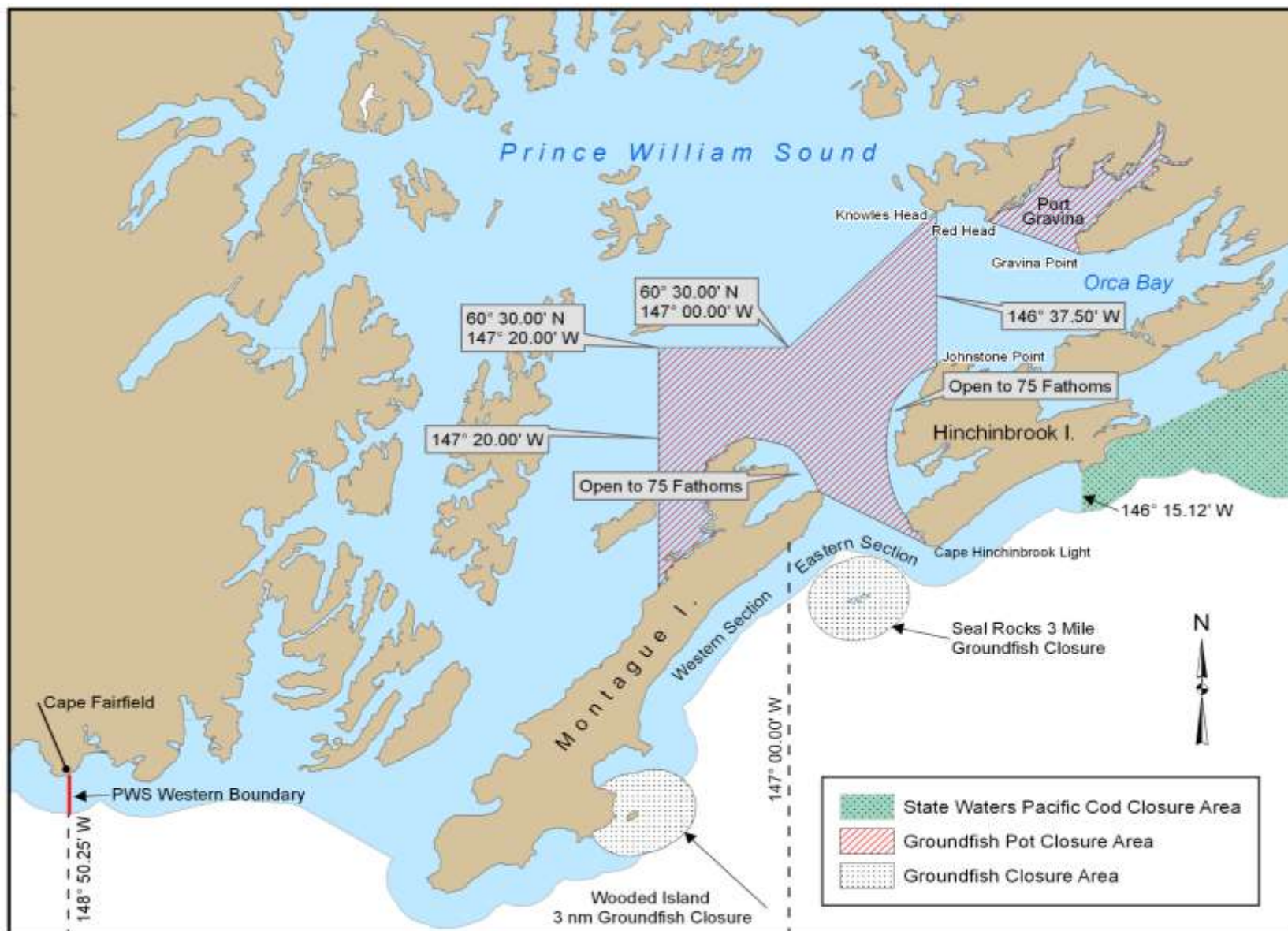


Figure 1. Prince William Sound closures to groundfish pot gear, groundfish fishing, and to the state-waters Pacific cod season.

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