

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #31

SEINE FISHERIES: This announcement will detail PWS purse seine fishing periods commencing on Friday, July 14. It is estimated that 800,000 pink salmon were harvested in eastern PWS on Wednesday, July 12. The cumulative PWS pink salmon harvest in the Eastern district through July 12 is estimated at 4 million CPF and 900,000 VFDA cost recovery fish, for a total of 4.9 million fish. The 5-year odd-year average (2007–2015) cumulative PWS pink salmon harvest (cost recovery and CPF fish) through July 12 is 10.6 million fish.

EASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Eastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Friday, July 14.

Waters of Port Valdez east of 146°30.62' W. will be closed to commercial fishing during this period.

Waters of Port Fildago east of a line from a point on shore at 60°50.46' N., 146°14.89' W. to a point on shore at 60°50.98' N., 146°17.00' W. will be closed to commercial fishing during this period.

Waters of Beartrap Bay east of a line from 146°3.30' W. will be closed to commercial fishing during this period.

Waters within 200 yards of the AMHS Valdez Ferry Terminal are closed to commercial fishing when the ferry is arriving and departing. All waters of the Valdez small boat harbor and within 50 yards of the entrance to the harbor are closed to commercial fishing. Waters within the Alyeska Marine Terminal (Trans-Alaska Pipeline System) Security Zone are closed to commercial fishing. **Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures north of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point will not be in effect during this fishing period.**

Waters inside of all applicable Eastern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers will be closed for this period to ensure early season escapement. Waters closed for this period include the following areas:

- (1) **Sheep Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°41.13' N. lat., 145°58.87' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°40.46' N. lat., 145°58.01' W. long.;
- (2) **St. Matthews Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°43.36' N. lat., 146°19.07' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°43.61' N. lat., 146°21.17' W. long.;
- (3) **Irish Cove:** south of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°46.73' N. lat., 146°26.62' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°46.27' N. lat., 146°27.12' W. long.;
- (4) **Landlocked Bay:** waters north of 60°50.76' N. lat.;
- (5) **Galena Bay:** east of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°56.87' N. lat., 146°39.87' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°56.55' N. lat., 146°39.65' W. long.;
- (6) **Jack Bay:** south and east of a line from a shore marker at approximately 61°02.34' N. lat., 146°35.27' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 61°02.17' N. lat., 146°39.77' W. long.;
- (7) **Sawmill Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 61°02.71' N. lat., 146°46.44' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 61°02.58' N. lat., 146°47.07' W. long.

NORTHERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northern District east of a line at 147°31.00' W. will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Friday, July 14.

Waters inside of all applicable Northern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers will be closed for this period to ensure early season escapement. Waters closed for this period include the following areas:

- (1) **Granite Bay:** north and east of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°55.02' N. lat., 147°27.61' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°54.66' N. lat., 147°26.72' W. long.;
- (2) **Cedar Bay:** north and east of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°56.46' N. lat., 147°27.03' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°56.03' N. lat., 147°26.39' W. long.;

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm, on Friday, July 14.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: The Port Chalmers Subdistrict, north of 60°12.56' N. and east a line from 60° 12.56' N., 147° 20.25' W. to 60° 20.00' N., 147° 14.30' W., will open to seine fishing for 12 hours beginning at 8:00 am on Friday, July 14. **Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect until further notice.** Preliminary harvest estimates from the 12-hour period that ended on Tuesday, July 11 are 8,332 chum salmon and 56,701 pink salmon with 4 deliveries reported.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT: The AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will open for 12 hours beginning at 8:00 am on Friday, July 14. **Anadromous stream closures within the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will not be in effect until further notice.**

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

The next scheduled seine fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Friday, July 14.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Saturday, July 15.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound and Copper River homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery, you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a Category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.**

Please reference http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species).

Under the ESA, "take" means to "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." (16U.S.C. 1532(19)); and "harass" means an "intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering." (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.