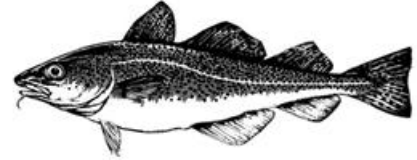


**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner
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**2012 SOUTH ALASKA PENINSULA AREA
STATE-WATERS PACIFIC COD SEASON OPENINGS**

The 2012 South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod season for vessels using pot gear will open at 12:01 a.m. on Wednesday, March 7, 2012 unless delayed by weather. Pot vessels are restricted to operating no more than 60 pots. Buoy tags are required for all pot gear. Open and unbaited pots may be stored in waters less than 25 fathoms deep prior to the start of the state-waters pot season. Pot gear may not be baited or placed into waters deeper than 25 fathoms until the pot season opens on March 7. The 2012 South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod guideline harvest level (GHL) is 15.45 million pounds. Pot vessels are allocated 85 percent of the GHL or 13.13 million pounds.

The state-waters Pacific cod season for vessels using jig gear will open 48 hours after closure of the Western Gulf of Alaska (WGOA) federal/parallel jig gear A-season, unless delayed by weather. However, if the WGOA federal/parallel jig A-season has not closed by March 15, ADF&G may close the WGOA parallel (0-3 nautical miles from shore) jig season and open the South Alaska Peninsula state-waters jig season based on inseason assessment of effort, harvest rate, or remaining federal/parallel jig quota. Jig vessels may not operate more than 5 mechanical jig machines with no more than 30 hooks per line. Jig vessels are allocated 15 percent of the total GHL or 2.32 million pounds.

All vessels participating in the South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod season may not exceed 58 feet in overall length. Vessel operators must obtain a miscellaneous finfish interim-use permit card from the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission and an exclusive state-waters vessel registration from ADF&G prior to participating in the state-waters season. Registration and buoy tags are available at ADF&G offices in Kodiak and Dutch Harbor, Trident Seafoods in Sand Point, and Peter Pan Seafoods in King Cove.

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WEATHER DELAYS

The state-waters season openings for pot or jig gear will be delayed for 24-hours if the National Weather Service (NWS) 48-hour marine weather forecast for Area 155 issued at 4 a.m. on the scheduled opening day for the pot season or the scheduled opening day for the jig season contains gale force wind warnings (35 knots or higher). If a season opening is delayed and the following day's 4 a.m. 48-hour forecast again contains gale warnings, the season opening will be delayed an additional 24-hours. Season opening delays may continue on a rolling 24-hour basis for up to seven days beyond the initial opening date. After seven days, the pot or jig seasons will open regardless of the NWS marine weather forecast for Area 155.

CATCH REPORTING

Vessel operators using pot gear during the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod season must report the following information to ADF&G daily;

- 1) Fishing location;
- 2) Number of pot lifts for the previous 24-hour reporting period; and
- 3) Pounds of Pacific cod retained for the previous 24-hour fishing period.

Reports will be taken by ADF&G between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. each day by satellite dispatch (7894). Vessels operators may also report by phone (907-486-1840) or email (mark.stichert@alaska.gov). Vessels without satellite service may relay reports through other fishing vessels or local processors. Encrypted code sheets will be issued to vessels relaying catch information to maintain confidentiality. Vessel operators interested in making alternative reporting arrangements are encouraged to contact ADF&G prior to the season opening.

For more information, contact the Alaska Department of Fish & Game in Kodiak at 486-1840.

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