

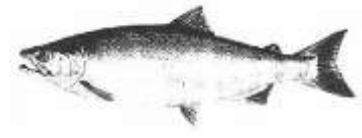
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

Cora J. Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff R. Regnart, Director



Contact:

Jeremy Botz, Gillnet Area Management Biologist
Tommy Sheridan, Seine Area Management Biologist
Amanda Wiese, Asst. Area Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 424-3212 Fax: (907) 424-3235

Prince William Sound Area Office
401 Railroad Avenue, PO Box 669
Cordova, AK 99574-0669
Date Issued: Thursday, July 18, 2013
Time: 2:00 pm

Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #42

The purpose of this news release is to provide an update on the VFDA pink salmon fishery, and to announce a commercial purse seine fishery for the Eastern, Northern, Northwestern, and Southeastern districts. All other fisheries remain as previously announced.

SEINE FISHERIES: An aerial survey of the Eastern, Northern, Unakwik, Coghill, and Northwestern districts was flown on Monday. An aerial survey of the Eshamy, Southwestern, and Montague districts is being flown today. Wild stock escapement indices are tracking ahead of anticipated numbers, and support broad area opportunity for tomorrow's purse seine fishery. ADF&G sampling of pink salmon harvested in Valdez Arm on July 11 resulted in an average weight of 2.94 pounds. Final harvest numbers for the July 17 fishery in the Eastern, Northern and Southeastern districts are unavailable at the time of this announcement; however, it is estimated that at least 1.8 million pink salmon were harvested in these districts using this average weight.

VFDA has expressed concerns regarding broodstock collection progress at/near Solomon Gulch Hatchery (SGH), and has requested expanded area protection in Port Valdez. Time and area for future commercial fishing periods will be based on consideration for VFDA broodstock collection progress, harvest results from the July 19 fishery, and wild stock escapement indices. It is possible that the next broad area opener could be delayed until Monday, July 22, with additional information being provided in the Saturday, July 20 ADF&G news release.

EASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Eastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Friday, July 19. **All waters of Port Valdez north of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point will be closed to commercial fishing during this period.**

Waters inside of the following Eastern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers are closed to commercial fishing during this period to ensure early season escapement:

- (1) Galena Bay: east of a line from 60°56.87' N. lat., 146°39.87' W. long. to 60°56.55' N. lat., 146°39.65' W. long.;
- (2) Jack Bay: south and east of a line from 61°02.34' N. lat., 146°35.27' W. long. to 61°02.17' N. lat., 146°39.77' W. long.;
- (3) Sawmill Bay: north of a line from 61°02.71' N. lat., 146°46.44' W. long. to 61°02.58' N. lat., 146°47.07' W. long.

NORTHERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northern District, excluding the Perry Island Subdistrict and Cannery Creek Hatchery Escapement Exclusion Zone (HEEZ) within the CCH SHA, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Friday, July 19. The CCH HEEZ consists of the waters of the CCH SHA north and east of a line from 61° 00.97' N., 147° 32.62' W. southward to a point on the shore at 61° 00.44' N., 147° 31.50' W.

Waters inside of the following Northern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers are also closed to commercial fishing during this period to ensure early season escapement:

- (1) Siwash Bay: west of a line from 60°58.26' N. lat., 147°37.32' W. long. to 60°56.96' N. lat., 147°36.02' W. long.;
- (2) Jonah Bay: west of a line from 61°01.17' N. lat., 147°35.07' W. long. to 61°00.40' N. lat., 147°35.93' W. long.;

SHTF marker coordinates are available in the Cordova ADF&G office, and have been provided to area processors, VFDA and PWSAC for distribution to fishery participants.

NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Friday, July 19.

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Friday, July 19.

Please refer to Prince William Sound News Release #26 from Thursday, June 27 for details regarding Prince William Sound anadromous stream closures. Electronic copies of the list and associated map detailing these updated regulatory closed waters are available at the following web address under the Prince William Sound Anadromous Waters Closures heading:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.salmon#/maps>

Copies of the list and map are also available in the Cordova ADF&G office.

Please refer to the ADF&G 2012-2015 Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations for Prince William Sound booklet for regulations regarding commercial salmon fisheries in the Prince William Sound Area. This booklet is available in the Cordova ADF&G office and at the following web address:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/fishregulations/pdfs/commercial/PWSSalmon-2012-2015.pdf>

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Saturday, July 20.

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.

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 addresses:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound 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 that 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.