

Regional Information Report No. 1J09-11

Management Plan for the Summer Commercial Troll Fishery in Southeast Alaska, 2009

by

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And

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June 2009

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Division of Commercial Fisheries



Symbols and Abbreviations

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Weights and measures (metric)		General		Measures (fisheries)	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative		fork length	FL
deciliter	dL	Code	AAC	mid-eye-to-fork	MEF
gram	g	all commonly accepted		mid-eye-to-tail-fork	METF
hectare	ha	abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	standard length	SL
kilogram	kg			total length	TL
kilometer	km	all commonly accepted			
liter	L	professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.	Mathematics, statistics	
meter	m			<i>all standard mathematical</i>	
milliliter	mL	at	@	<i>signs, symbols and</i>	
millimeter	mm	compass directions:		<i>abbreviations</i>	
		east	E	alternate hypothesis	H _A
Weights and measures (English)		north	N	base of natural logarithm	<i>e</i>
cubic feet per second	ft ³ /s	south	S	catch per unit effort	CPUE
foot	ft	west	W	coefficient of variation	CV
gallon	gal	copyright	©	common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2 , etc.)
inch	in	corporate suffixes:		confidence interval	CI
mile	mi	Company	Co.	correlation coefficient	
nautical mile	nmi	Corporation	Corp.	(multiple)	R
ounce	oz	Incorporated	Inc.	correlation coefficient	
pound	lb	Limited	Ltd.	(simple)	r
quart	qt	District of Columbia	D.C.	covariance	cov
yard	yd	et alii (and others)	et al.	degree (angular)	°
		et cetera (and so forth)	etc.	degrees of freedom	df
Time and temperature		exempli gratia		expected value	<i>E</i>
day	d	(for example)	e.g.	greater than	>
degrees Celsius	°C	Federal Information		greater than or equal to	≥
degrees Fahrenheit	°F	Code	FIC	harvest per unit effort	HPUE
degrees kelvin	K	id est (that is)	i.e.	less than	<
hour	h	latitude or longitude	lat. or long.	less than or equal to	≤
minute	min	monetary symbols		logarithm (natural)	ln
second	s	(U.S.)	\$, ¢	logarithm (base 10)	log
		months (tables and		logarithm (specify base)	log ₂ , etc.
Physics and chemistry		figures): first three		minute (angular)	'
all atomic symbols		letters	Jan, ..., Dec	not significant	NS
alternating current	AC	registered trademark	®	null hypothesis	H ₀
ampere	A	trademark	™	percent	%
calorie	cal	United States		probability	P
direct current	DC	(adjective)	U.S.	probability of a type I error	
hertz	Hz	United States of		(rejection of the null	
horsepower	hp	America (noun)	USA	hypothesis when true)	α
hydrogen ion activity	pH	U.S.C.	United States	probability of a type II error	
(negative log of)			Code	(acceptance of the null	
parts per million	ppm	U.S. state	use two-letter	hypothesis when false)	β
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰		abbreviations	second (angular)	"
			(e.g., AK, WA)	standard deviation	SD
volts	V			standard error	SE
watts	W			variance	
				population	Var
				sample	var

REGIONAL INFORMATION REPORT NO. 1J09-11

**MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SUMMER COMMERCIAL TROLL
FISHERY IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA**

by

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The Regional Information Report Series was established in 1987 and was redefined in 2007 to meet the Division of Commercial Fisheries regional need for publishing and archiving information such as project operational plans, area management plans, budgetary information, staff comments and opinions to Board of Fisheries proposals, interim or preliminary data and grant agency reports, special meeting or minor workshop results and other regional information not generally reported elsewhere. Reports in this series may contain raw data and preliminary results. Reports in this series receive varying degrees of regional, biometric and editorial review; information in this series may be subsequently finalized and published in a different department reporting series or in the formal literature. Please contact the author or the Division of Commercial Fisheries if in doubt of the level of review or preliminary nature of the data reported. Regional Information Reports are available through the Alaska State Library and on the Internet at: <http://www.sf.adfg.ak.us/statewide/divreprots/html/intersearch.cfm>.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES	ii
ABSTRACT	1
INTRODUCTION	1
2009 SUMMER TROLL FISHERY DATES	1
MANAGEMENT APPROACH	1
Chinook Salmon	1
Management Objectives	2
Management Methods	2
Projected 2009 Chinook Salmon Harvests and Allocations	3
Coho Salmon	4
Management Objectives	5
Management Methods	5
Allocation Actions	6
Tentative 2009 Summer Season Schedule	9
OPEN AREAS DURING 2009 GENERAL SUMMER TROLL SEASON	10
Regulations Pertaining To Commercial Troll Bycatch Of Groundfish And Halibut	10
SPORT FISHING AND CHARTERING FROM A REGISTERED TROLL VESSEL	11
REGIONAL AQUACULTURE TERMINAL HARVEST AREAS	12
Sitka Sound And Neets Bay Chum Salmon Plans For 2009	12
Sitka Sound	12
Neets Bay	12
FISHERY CONTACTS	21

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
Figure 1.—General summer catch reporting districts.....	13
Figure 2.—Fisheries Performance Data program reporting areas in Southeast Alaska.....	14
Figure 3.—Southeast Alaska areas closed to trolling for all species following the initial Chinook salmon opening in the Southeast Alaska summer troll season.	15
Figure 4.—The regression model that is used in season to predict the wild Southeast Alaska commercial coho salmon return.....	16
Figure 5.—Ketchikan area general summer trolling areas and seasons.....	17
Figure 6.—Juneau area general summer trolling areas and seasons.....	18
Figure 7.—Trolling times and areas for the Yakutat area, beginning August 7.	19
Figure 8.—Neets Bay Terminal Harvest Area for chum salmon fisheries.	20

ABSTRACT

This document summarizes the plan that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) will follow to manage the 2009 Southeast Alaska summer commercial salmon troll fishery from July 1 through September 30, 2009. The troll fishery will be managed according to the Board of Fisheries adopted guidelines listed in the State of Alaska Administrative Code, Title 5, Chapter 29 Salmon Troll Fishery. The first Chinook salmon fishing period will begin on July 1 and will close by emergency order. The fishery is being managed for a target harvest of 85,850 fish. The remainder of the troll Chinook salmon Treaty allocation will be harvested following the August coho salmon closure period. The fishery will be open to harvest coho salmon July 1–September 20, with inseason consideration given to a possible conservation closure period in late July, a possible conservation or allocation closure in mid-August, and consideration of an extension of the season until September 30.

Key words: salmon, troll, summer, commercial, management plan, Chinook salmon, coho salmon, Southeast Alaska

INTRODUCTION

The Southeast Alaska/Yakutat commercial salmon troll fishery occurs in State of Alaska and Federal Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) waters east of Cape Suckling and north of Dixon Entrance. The fishery is managed according to regulations promulgated by the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board), the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and the U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC). The department, under emergency order authority, conducts inseason management. The all-gear Chinook salmon fishery will be managed to achieve a harvest target based on the 2009 Bilateral Treaty Agreement. The Treaty agreement specifies a harvest based on a relationship between a preseason Abundance Index (AI) generated by the Pacific Salmon Commission's Chinook Technical Committee and a target harvest rate specified in the agreement. The Treaty agreement also provides for an inseason adjustment to the harvest level based on an assessment of inseason data. Coho salmon will be managed to ensure escapement goals and to achieve board allocation guidelines. Coho salmon near Dixon Entrance will be managed in cooperation with Canada according to the Treaty agreement.

This management plan discusses the management objectives and methods used to achieve board, NPFMC, NMFS, and PSC policies and goals for the commercial summer troll fishery. This plan covers commercial trolling for Chinook, coho, and chum salmon. Other species caught and retained by trollers are considered incidental.

2009 SUMMER TROLL FISHERY DATES

The summer troll fishing season covered in this plan is July 1 through September 20. Chinook salmon may be harvested only during open periods announced by the department. The coho salmon season may be extended no more than 10 days (September 21 through September 30) in Districts 101 through 116 (Figure 1) depending on run strength (5AAC 29.110).

MANAGEMENT APPROACH

CHINOOK SALMON

The majority of the Chinook salmon harvested in the Alaska summer troll fishery are of wild stock origin. Hatchery stocks harvested in the fishery originate in British Columbia, Canada, Washington, and Oregon with a relatively small number from Alaskan hatcheries. As a result, the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon harvest is managed on an annual, all-gear catch quota established by the United States and Canada through the PSC. The ceiling is now abundance-

based, with increased quotas when abundance is high, and vice versa. In addition to the catch ceiling of Treaty fish, provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) administered by the PSC provide for an additional harvest of Chinook salmon that have been produced in Alaskan hatcheries (add-on). The all-gear add-on is equal to the total number of Alaskan hatchery Chinook caught, minus the pre-Treaty production of Chinook salmon of around 5,000 fish, and a risk adjustment factor of around 1,000 fish.

Management Objectives

1. Achieve the allowable Chinook salmon harvest.
2. Maximize the harvest of Alaska hatchery-produced Chinook salmon.
3. Manage the fishery according to the board's Summer Salmon Troll Fishery Management Plan (5AAC 29.100)
4. Continue the coastwide natural Chinook salmon stock-rebuilding program.
5. Achieve catch allocations among user groups as mandated by the board.
6. Minimize the incidental mortality of Chinook salmon to the extent practicable.

Management Methods

Historically, the majority of the annual troll Chinook salmon harvest is taken during the general summer opening, when salmon may be taken throughout most of the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat including the outside waters of the EEZ. Unlike the spring fishery, a quota is set for management of Chinook salmon. One of the major functions of the department's troll management plan is determining when the general summer season for Chinook salmon must be closed in order to stay within the allowable harvest. Tabulating the up-to-date troll catch is difficult due to the large number of fish tickets and the difficulty of receiving them from remote areas in a timely manner. Therefore, a Fisheries Performance Data (FPD) program, consisting of confidential interviews with commercial trollers as they deliver catches, is used to estimate daily catch rates in six areas (Figure 2). The total number of days the fishery will be open for Chinook salmon retention is calculated by dividing the summer season harvest goal by the estimated daily catch by the troll fleet.

From 1992 through 1995, and again in 2000, 2001 and 2008, the department announced a fixed number of days beginning July 1, due to the low number of Chinook salmon available for harvest. From 1996–1999 and 2002–2007, the Chinook fishery was managed in season and closed by emergency order, due to the larger Chinook quotas during those years. In 2009, the department will return to inseason management for the first Chinook opening and will close the fishery by emergency order. The department will manage the summer troll season according to the board management plan (5 AAC 29.100), which calls for harvesting 70% of the remaining Chinook salmon troll quota (see next section) in an initial opening beginning July 1. The remainder of the Chinook salmon quota is to be harvested following any closure for coho salmon conservation and/or allocation in August. Following the first Chinook opening, the waters of high Chinook abundance will be closed unless the department determines that less than 30% of the Chinook salmon harvest goal for the initial opening was taken in that opening (Figure 3). In addition, during the second Chinook salmon opening, if the department determines after 10 days that the annual troll Chinook salmon harvest ceiling might not be reached by September 20 with

those waters closed, the department shall reopen the waters of high Chinook salmon abundance by emergency order.

The hatchery add-on is calculated in season through port sampling programs. Chinook salmon are sampled for the presence of adipose fins. The heads from fish that have missing adipose fins are then sent to the Juneau Mark, Tag and Age lab for processing. Coded-wire tags are removed from the heads and decoded. The number of Alaskan hatchery fish is calculated by expanding the number of Alaskan hatchery-produced Chinook salmon in the sampled catch by the total catch.

Projected 2009 Chinook Salmon Harvests and Allocations

The Chinook salmon fisheries will be managed according to the 2009 Bilateral Treaty Agreement. In addition to the pre-Treaty troll fishery “base catch” of 3,700 Alaska hatchery-produced Chinook salmon, and the hatchery catches in the winter and spring fisheries, Alaska hatcheries are projected to contribute approximately 3,700 Chinook salmon to the summer troll harvest for a projected 2009 total of 18,200 Alaska hatchery Chinook salmon. The actual hatchery add-on will be determined in season and finalized postseason from coded-wire-tag (CWT) estimates.

At the February 1997 and January 2006 Board of Fisheries meetings, sharing percentages were established for the recreational and commercial troll and net Chinook salmon fisheries (not including Alaska hatchery Chinook salmon). The commercial troll fishery was allocated 80% and the recreational fishery 20% of the PST quota, after subtracting 4.3% from the total for the purse seine fisheries, 2.9% for the drift gillnet fishery, and 1,000 fish for the setnet fishery. The pre-Treaty Chinook salmon harvest and risk adjustment factors (4,700 combined) are proportionally shared between the gear groups.

Allocations of this harvest quota for 2009 are as follows:

All-gear Treaty Quota	Seine	Drift Gillnet	Set Gillnet	Sport	Troll
218,789	9,408	6,345	1,000	40,407	161,629

The Chinook Technical Committee (CTC) of the PSC has determined that the Chinook salmon abundance index for Southeast Alaska for 2009 is 1.33. This abundance index equates to an all-gear quota of 218,789 Treaty Chinook salmon, which is about 48,800 fish greater than the 2008 quota. Chinook salmon returns to many West Coast rivers from Oregon to Alaska remain below the high levels seen from 2003 to 2005, but several key populations are showing improvements over the returns that led to the significantly reduced allowable harvests in 2008. According to the BOF allocation plan outlined above, the troll fishery allocation of the Treaty quota is 161,629 fish.

Estimated troll fishery harvests of Treaty Chinook from the winter and spring troll fisheries are:

Fishery	Total	Alaska Hatchery	Treaty Fish
Winter Fishery	24,889	2,752	22,137
Spring Fishery	27,585	11,752	15,832
Pre-summer Totals	52,474	14,504	37,969

The summer troll Treaty quota is calculated by adding the winter Treaty harvest of 22,137 fish, the spring Treaty harvest estimated at 15,832 fish, the pre-Treaty Alaska hatchery harvest of 3,700 fish, and a statistical risk factor surrounding the Alaska hatchery contribution estimate of 1,000 fish. The resultant sum is then subtracted from the troll allocation. This results in a summer troll quota of approximately **118,960** Treaty fish (34,460 more than 2008). In addition, under the BOF plan, 70% of the summer quota is to be harvested during the first summer opening beginning July 1. Therefore, the target catch for the first opening will be approximately 83,300 Treaty fish, plus an estimated 3% Alaska hatchery fish, or a total first summer opening target harvest of **85,850** fish. The second Chinook opening target catch is projected to be approximately **36,790** fish (including 35,690 Treaty fish).

The department will update the preseason projection of abundance with actual fishery catch and effort statistics immediately following the closure of the first opening. Any adjustments to the targeted all-gear harvest based on this inseason data will be made as soon as possible.

Based on past fishery performance at similar abundance levels of Treaty Chinook salmon, the department anticipates the **first opening harvest target will be taken in 7 to 10 days**. However, effort and catch rates are highly variable and the projected fishery length is based on historical effort levels. If available data indicates that the catch rates are significantly lower than expected, the department could extend the opening. Closure announcements and any updates will be made via U.S. Coast Guard marine advisory broadcasts and trollers are advised to either listen to the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Advisory broadcasts daily or stay in close contact with the department or processors for any such announcements.

Following the closure of the initial summer Chinook salmon period, all Chinook salmon must be offloaded prior to trolling for other species.

COHO SALMON

Most coho salmon harvested in the troll fishery are of Alaskan origin. They spawn in approximately 2,500 streams in Southeast Alaska during the fall and early winter months. Coho salmon harvests were depressed in the mid to late 1970s but improved through most of the 1980s and 1990s. Factors contributing to the increased harvests include the improved spawning escapement levels achieved under the conservative management regime implemented in 1980, increased marine survivals due to favorable ocean conditions, increased targeting of coho salmon by trollers and increasing Alaska hatchery production. Hatchery coho salmon production (almost entirely from Southeast Alaska facilities) first became significant in 1980. The contribution of hatchery coho salmon since then has varied from 0.4% of the total troll catch in 1980, 13.0% in 1986, 5.5% in 1988, and 20 to 26% from 1996 through 2004. The 2008 Alaska hatchery contribution of 20% was similar to the 1989–2008 average of 19%.

Early in the season, coho salmon stocks returning to southern Southeast Alaska are harvested by the troll fishery in northern and central outside areas where they intermingle with coho salmon bound for northern and central areas of the region. Troll fishery catches of coho salmon in outer coastal areas generally peak during mid-July to mid-August. Catches in inside fisheries generally peak during late August to mid-September. Management of coho salmon is based on aggregate abundance. Lack of a general coho salmon stock identification technique prevents assessment of run strength of individual stock groups contributing to these early-season mixed stock fisheries.

The 2008 troll harvest of coho salmon was 1.27 million fish, the 21st highest in the 50 years since statehood. An assessment in early August indicated that a mid-season closure of five days was appropriate, prior to the second Chinook opening. Though run strength initially appeared to be about average, catch rates in the troll, northern gillnet and Juneau sport fisheries were below average by early August (catch rates in the southern gillnet fisheries were above average). During the four weeks that followed the coho closure, catch rates in the troll and inside sport fisheries remained below average and wild coho abundance was projected to be low. As a result, the department determined that 2008 could not be considered a high coho abundance year, so the troll fishery was not extended in any portion of the region beyond the September 20 regulatory closure date.

Management Objectives

1. Provide adequate escapement of coho salmon, by area, to ensure sustainable populations.
2. Provide maximum opportunities for harvest consistent with conservation objectives (5AAC 29.110).
3. Manage the coho salmon fisheries to achieve allocations consistent with board regulations.
4. Manage coho salmon on the U.S./Canada border to comply with provisions of the Agreement.

Management Methods

As with Chinook salmon, the department's primary tool for inseason assessment of coho salmon catch rates is a program of dockside interviews with vessel skippers. Catches by the net fisheries are obtained from fish tickets, while the recreational catch is estimated from a creel census conducted by the Sport Fish Division. An assessment of run strength using troll catch per unit of effort (CPUE) data from the FPD program occurs in mid to late-July. Information available on individual coho salmon indicator stocks will also be considered in management actions.

Catch rates will be assessed in Southern Southeast Alaska from mid- through late-July to assess run strength of early-run coho salmon returning to systems in both Canada and the U.S., near the border. If run strength is weak, areas of Districts 101–104 may close for conservation for up to three weeks, from late July through mid-August, as per the terms of the June 1999 PST agreement.

Projected total season troll coho salmon harvests will be used as a relative index of total run size. Analysis of the FPD program has shown that the average area-wide catch-per-day for Statistical Weeks 28 and 29 (average week ending date is July 19) for the years 1981 to 2001 and 2004 to 2008 is a good predictor of the wild coho salmon catch (Figure 4). If the projected overall run size is less than 1.1 million wild fish, the department will implement a 7-day conservation closure beginning sometime in late July (5AAC 29.110). In 2009, the department will make this projection during the third or fourth week of July (Figure 4). The 2002 and 2003 catch and effort data will not be used for this projection because coho fishing or fish behavior patterns during those years did not reflect patterns consistent with other years. The department will continue to monitor all coho fisheries after the July assessment to determine if the number of coho salmon

reaching inside areas will be adequate to provide for spawning requirements, given normal or even restricted inside fisheries. The primary abundance indicators for this assessment consist of relative harvest levels by all fisheries and, in particular, CPUE of wild fish in inside drift gillnet and sport fisheries compared to 1971–1980 levels. An assessment will be made in early August to determine when and how long to close the troll fishery for conservation and allocation purposes.

Cumulative catch-per-day of wild fish will be monitored in each of the six FPD areas (Figure 2) through August to assess run strength in each of the areas. Data will be compared with catches and CPUE within these areas and, if necessary, the department will implement area-specific closures.

The department, in years of high abundance, may extend the troll season through September 30 in portions of Districts 101 through 116 if there are no conservation concerns. The department will consider the following data in determining if an extension is warranted:

1. Total run size projection,
2. Total harvests to date by gear by area,
3. CPUE relative to previous years by gear by area,
4. Percent of hatchery fish in the catch relative to previous years,
5. Survival projections for hatchery and wild stocks, and
6. Inseason escapement data.

The department will announce any extensions, if warranted, during the third week of September.

Allocation Actions

The board has established long-term allocation goals for the coho salmon harvest by each commercial gear type. Target percentages established by the board are 61% for troll, 19% for purse seine, 13% for drift gillnet, and 7% for set gillnet. The board stated that subsistence, personal use, and recreational harvests of coho salmon are not affected by the established allocations between commercial gear types. The board also stated that:

“These percentages are guidelines only and may vary from season to season given natural fluctuations in salmon abundance and distribution and the limitations of fisheries management. It is, however, the board’s intent that these allocation guidelines be met as closely as possible over the long term. It is not the board’s intent for the department to disrupt any of the traditional commercial fisheries that the historical allocation is founded. The department may, however, make inseason adjustments to attempt to achieve these long term allocation guidelines.”

The department will, however, implement applicable, existing regulations (5AAC 29.100). These regulations are:

1. A regionwide troll closure for up to 10 days is required during the coho salmon season to address allocations between outer coastal fisheries and inside water fisheries if the department determines that the proportional share of coho salmon harvest by the troll fishery is larger than that of inside gillnet and recreational fisheries compared to the 1971–1980 levels. Primary inside fishery indicators for this assessment are overall coho

2. In Sections 1-C, 1-E, and 1-F, salmon may be taken only as follows (Figure 5).
 - (a) Section 1-C: from August 15 through September 20.
 - (b) Section 1-E:
 - (1) In waters of W. Behm Canal within one nautical mile of the western shore of Revillagigedo Island north of the latitude of Escape Point 55°39.07'N. lat., 131°43.08' W. long. excluding the waters of the Neets Bay SHA (5 AAC 33.370) from July 1 through September 20.
 - (2) All other waters from July 13 through September 20.
 - (c) Section 1-F: east of a line from the northernmost tip of Kirk Point to Mary Island Light to the southernmost tip of Cone Island, from July 13 through September 20.
 - (d) Section 1-F: east of a line from the southernmost tip of Black Island to the westernmost tip of Slate Island to the westernmost tip of White Reef to the easternmost tip of Black Rock to the northernmost tip of Kirk Point, including the waters of Boca de Quadra not closed under 5 AAC 29.150(b)(2), from August 1 through September 20.
3. In District 11 salmon may be taken only in Sections 11-C and 11-D (Figure 6).
4. In District 15 salmon may be taken only in Sections 15-A and 15-C (Figure 6).
6. In the Yakutat area, from August 7–September 20, salmon may not be taken in state waters within a portion of District 181 as described in 5 AAC 29.100(i). Based on new regulations adopted by the board in 2009, troll and set gillnet fishery openings are no longer coupled from August 7–September 20 in State waters of the Yakutat area. Troll openings will be established independently of set gillnet openings (Figure 7).

If a regionwide troll closure is implemented to conserve coho salmon during late July or early August, the likelihood of a closure during mid-August to meet the allocation criteria will be reduced. Any potential transfer of coho salmon harvest to inside fisheries resulting from an early closure, if implemented, will be reflected in inside fishery performance indicators used for comparison against the allocation criteria.

Tentative 2009 Summer Season Schedule

The following is a generalized timetable for summer salmon management. It is emphasized that some modifications to this schedule may be required.

DATES	EXPECTED REGULATORY ACTIONS
July 1	Open the 2009 general summer troll season for all species; the initial troll Chinook salmon opening will close when 70% of the total summer harvest target has been harvested. The first Chinook salmon retention period will be managed in season and will close by Emergency Order. The waters of frequent high Chinook salmon abundance will close following the Chinook salmon closure.
Mid- through late-July	Assess coho salmon run strength in Southern Southeast Alaska. Portions of Districts 101–104 may close if run strength indicates conservation concerns for coho salmon stocks near the U.S./Canada border.
Late July/early August	Seven-day, regionwide conservation closure if projected run size is less than 1.1 million wild coho salmon; the projected total season commercial harvest will be used as index of run size.
Mid- to late-August	<p>A regionwide closure of up to 10 days will be implemented if required for either coho salmon conservation or allocation based on assessment of stock and fishery performance data relative to board-established criteria. If a regionwide conservation closure has occurred during late July, the likelihood of a closure being implemented for allocation at this time will be reduced.</p> <p>Following any closure of the troll fishery, the Chinook salmon fishery will reopen to take all of the remaining Treaty quota Chinook salmon. A minimum closure of 2 days is required prior to the second Chinook salmon opening to allow for a fair start (5 AAC 29.100(c)(1)(B)(ii)).</p> <p>During the closure period, a chum salmon fishery may occur in the Sitka Sound and Neets Bay (Figure 8) areas.</p>
Late-August to September 20	Coho salmon conservation measures implemented regionwide or by area, as required, to protect weak coho stocks.
Mid-September	An assessment of coho strength to determine if the troll season may be extended beyond September 20.
September 20	<p>Established regulatory closing date of 2009 general summer troll season.</p> <p>All salmon must be offloaded prior to fishing in the Winter Troll Fishery beginning October 11.</p>

The widespread and complex nature of the troll fishery necessitates a closely coordinated management program. Inseason management is accomplished through a team consisting of the Southeast regional supervisor and management biologist, two troll fishery management

biologists, and 12 area management biologists. Department contact information is listed at the end of this plan.

OPEN AREAS DURING 2009 GENERAL SUMMER TROLL SEASON

Salmon trolling is permitted in all areas during the first Chinook salmon retention period of the 2009 general summer season except for those waters described in 5AAC 29.100 and the closed waters listed in 5AAC 29.150. In addition, during subsequent Chinook salmon retention periods, waters designated as frequent high Chinook salmon abundance (5AAC 29.025) will be closed as necessary. During the 2006 Board of Fisheries meeting in January, the northern boundary of the high Chinook salmon abundance area along Yakobi Island was changed and moved approximately 1/3 nautical miles south of the previous location. The new northern boundary is now at 58°05.00' N. lat. (5AAC 29.025(a)(3)).

REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO COMMERCIAL TROLL BYCATCH OF GROUND FISH AND HALIBUT

For information on Southeast Alaska Groundfish regulations, refer to the 2009–2009 Statewide Commercial Groundfish Fishing Regulations books available at all Southeast ADF&G area offices.

Halibut incidentally taken during an open commercial halibut season by power and hand troll gear being operated for salmon consistent with applicable state laws and regulations are legally taken and possessed (5AAC 28.133 (c)). Commercial halibut may be legally retained only by IFQ permit holders during the open season for halibut, March 21–November 15, 2009. Trollers making an IFQ halibut landing of 500 lbs or less of IFQ weight as determined pursuant to 50 CFR 679.42(h) are exempted from the 3 hour Prior Notice of Landing (PNOL) if landed concurrently with a legal landing of salmon [50 CFR 679.5(l)(1)(iv)(A)]. Halibut taken incidentally during the troll fishery shall be reported on a fish ticket using the CFEC salmon permit. For information on regulations and landing requirements for the federal IFQ halibut fishery contact the National Marine Fisheries Service at 586-7225 (Juneau), 747-6940 (Sitka), 772-2285 (Petersburg), or 247-5804 (Ketchikan).

Lingcod may be taken as bycatch in the commercial salmon troll fishery only from May 16 through November 30 (5AAC 28.113 (c)). Lingcod harvest allocations for the troll fishery are set by Lingcod Management Area and area closures will occur as allocations are taken. Closures will be announced by news release and marine radio broadcast by the U.S. Coast Guard and National Weather Service. For updates on area closures for lingcod, call the Groundfish Hotline at 747-4882 or contact the Groundfish staff in Sitka at 747-6688.

Lingcod may be taken as salmon bycatch in the summer troll fishery in unlimited amounts with the following exceptions:

1. The 2009 commercial lingcod allocation for the Icy Bay Subdistrict (IBS) has been taken and this area was closed to lingcod retention effective June 9 for the remainder of the year.
2. Lingcod bycatch in the EYKT management area is limited to 10% (round weight) and lingcod bycatch in the NSEO management area is limited to 5% (round weight) of the round weight of salmon on board.

3. Lingcod must measure at least 27 inches from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail, or 20.5 inches from the front of the dorsal fin to the tip of the tail.
4. In the Sitka vicinity, the retention of lingcod is prohibited in the waters of Sitka Sound as defined by 5AAC 28.150(a).
5. Lingcod and other groundfish may not be taken in the waters off Cape Edgecumbe in the Edgecumbe Pinnacles Marine Reserve (5AAC 28.150(c)).

The Department has been involved in a lingcod tagging program and trollers are requested to retain tagged lingcod of any size and to notify the nearest ADF&G office at the time of delivery so the fish may be sampled. Tagged lingcod may be retained at any time however tags must remain attached to any tagged lingcod that are undersized, taken out of season, or from a closed area. Tagged lingcod should be dressed, with the head left attached. The date, capture location (latitude and longitude) and depth taken should be recorded. A hat will be rewarded and fishermen providing all of the recovery information will be entered into a cash drawing.

For information on bycatch allowances of groundfish in the salmon troll fishery, refer to the news release issued on June 1, 2009.

Other regulations:

1. Vessels trolling for salmon in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the Gulf of Alaska that retain groundfish bycatch must have a Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP) endorsed for troll gear. (contact NMFS at 907-586-7202 or 800-304-4846)
2. Trollers are allowed to longline for groundfish and troll for salmon on the same trip as long as salmon are not onboard the vessel in an area closed to trolling and the fisherman has both a commercial salmon permit and a commercial longline permit.
3. A vessel may not participate in a directed fishery for groundfish with dinglebar troll or mechanical jig gear if they have commercial caught salmon on board. A vessel fishing for groundfish with dinglebar troll gear must display the letter "D" and a vessel fishing for groundfish with mechanical jigging machines must display the letter "M" at all times when fishing with or transporting fish taken with dinglebar troll gear or mechanical jigging machines (5AAC 28.135 (a)(4)). A person may not operate a vessel that is displaying one of these letters when the vessel is being used to fish for salmon (5AAC 28.135 (c)).
4. Due to new regulations passed by the 2009 Board of Fish meeting, trollers may now sell black rockfish taken as bycatch in Sitka Sound and the other black rockfish closure areas listed in 5AAC 28.150 (e).

SPORT FISHING AND CHARTERING FROM A REGISTERED TROLL VESSEL

1. Sport fishing is allowed from a registered commercial salmon troll vessel (5AAC 47.041 (a)).
2. If sport fishing in **waters closed** to commercial trolling, the dorsal fin must be removed immediately from any salmon brought onboard the vessel (5AAC 47.041(c)). This regulation also applies when a person is sport fishing for a **species closed** to commercial trolling.

3. Sport fishing from a commercially licensed vessel, while commercially caught salmon are in possession, is illegal in waters closed to commercial salmon fishing (5AAC 47.041(d)).
4. A vessel registered for commercial trolling may also be registered as a charter vessel, though a vessel may not be used for both activities on the same day (5AAC 75.995 (8)). Sport-caught fish may not be sold.
5. A troll gurdy may NOT be used in conjunction with a fishing rod while fishing commercially but may be legally used as a downrigger to sport fish from a hand or power troll vessel (5AAC 29.120 (e)).

These regulations can be found in the 2009 Sport Fishing regulation booklet.

REGIONAL AQUACULTURE TERMINAL HARVEST AREAS

Terminal harvest areas (THAs) are described in the Southeast Alaska and Yakutat Commercial Salmon and Miscellaneous Finfish Regulations book. Hidden Falls, Neets Bay, Anita Bay, Deep Inlet, and Nakat Inlet THAs will be open to the harvest of all salmon species unless closed by emergency order. Trollers are requested to consult the appropriate terminal harvest area News Releases or contact any department office for the exact harvest schedules for each THA.

SITKA SOUND AND NEETS BAY CHUM SALMON PLANS FOR 2009

Sitka Sound

NSRAA has projected a return of approximately 1,160,000 chum salmon to the Deep Inlet THA and Medvejie Hatchery in 2009, with approximately 970,000 chum salmon available for common property fisheries. Compared to 2008, this projected return is smaller by 290,000 fish, with 190,000 fewer fish available for common property harvest. The Deep Inlet THA rotational fishing schedule began on May 31 to intercept Medvejie hatchery Chinook. The THA is open to trolling one day per week each Saturday between May 31 and June 20. The department issued a news release on June 12 describing common property and cost recovery hatchery chum fisheries in Deep Inlet, Eastern Channel and Silver Bay, to begin June 21.

Troll harvest of returning chum salmon typically takes place in Eastern Channel and in Sitka Sound from the last week of July through the mid-August troll closure. An area has been established in Sitka Sound where trollers may target chum salmon during the troll coho closure in August. During the coho closure, trollers may not have coho salmon onboard while fishing for chum salmon (5 AAC 29.112).

Neets Bay

The Neets Bay THA has been open to trollers since May 1, 2009 and will be open until closed by emergency order. SSRAA has set a goal of allowing trollers to harvest 200,000 chum salmon in the Neets Bay THA in 2009. During the summer troll fishery, salmon may be taken in the waters of Neets Bay east of the longitude of Chin Point to the closed waters at the head of the bay located at 131°29.86' W. longitude through August 1. From August 1 through September 20, THA waters are open to the easternmost tip of Bug Island (Figure 5). SSRAA is expecting approximately 1,165,000 summer chum salmon to return to the Neets Bay THA, which is 52% greater than the 768,000 summer chum that were projected to return in 2008.

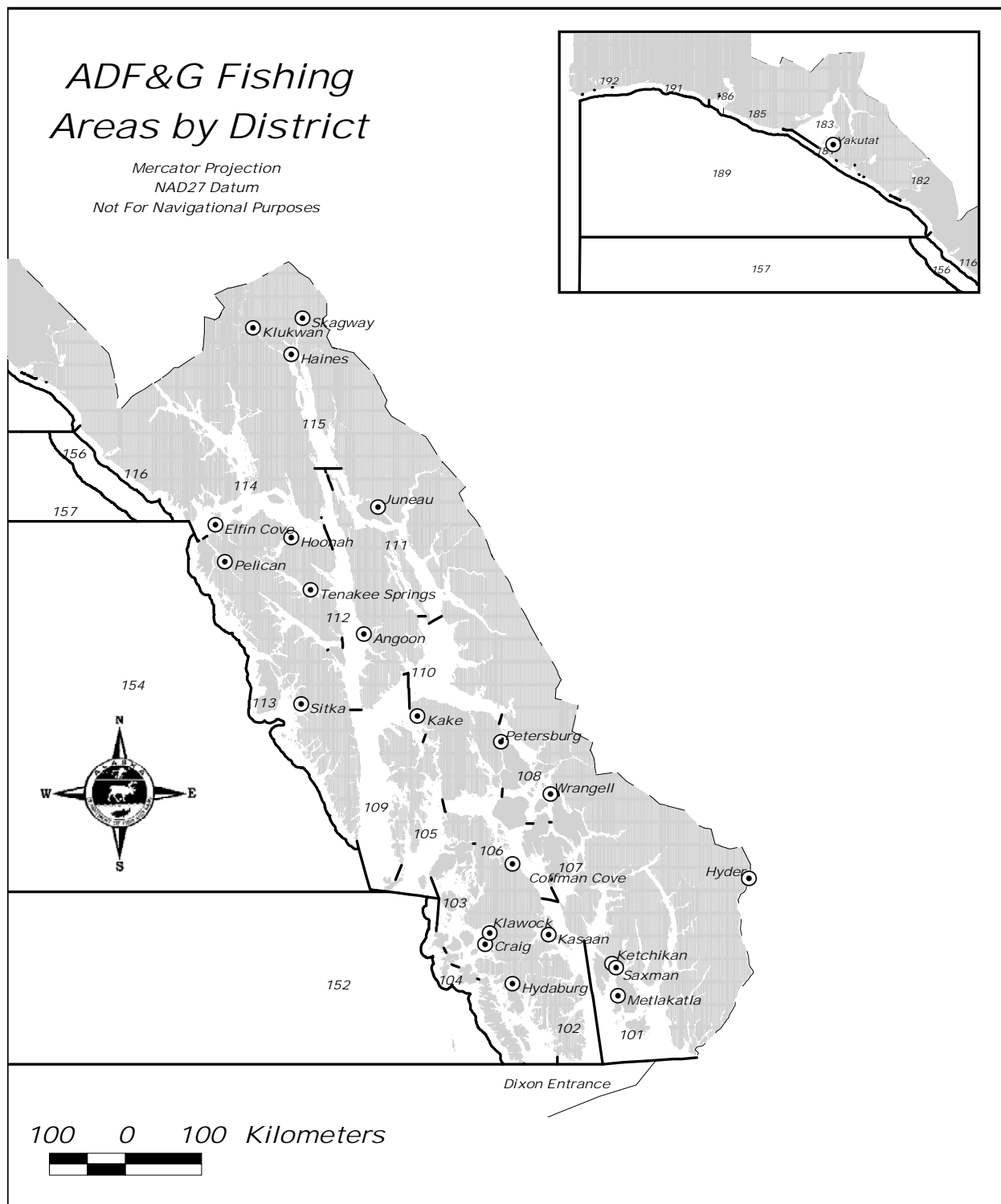


Figure 1.—General summer catch reporting districts.

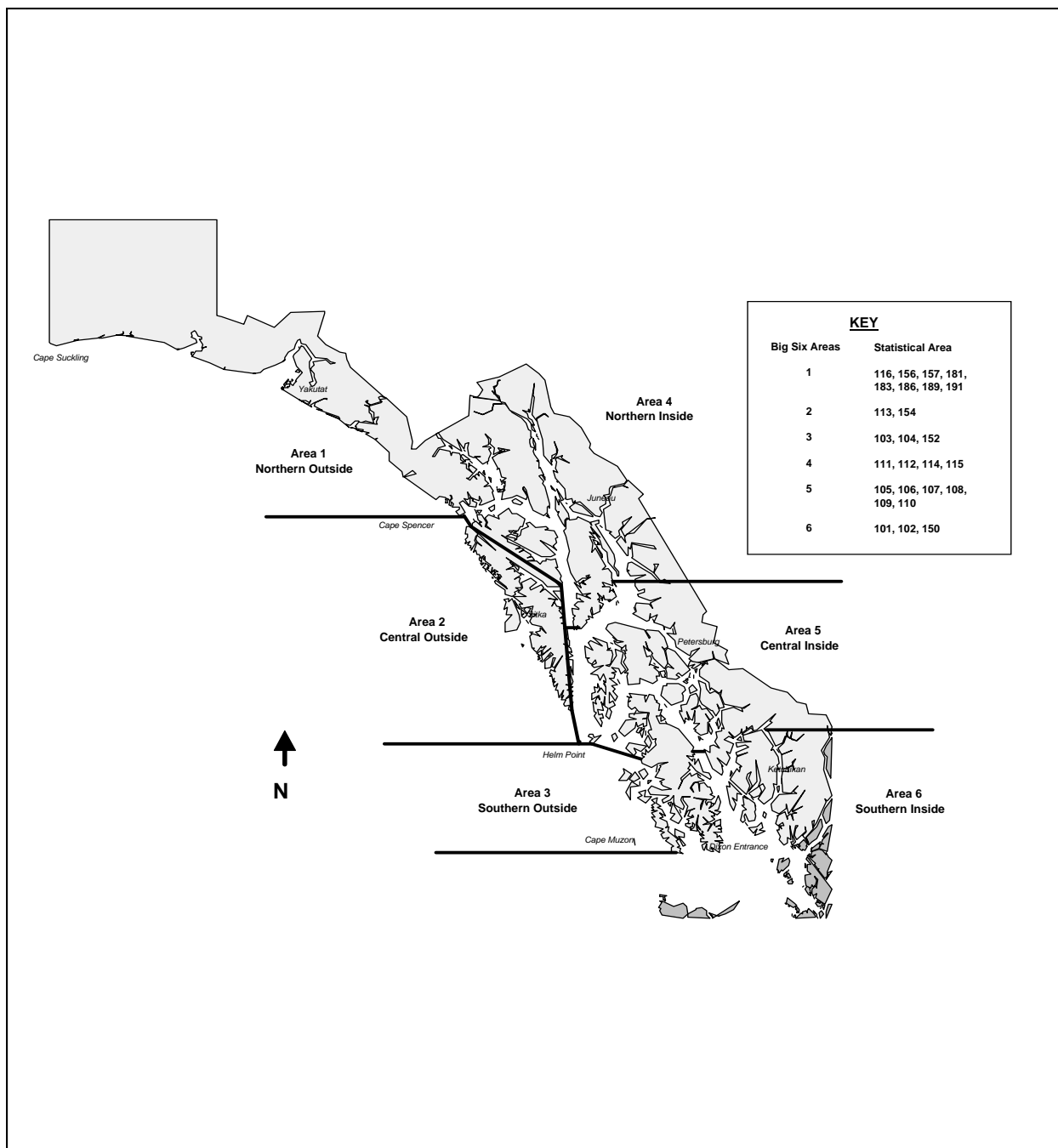


Figure 2.—Fisheries Performance Data program reporting areas in Southeast Alaska.

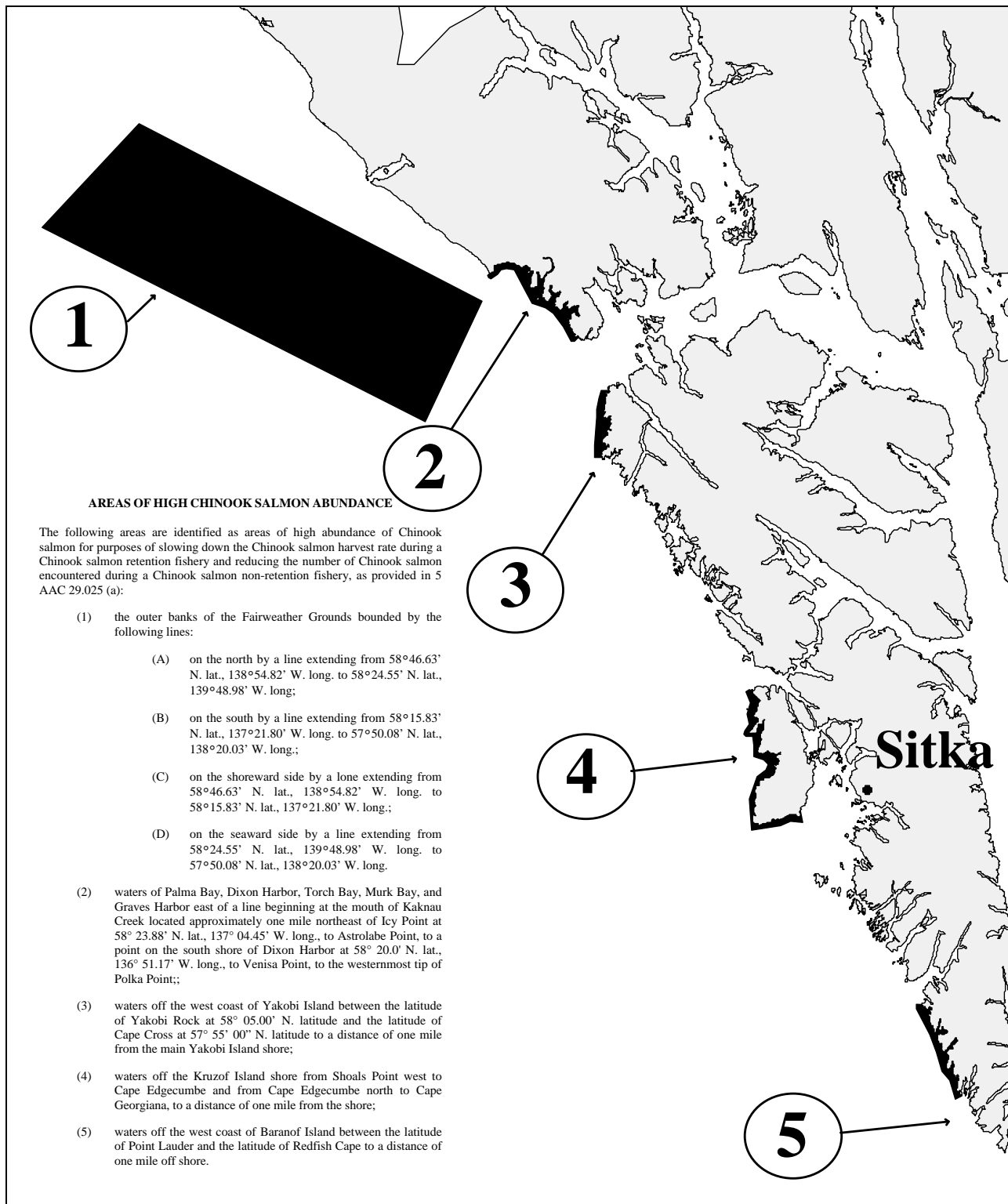


Figure 3.—Southeast Alaska areas closed to trolling for all species following the initial Chinook salmon opening in the Southeast Alaska summer troll season.

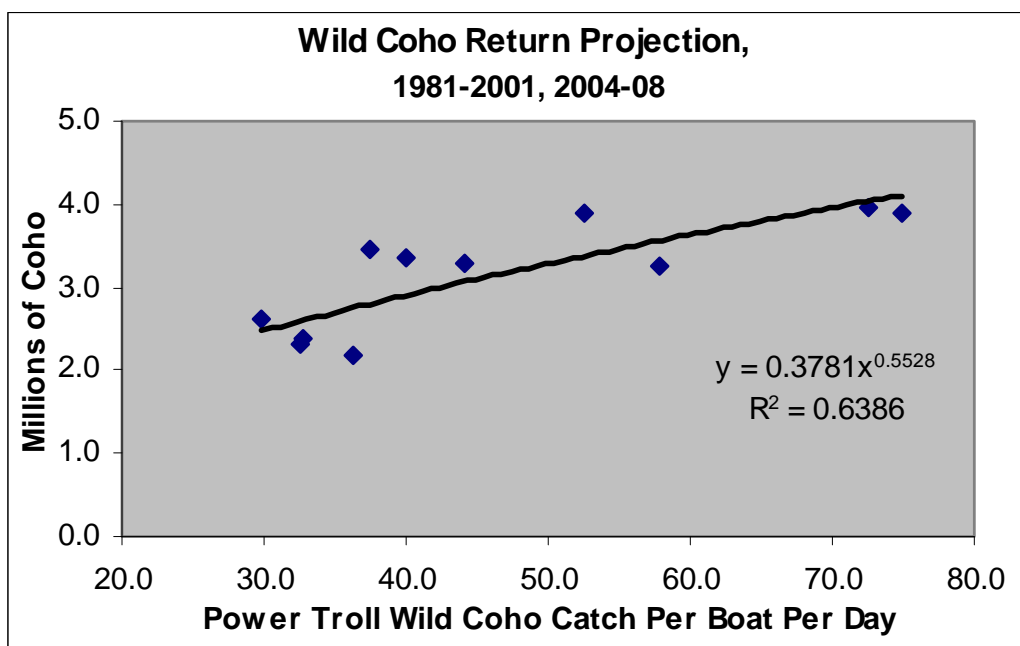


Figure 4.—The regression model that is used in season to predict the wild Southeast Alaska commercial coho salmon return.

Note: Y axis = Region total commercial wild coho salmon return prediction.

X axis = Troll fishery average power troll wild coho catch per boat day for statistical Weeks 28–29 (July 5–18), which is calculated by adding the average daily catch rate for boats that make a landing in week 28 (July 5–11) and the average daily catch rate for boats that make a landing in week 29 (July 12–18).

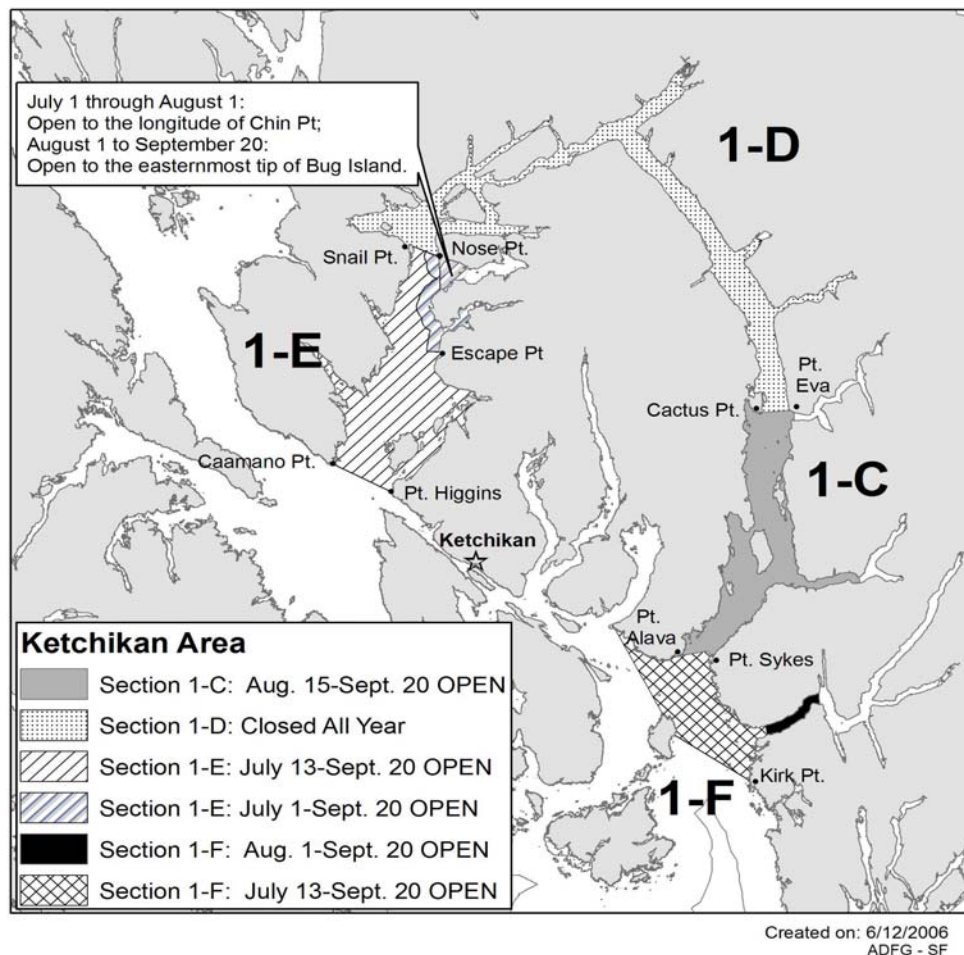
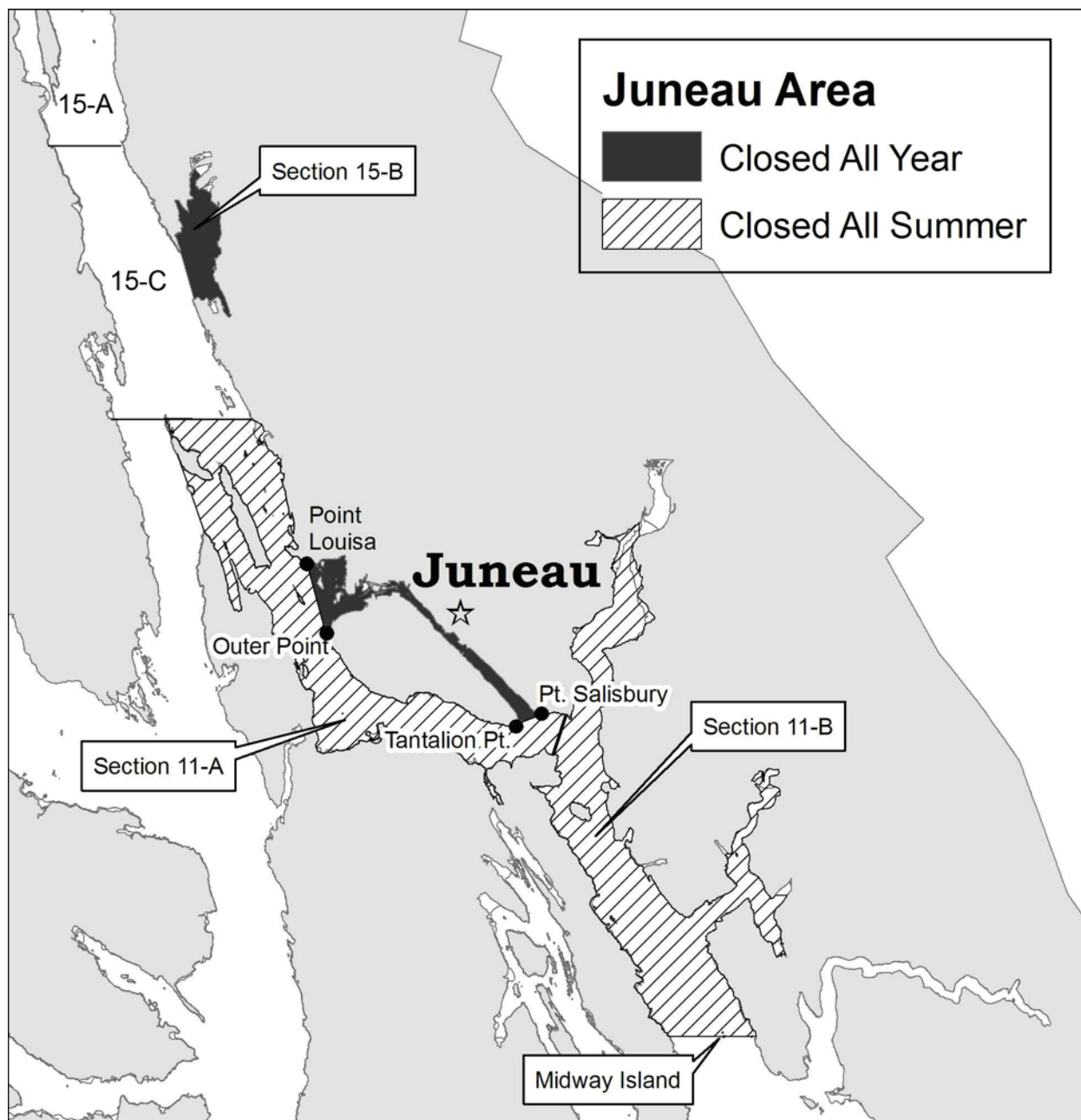


Figure 5.—Ketchikan area general summer trolling areas and seasons.

Note: This map is for general information only and does not exempt trollers from provisions in 5 AAC 29.150 (CLOSED WATERS) or Emergency Orders issued by the Department of Fish and Game. The general summer troll fishing season applies to those areas not specified in the key or in 5 AAC 29.150.



Created on: 6/12/2006
ADFG - SF

Figure 6.—Juneau area general summer trolling areas and seasons.

Note: This map is for general information only and does not exempt trollers from provisions in (5 AAC 29.150 (CLOSED WATERS)) or Emergency Orders issued by the Department of Fish and Game. The general summer troll fishing season applies to those areas not specified in the key or in 5 AAC 29.150.

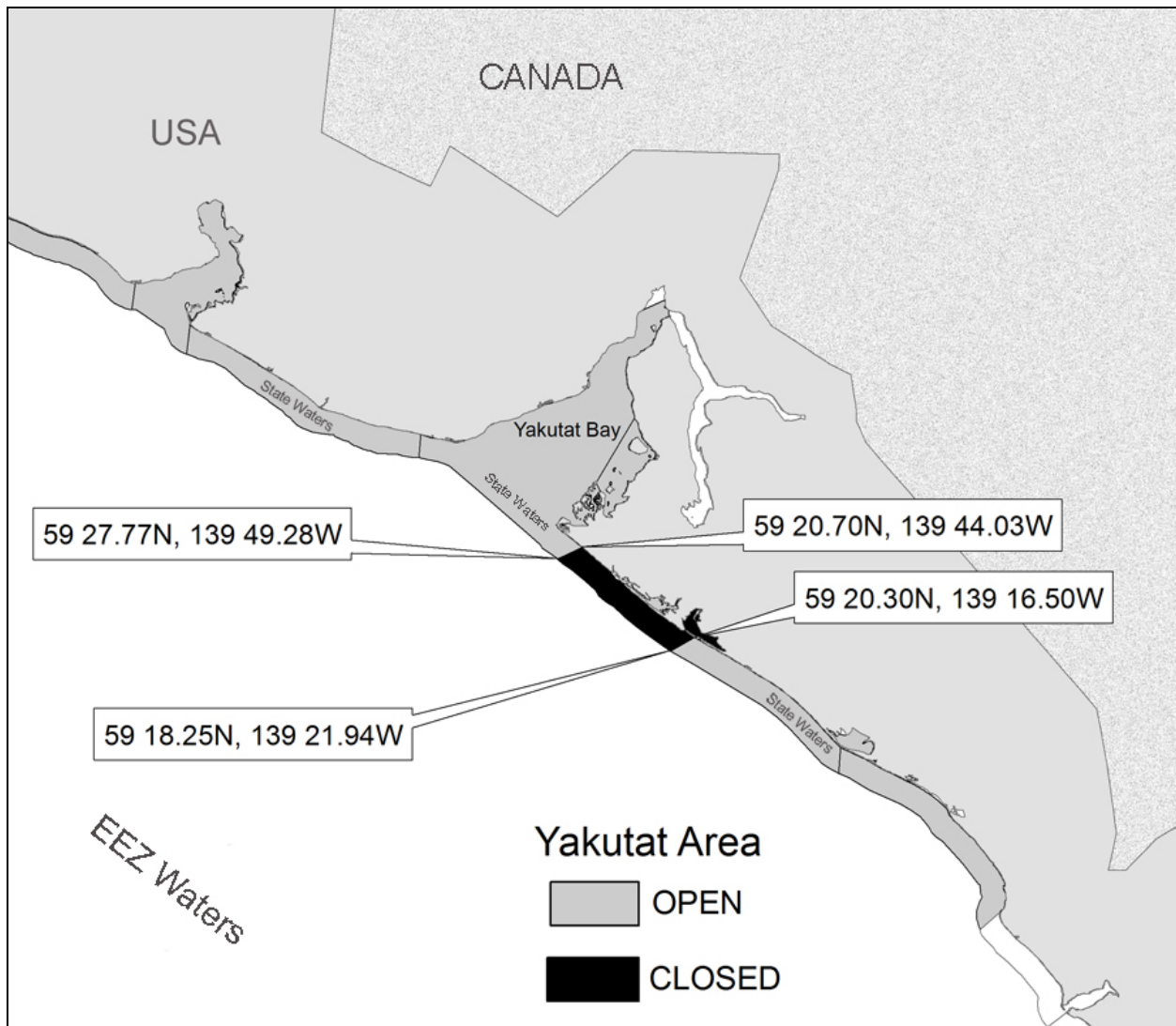


Figure 7.—Trolling times and areas for the Yakutat area, beginning August 7.

Note: This map is for general information only and does not exempt trollers from provisions in 5 AAC 29.150 (CLOSED WATERS) or Emergency Orders issued by the Department of Fish and Game. The general summer troll fishing season applies to those areas not specified in the key or in 5 AAC 29.150.

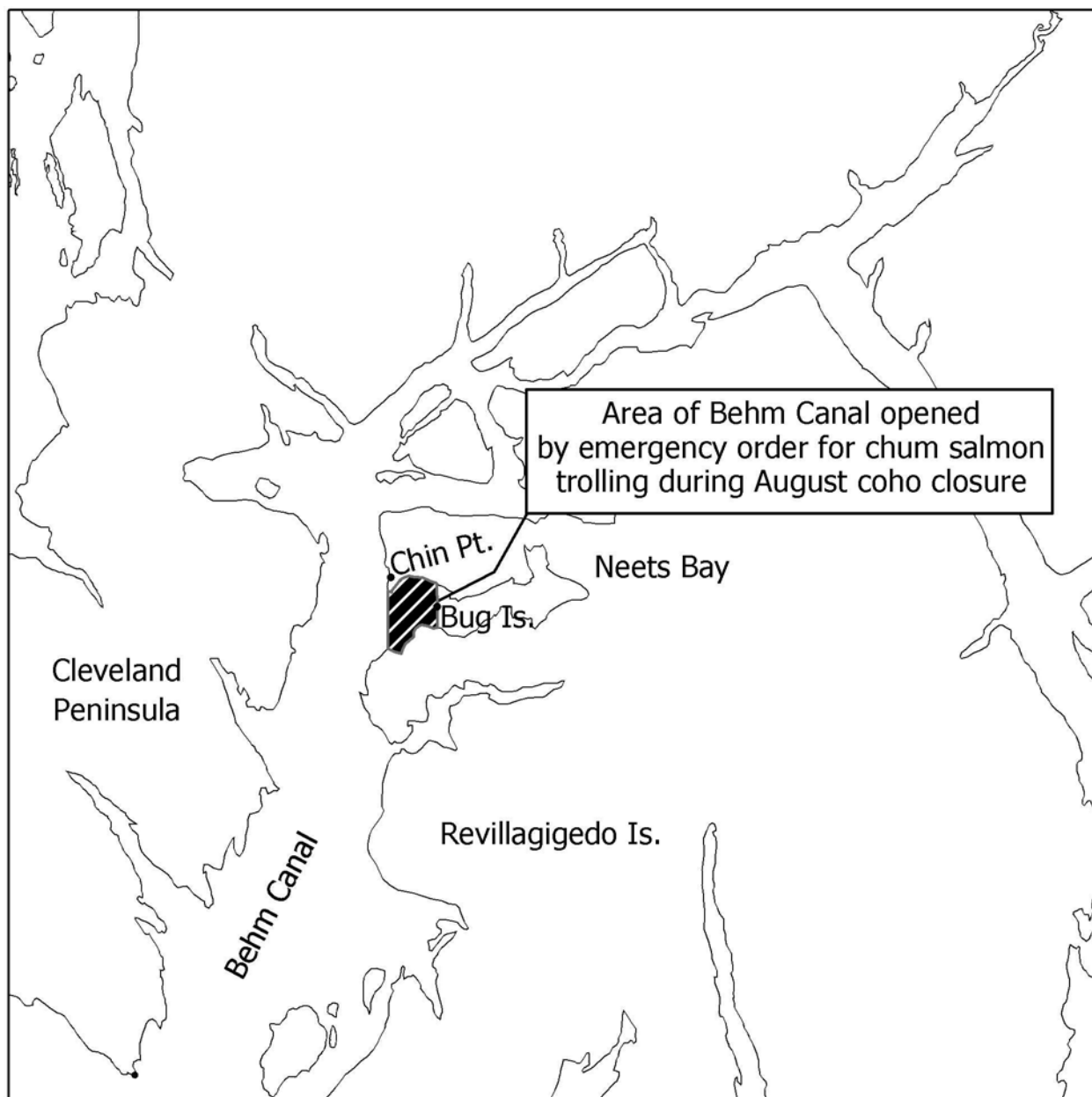


Figure 8.—Neets Bay Terminal Harvest Area for chum salmon fisheries.

Note: This map is for general information only and does not exempt trollers from provisions in 5 AAC 29.150 (CLOSED WATERS) or Emergency Orders issued by the Department of Fish and Game. The general summer troll fishing season applies to those areas not specified in the key or in 5 AAC 29.150.

FISHERY CONTACTS

The following are commercial fisheries division contacts regarding this management plan:

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For up-to-date troll information, call the 24-hour information line in the Douglas Office at 465-TROL (8765). In addition, the following telephone numbers may be called during the troll fishing season to obtain recorded announcements concerning areas open to trolling.

Ketchikan (907) 225-6870

Sitka (907) 747-8765

Petersburg (907) 772-3700

Southeast Alaska Troll Website:

www.cf.adfg.state.ak.us/region1/finfish/salmon/troll/trolinfo.php