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News Release

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Number of Allowable Pots Reduced in 2017 Prince William Sound Sport and Subsistence Shrimp Pot Fishery

(Prince William Sound) - The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is reducing the number of allowable pots per vessel in the 2017 Prince William Sound (PWS) sport and subsistence shrimp pot fishery from five pots to four pots. The season remains the same and will be open April 15 through September 15 with no bag limit. PWS sport shrimp permits are available online.

The total allowable harvest level (TAH) of shrimp in PWS is determined each year using the previous year's commercial and noncommercial effort and harvest and the results from an annual pot shrimp survey conducted by the department in October. As mandated by the PWS Shrimp Management Plan, the TAH is then divided between the sport and subsistence (60%) and commercial (40%) fisheries to create guideline harvest levels (GHLs) for each fishery. In 2017, the TAH is determined to be 167,000 pounds of shrimp. Of that total, 100,000 pounds is allocated to sport and subsistence fisheries.

Sport and subsistence participation and harvest levels from 2012–2015 were consistent and averaged approximately 89,700 pounds annually. During the 2016 season, using only four pots, the sport and subsistence shrimp fishery harvested an estimated 102,786 pounds of shrimp and exceeded their GHL by 32,193 pounds. Between 2012–2015, an average of 3,100 households were issued PWS shrimp permits. In 2016 a total of 3,592 households received shrimp permits; 2,107 of these households reported harvesting shrimp, also an increase from the 2012-2015 average of 1,869 households.

In an effort to not exceed the 2017 noncommercial GHL of 100,000 lbs., a four pot limit is necessary. Therefore, in order to reduce harvest and target guideline harvest levels, the department is reducing pot limits from five pots per vessel to four pots per vessel. All noncommercial PWS participants are required to have a permit and permits are available online.

For more information about these regulation changes, contact Anchorage Sport Fish Front Desk at (907) 267-2218.