

STATEMENT TO THE BOARD OF FISHERIES

April 1978

UGAK BAY SHRIMP FISHERY

The Ugak Bay shrimp fishing section of the Kodiak shrimp district has been closed to commercial fishing since 1973. The Department proposes reopening Ugak Bay no later than the 1980-81 shrimp fishing season.

Ugak was once a major shrimp fishery in the Kodiak district. This fishery rapidly declined and by 1972 the Board of Fish and Game approved the policy of closing Ugak until it could show a significant recovery. Prior to the total closure the Department began stock assessment surveys of Ugak. Since that time there has not been a significant change in the abundance of shrimp.

The Department proposes opening Ugak to limited commercial fishing no later than the 1980-81 shrimp fishing season. If, however, there has been a substantial stock recovery prior to the 1980-81 season, then the Department would consider an earlier opening date. In the falls of 1978 and 1979, recruitments from the first unfished major parent stocks will be available. In other words, any benefits accrued for having protected the population for one full life cycle should be apparent by assessing the recruitment trends in 1978 and 1979. If there has not been a substantial benefit to the population prior to the 1980-81 season and the abundance has not further declined, then the Department recommends opening the Ugak shrimp fishery as a depressed stock.