



## Advisory Announcement

*For Immediate Release: August 26, 2022*

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### **Prince William Sound Area** **State-Waters Season Closes to Pot and Longline Vessels** **Parallel Pacific Cod Season Opens to Pot and Longline Vessels** **Emergency Order # 2-GF-E-10-22**

The Prince William Sound Area (PWS; Area E) state-waters Pacific cod season will close to pot and longline gear and the parallel Pacific cod season will immediately **open to vessels fishing pot gear and to vessels fishing longline gear effective 12:00 noon September 1**. The parallel season remains open to vessels fishing jig gear.

There is a 24-hour delivery time requirement following closure of a groundfish fishery. All fish harvested in the state-waters season must be landed prior to participating in the parallel season.

PWS parallel Pacific cod seasons for pot and longline gear are established by emergency order (EO) to coincide with the Pacific cod season dates and gear sectors set by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in the adjacent federal Central Gulf of Alaska Regulatory Area (CGOA); the parallel season for longline gear in PWS is coordinated with the CGOA Pacific cod season for hook-and-line (HAL; longline) gear operated from vessels less than 50 feet (<50') in overall length (5 AAC 28.267(b)(2)(C)). NMFS announced that federal "B" seasons for pot and HAL <50' gear sectors will open September 1. The parallel seasons will close by EO concurrent with federal "B" season closures when gear sector allocations are achieved.

Fishers are reminded: 1) to obtain a PWS parallel Pacific cod season registration from ADF&G prior to fishing; 2) participants using pot or longline gear in parallel Pacific cod fisheries must have a functioning, NMFS approved, vessel monitoring system (VMS) as described at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/enforcement/regional-vessel-monitoring-information>; and, 3) to adhere to the federal seabird avoidance measures (SAM) which are required in all longline fisheries for groundfish in the Outside District of PWS. Additional information on SAM can be found at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/bycatch/seabird-avoidance-gear-and-methods>.

NMFS continues to prosecute the North Pacific Groundfish and Halibut Observer Program. Vessel operators participating in parallel groundfish and/or directed halibut fisheries are encouraged to become familiar with this federal program. Information on the observer program may be found at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/fisheries-observers/north-pacific-observer-program> or by contacting the NMFS Sustainable Fisheries Division in Juneau at (907) 586-7228.

Directed fishing for all groundfish species is closed in waters within 3 nautical miles of two Steller sea lion rookeries within PWS and certain waters are closed to fishing with groundfish pot gear (Figure 1; 5 AAC 28.250(a)). For specific regulatory language regarding Steller sea lion protection areas contact NMFS in Kodiak at (907) 481-1780 or <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/sslpm>.

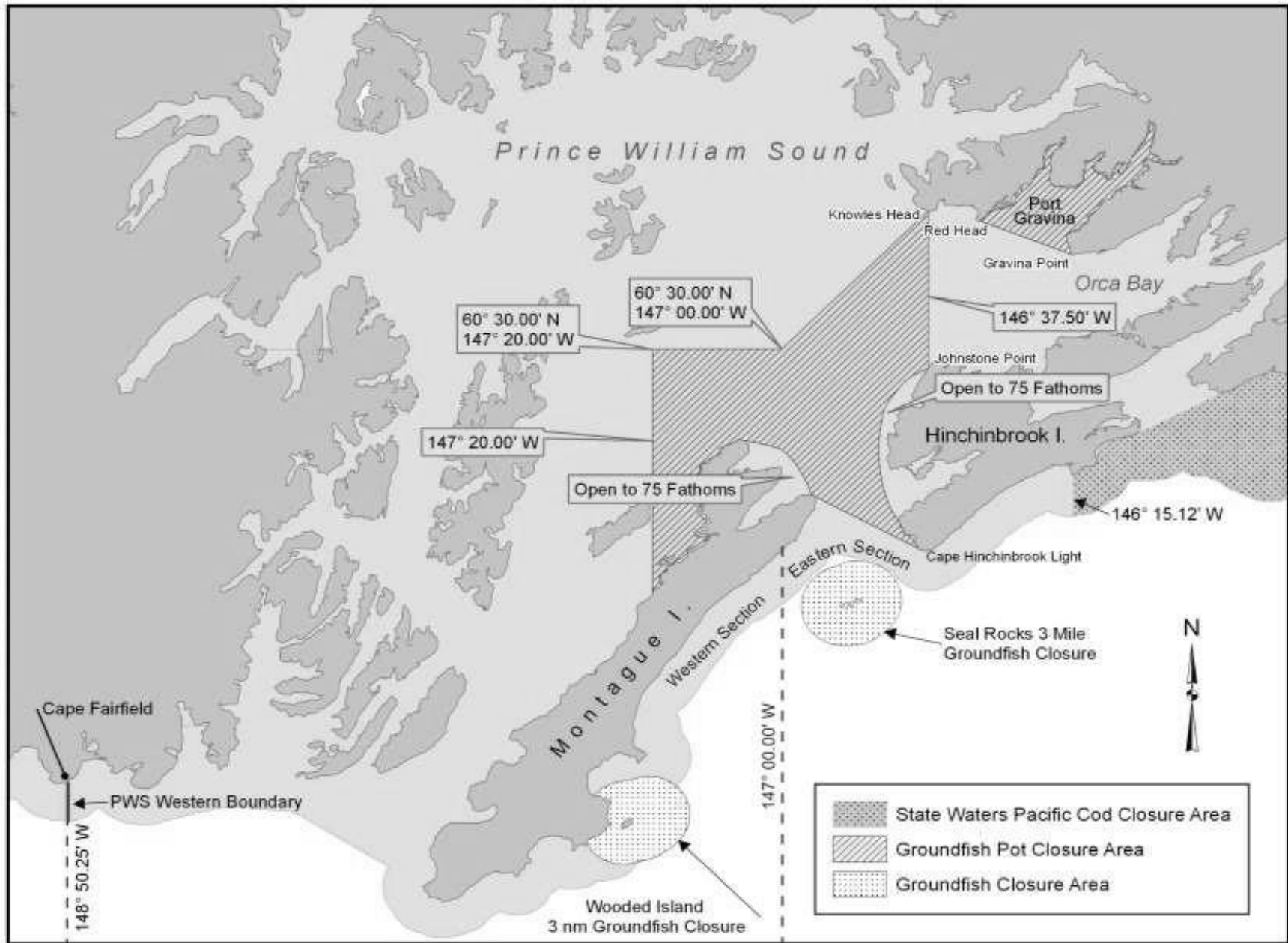


Figure 1. Prince William Sound Area closures to groundfish pot gear, groundfish fishing, and to the state-waters Pacific cod season.

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