



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ANNOUNCE 1941 FISHERY REGULATIONS FOR ALASKA

Containing a number of changes of importance to both fishermen and packers, new regulations for the protection of the commercial fisheries of Alaska in 1941 were promulgated today by Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes.

These regulations, recommended by Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, are based upon testimony presented at seven public hearings held at various places in Alaska and one in Seattle during the past season; and upon investigations of fishery biologists and law enforcement officers on duty in Alaska.

Of outstanding importance, among the changes is the reduction in the weekly closed period of 24 hours in Bristol Bay, 12 hours in the Alaska Peninsula and Prince William Sound areas, and 24 hours in most districts of southeastern Alaska. The weekly closed period in the Copper River and Bering River areas has been increased 12 hours. Where purse seining for salmon is permitted, the new regulations allow detachment of leads having 7-inch mesh, and purse seine boats are permitted to carry unhung web for mending purposes.

In the Alaska Peninsula area the 24-hour extension to the weekly closed season terminates 10 days earlier, on July 15; the catch limit of 700,000 red salmon is applicable only to waters in the vicinity of the Bear and Sandy Rivers.

In the Kodiak area the opening date for the Red River district has been made June 1, and in the Cook Inlet area additional protection has been afforded the odd-year pink salmon runs by somewhat earlier closure in August as in 1939; also after May 25 not to exceed 35 fathoms of the gill nets used may be of mesh less than 8-1/2 inches in the central part of the Inlet.

In the Prince William Sound area and Icy Strait and Western districts of the southeastern Alaska area the regulations as issued by Secretary Ickes contemplate voluntary curtailment of fishing intensity by operators and fishermen to prevent too severe drains on expected small runs of pink salmon. Earlier closing dates are provided in some districts of southeastern Alaska where the pink salmon runs are expected to be below normal. In the Stikine district the opening date for red salmon fishing has been made June 23, thus lengthening the season three days. In the Icy Strait, Western, and Eastern districts the fall season is from October 1 to October 20 instead of October 5 to 25 as in 1940. No change has been made in the fall season in other districts of southeastern Alaska.

Three trap sites have been closed by these regulations. One was in the Kodiak area and two were in the Western district of southeastern Alaska. A number of corrections of latitude and longitude of fish trap sites have been made, based upon official surveys by the War Department. No transfers of trap sites and no new sites have been authorized.

The General Regulations have been modified to permit salmon lawfully caught in traps to be held for 24 hours after the close of fishing if the traps are rendered inoperative by removal of the wire along the walls of the inner heart.

The limit on the commercial catch of herring in both the Kodiak and Prince William Sound areas, except by gill nets and for bait, has been reduced to 250,000

barrels. This is a curtailment of 50,000 barrels in the Kodiak area and 100,000 barrels in the Prince William Sound area. Provision is made, however, to allow fishing in unexplored waters of the Kodiak area without regard to the limit which is applicable only in waters now being fished. This curtailment is necessitated by evidence of a failing supply of herring in both areas. All commercial herring fishing is prohibited in southeastern Alaska, except by gill nets and for bait purposes. In this area the stocks of herring have been so seriously depleted by overfishing that the only hope of rehabilitation lies in this action.

In the southeastern Alaska area the closed period for commercial shrimp fishing is the same length as formerly but begins 15 days earlier and now continues from March 1 to April 15; also the taking at all times of shrimp of which more than 50 percent are less than 3 inches in length is prohibited.

The taking of Dolly Varden trout for commercial purposes is prohibited east of 150 degrees west longitude instead of 138 degrees as formerly. This will include waters in part of the Kenai Peninsula, Prince William Sound and Yakutat regions as well as southeastern Alaska.

Regulations for sport fishing are issued separately.

The regulations will be published in codified form; simplified interpretations will be made available in each district as heretofore.