



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ALASKA COMMERCIAL FISHERY REGULATIONS REVISED FOR 1948

Secretary of the Interior J. A. Krug has issued changes in regulations for the protection of the commercial fisheries of Alaska for 1948.

The new regulations are based upon investigations and recommendations of Fish and Wildlife Service personnel, testimony presented at public hearings conducted by the Service at eight places in Alaska and at Seattle, Washington, and upon written briefs submitted by those interested in the Alaska fishing industry.

A number of changes have been made in the general regulations applicable in most sections of Alaska. The predetermined patterns of extensions and curtailments of fishing seasons in Southeastern Alaska, Kodiak, Prince William Sound, and the Alaska Peninsula areas have been eliminated. Flexibility in the fishing seasons will be assured by the delegation of authority to Fish and Wildlife Service personnel in the field to extend or curtail fishing seasons as conditions warrant.

Other changes of general interest provide a minimum weight as well as a minimum length limitation on troll caught king salmon. No salmon of this species measuring less than 26 inches in length or weighing less than 6 pounds when dressed may be taken commercially under the revised regulations. Minimum limitations have been placed on otter trawls with regard to mesh size, method of operation, and place of operation with relation to immature halibut. Otter trawl operators also are required to submit periodical reports including catch statistics. Herring catch quotas have been reduced from 400,000 to 300,000 barrels in the Kodiak area, and increased from 350,000 to 400,000 barrels in Southeastern Alaska. The quota of 150,000 barrels for the Prince William Sound area remains the same as in 1947.

In the Bristol Bay area a good red salmon run is expected this year and only minor regulation changes have been made. Opening and closing dates for fishing have been advanced two days to provide an open season from June 28 to July 28 in the Ugashik District, and from June 25 to July 25 in all other districts. These dates were in effect prior to the 1947 season. Certain waters in the Kvichak-Naknek District have been identified as the Naknek Section in order to facilitate the application of special control measures, when necessary, over the Naknek River runs. Additional information is being developed at present with regard to a possible further change in the 1948 regulations to modify the restriction on the use of motor-propelled gill net boats in Bristol Bay.

In the Alaska Peninsula area seasonal restrictions in effect prior to 1947 have been restored except that the fall season will open on August 20 instead of August 26 in the Port Moller District, and on September 6 instead of August 26 in other waters of the area. In order to restore depleted pink salmon runs, closed areas have been extended or established near the mouths of several important spawning streams. Other changes in this area reduce the red salmon catch quota from 700,000 to 500,000 in waters between Entrance Point and Cape Seniavin, and eliminate an open area for a trap that has not been occupied.

In the Kodiak area the opening date for salmon fishing in the Karluk and General Districts has been changed from June 1 to June 10 except in waters surrounding Raspberry Island, Whale Island, and Afognak, Marmot, and Shuyak Islands, where the opening date has been delayed from June 1 to July 10 to rebuild depleted red-salmon runs. Elsewhere in the area seasonal limitations in effect prior to 1947 have been restored. A total of 700,000 red salmon has been fixed as the minimum escapement to Karluk River, of which not less than 350,000 shall be counted through the weir prior to July 15. Closed areas around the mouths of certain pink salmon spawning streams have been increased to restore runs of this species. Other changes specify an increase in the maximum length of salmon purse seines from 125 to 200 fathoms, and provide seasonal and size limitations for the protection of Dungeness crabs.

The usual even-year seasons for salmon fishing have been provided in the Cook Inlet area, and a uniform closed season on razor clams, from July 10 to August 31, has been established for the area.

In the Resurrection Bay area the same restrictions on the size and operation of purse seines and leads have been prescribed as those in effect in the adjacent Prince William Sound area. Provision also has been made for the registration of fishing boats operated in Resurrection Bay after the close of the regular season in the Prince William Sound area on August 7.

The opening dates for salmon fishing in the Prince William Sound area have been changed from July 5 in each odd-numbered year and July 10 in the even-numbered years to July 1 and July 20, respectively, and additional closed sections have been designated near the mouths of two important spawning streams.

In order to provide additional protection to depleted red salmon runs in the Copper River and Bering River-Icy Bay areas the total weekly closed period for salmon fishing prior to August 10, has been extended from 48 to 72 hours by the addition of a mid-weekly closing period from 6 a.m. Wednesday to 6 a.m. Thursday of each week. During this season the maximum limitation on the use of red-salmon gill nets also has been changed from 200 fathoms of net per boat to 150 fathoms for any individual.

In the southeastern Alaska area a uniform season for salmon fishing, other than trolling, has been established from August 9 to September 3, except in the Yakutat District. Regulations in the Yakutat District are the same as for 1947. The purpose of the uniform season in most of southeastern Alaska is to rebuild early pink-salmon runs, particularly in the northern districts of southeastern Alaska where the seasons formerly opened two to four weeks earlier. A uniform season will reduce to some extent the intensity of fishing operations that has resulted in the past from the concentration of gear in each district as the various seasons opened. It has been emphasized that both the opening and closing dates of the uniform season for southeastern Alaska are subject to revision as the runs progress. Officials of

the Fish and Wildlife Service will be authorized, as in past years, to modify seasonal dates in the field whenever such changes are found necessary to permit adequate escapements.

A number of exceptions have been made to the August 9 opening date to permit fishing prior to that time, in certain waters where species other than pink salmon predominate. These sections include Tenakee Inlet, the northern section of Lynn Canal, Taku Inlet and Port Snettisham, the Stikine District, and waters west of a line from Cape Muzon to Cape Ulitka. Fishing boats entering these waters prior to August 9 are required to register with, and report catches to, local agents of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Other changes in the southeastern Alaska area fix the closed season for shrimp fishing from February 15 to May 1, prohibit trolling throughout the year from Icy Point to and including Lituya Bay, and eliminate six open areas for traps that have been abandoned.

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