

**PWS/Valdez Advisory Committee
Wednesday, March 5th, 2025
Over Zoom**

I. Call to Order: 6:03 pm by Nick Crump

II. Roll Call

Name	Present	Excused/Unexcused
Nick Crump	X	
Dan Eames	X	
Bruce Bowman	X	
Patrick Day	X	
Brett Wilbanks	X	
Jens Saxum	X	

Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 4

List of User Groups Present:

III. Fish and Game Staff Present: Leila Williams, Donnie Aurther, Brittany Blaine Roth, Alissa Cole, Martin Schuster

IV. Guests Present: Gordon Scott, Brett Roth, Doug Frasher, 907----678, Richard Regan

V. Approval of Agenda: Motion by Bruce, 2nd Pat

VI. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Motion by Bruce, 2nd Brett

VII. Reports

- a. Chair's report-none
- b. ADF&G-none
- c. Others-

VIII. Public Comment- Doug Frasher indicated general approval of the FMP.

IX. Old Business

X. New Business

- a. Amendment for Proposal 299 to be Submitted as a Record Copy: Nick had to leave the meeting after RC to 299 was discussed
- b. Proposal 304 Data was presented to the AC
- c. Other Fish and Game Business as Needed

PROPOSAL 299

5 AAC 31.XXX. New Section. and 5 AAC 55.055 - Prince William Sound Noncommercial Shrimp Fishery Management Plan.

Develop a Prince William Sound pot shrimp management plan, as follows:

Board action to compel the Department to develop a comprehensive PWS pot shrimp management plan in accordance with 5 AAC 39.200. For example, reference the SE Alaska pot shrimp management plan and the Regional Information report(1J06-08), both Department generated documents.

As a secondary measure, Consider reinstatement of 5 AAC 31.260 Prince William Sound commercial pot shrimp management plan to define management goals.

Implement a shrimp task force similar to the SE Alaska pot shrimp task force approved by the Board of Fish in 2003 (accepted in 2006 _RIR 1J06-08), which remains un-amended. The purpose of this panel would be to develop and maintain a comprehensive management plan. Having a comprehensive plan would lead to proactive management, in contrast to the current historical reporting method used for regulatory changes, which is reactive (managed by EO).

With a comprehensive Management plan, guidance to fishery managers will exist and can be in place before there is negative resource impact. This will limit the Emergency Order process, resulting in proactive, not a reactive, sustained yield management of PWS pot shrimp.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, there is no comprehensive Prince William Sound pot shrimp management plan. The intent of this proposal is to compel the Board of Fisheries and the department of fish and game to develop a Fishery Management Plan (FMP) as supported by regulation.

To date, The PWS pot shrimp fishery is managed and guided by the regulations cited above. These regulations are useful, but not refined enough, which results in management reliance on emergency orders to operate.

These regulations are vague in the context of a FMP and do not define the specific parameters needed to effectively support the Maximum Sustained Yield (MSY) of the resource.

The existing regulations fail to address concerns such as stock assessment, reporting measures, in-season management, conservation goals, and resource access that may not be appropriately weighted, specifically given the intent or involvement of particular user groups. The goal of a comprehensive plan would be to define a framework that outlasts management changes.

A consistent definition (plan) for conservation and MSY management of this precious resource is more than appropriate. 30

It is necessary to develop a standing body of regulation that considers all aspects of the PWS pot shrimp fishery, for all user groups, and provide guidance for ADF&G management into the future while prosecuting the fishery in perpetuity.

We Are Addressing the Board of Fish to direct the ADF&G to support achievement of the goal defined regulation as follows.

5 AAC 39.200 - Application of fishery management plans

- (a) The Board of Fisheries has implemented by regulation fishery management plans that provide the Department of Fish and Game with guidelines to be followed when making management decisions regarding the state's subsistence, commercial, sport and personal use fisheries. The primary goal of these management plans is to protect the sustained yield of the state's fishery resources while at the same time providing an equitable distribution of the available harvest between various users. The regulations contained in this section are intended to aid in the achievement of that goal and therefore will apply to all fishery management plans contained in 5 AAC 03 - 5 AAC 39.

If a Fishery Management Plan is not considered, developed, and implemented for the harvest of PWS spot shrimp, the fishery will continue to be managed in a reactionary fashion, instead of being proactive for conservation and MSY goals. Continuing to operate the fishery in this way will prevent the progressive management of this stock.

These record comments are submitted by Valdez/PWS Advisory Committee in support and clarification of proposal 299 Comprehensive PWS Shrimp Management Plan

The Advisory Committee advises the Board to enhance the successful prosecution of the PWS shrimp fisheries with guiding principles that maintain equitable access, equitable allocation, and a framework for sustainability. The Advisory Committee looked to the Department's mission statement, Guiding Principles, and Core Service statements, as well as some statutes for guidance.

The existing regulations do not constitute an effective management plan. This can be accomplished with a plan developed via a task force, working group, or similar ad hoc organization . This would be like the Board implemented in Alaska's South East region for that shrimp pot fishery. If a task force can provide guidance for the board within a

year, ideally the board may be able to consider task force findings out of cycle in late 2025.

Joint Whittier and Valdez PWS Advisory Committee Proposal 299

Purpose

- Ensure allowable harvest is not exceeded in order to protect maximum sustained yield. The primary goal is a sustainable PWS shrimp fishery.
- Allow fishing the harvestable surplus sound wide. Remove administrative barriers to access and any associated harm that may cause. Allow Department managers to set statistical area limits.
- Ensure equitable access to available surplus. Any surplus above subsistence and personal use levels should be allowed to be harvested without bias towards one group.

Current Concerns

- The historically applied MSY model has not been responsive
 - It is anticipated that a new MSY model and approach will be introduced during this BOF session by the Department
- Proposals over several Board cycles are repeating the same themes
- Management Plan should be developed in conjunction with the Department and stakeholders
 - See ADFG guiding principles and core services statement
- Inequity of conservation burden and open access interim entry erode BOF allocation to the commercial sector
- Trigger levels should relate to % of biomass
- The current regulations, which constitute the PWS shrimp commercial fisheries management strategies exist as 5 AAC 31.206 - 5 AAC 31.245 and do not meet the regulatory guidance outlined within **5 AAC 39.200** .

Current Management of the Fishery

Subsistence use is tracked as ancillary catch and not directly managed. The regulations in 5 AAC 02 address subsistence needs and general conditions but fail to give Department management staff specific guidelines to apply in an effort to manage a sustainable resource for subsistence needs. There is risk for a shift, or slip, from sport usage into subsistence usage. This could overwhelm the already determined subsistence need of 9-15k pounds of shrimp. This is the amount reasonably necessary (ANS) as determined by the Department.

Commercial use is highly regulated with reporting and landing requirements. This prevents harvest in the commercial sector exceeding GHL by any significant amount. Interim entry access by non-commercial participants represents approximately 5-8% of the commercial harvest. These cross-over participants take personal use shrimp for home pack and remove a portion of the commercial allocation.

Non-commercial use uses pre-season pot limits in an attempt to remain within GHL. There are minimal pot restrictions, liberal extra gear latitude, no bag or possession limits, nor in season reporting. This method has been unsuccessful in consistent adherence to the GHL from 2010-2024. This has led to an over harvest of the non-commercial allocation on several occasions. The average pounds harvested by the non-commercial sector over the same period was 107% of the GHL, with 137% of non-commercial GHL harvested in 2020, as an example.

The Department also noted that between 2017 and 2020 there was a large abundance of shrimp that may have caused early recruitment. The existing MSY calculation and harvest strategy did not take these carrying capacity limitations into account.

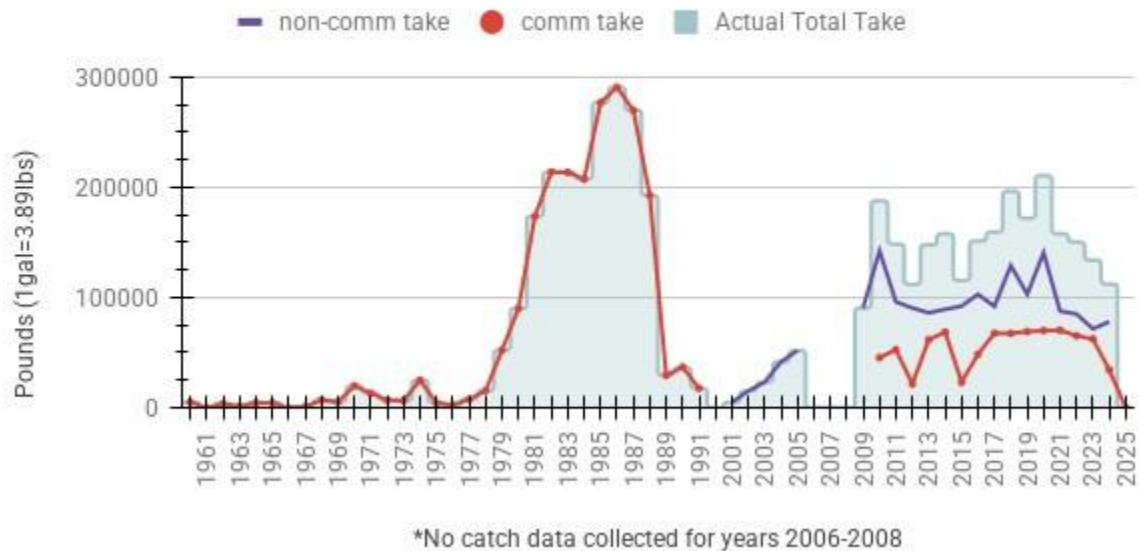
Summary

Some proposals this cycle attempt to address several of these issues. However, there would be other necessary changes and management triggers that would need to be introduced to fully address these concerns. Because of the three year BOF cycle, a well considered management plan has yet to be realized. Now, the impacts are economic, cultural, and severe. This proposal asks the Board to support the public call for better methods of managing the PWS shrimp pot fishery in a fair way.

The chart below shows the total actual pounds of shrimp harvested by pot from PWS over the years 1961 through 2024 using Department data. The commercial and non-commercial harvest is totaled in pounds. Where harvest was reported in gallons, it was converted to pounds using 3.89 lb/gal of whole spot shrimp.

PWS Shrimp Actual Harvest in Pounds

ADFG published data from fisheries reports



Appendix A - Reference

Highlighted in pink are regulations that may need revision/attention under a more comprehensive approach to regulating this resource **(FMP)**.

Highlighted in red is a potential regulatory option to address the need for additional commercial regulation.

Highlighted in blue is an example of the disparity within the regulations that describe the PWS area.

SUBSISTENCE and PERSONAL USE REGULATIONS

5 AAC 02.210 Description of the PWS Area

The Prince William Sound Area has as its western boundary the longitude of Cape Fairfield (148° 50.25' W. long.), as its eastern boundary the longitude of Cape Suckling (144° W. long.), and as its seaward boundary the 400-fathom (732 m) depth contour.

5 AAC 02.208 Customary and traditional subsistence uses of shellfish stocks

(b) The board finds that 9,000 - 15,000 pounds of usable weight of shrimp are reasonably necessary for subsistence uses in the Prince William Sound Area

5 AAC 02.210 Subsistence Shrimp Fishery PWS

- (3) Marking of buoys
- (4) pot requirements
- (5) April 15 - September 15
- (6) 5 pot limit

5 AAC 02.210 Subsistence Shrimp Fishery PWS

- (a) shrimp may not be taken in the non subsistence area

5 AAC 99.015 Joint Board non subsistence Areas

- (5) The Valdez Non Subsistence Area is comprised of the following:

*NOTE: To protect subsistence interests the need for a Non Subsistence Area zone should be established for the Whittier access point to PWS at the next joint board session.

COMMERCIAL REGULATIONS

5 AAC 24.001 *Application of this Chapter*

Requirements set out in this chapter apply to commercial fishing only, unless otherwise specified. Subsistence, personal use, and sport fishing regulations affecting commercial fishing vessels or affecting any other commercial fishing activity are set out in the subsistence fishing regulations in 5 AAC 01 and 5 AAC 02, personal use fishing regulations in 5 AAC 77, and sport fishing regulations in 5 AAC 55 and 5 AAC 75.

5 AAC 24.100 Description of PWS Area

The Prince William Sound Area includes all waters of Alaska between 148° 50.25' W. long. (near Cape Fairfield) and 144° W. long. (near Cape Suckling).

5 AAC 31.200 Description of Registration Area E (PWS)

Registration Area E has as its western boundary a line running along the longitude of Cape Fairfield at 148° 50.25' W. long., south to the latitude of Cape Douglas at 58° 51.10' N. lat., then west to 149° W. long., then south along 149° W. long., and as its eastern boundary the longitude of Cape Suckling at 144° W. long.

5 AAC 31.206 Area E Commercial Registration

- (b) Area E is an exclusive registration area for vessels with shrimp pot gear
- (c) A person may only register one vessel to fish shrimp in area E during a registration year

5 AAC 31.210 Reg Area E PWS shrimp pot fishing seasons and area

- (a) April 15 - Sept 15
 - (1) Western area of the sound, 3 area rotation

5 AAC 31.214 Shrimp pot GHL for reg area E PWS

Estimated TAH must be more than **110,000 pounds** before a commercial fishery may be opened. GHL set at 40% of TAH. No more than 50% of GHL in any stat area. Season, pot limits, operation times set by EO to meet restrictions.

5 AAC 31.226 Shrimp pot marking requirements for reg area E PWS

- (a) buoy marking requirements
- (c) longline of more than five pots must have buoy at each end

5 AAC 31.227 Reg E PWS operation of other pot gear

Commercial participant prohibition on operating non-commercial gear while registered for commercial fishery

5 AAC 31.245 Reporting requirement for reg area E PWS

- (a) Logbook requirements
- (b) Landing requirements
- (c) Pre-trip reporting requirements
- (d) Fish ticket requirement
- (e) Additional reporting may be required per Commissioner at any time

5 AAC 31.260 PWS pot shrimp management plan (REPEALED in 2009)

NON-COMMERCIAL REGULATIONS

5 AAC 55.005 Description of the PWS Area

The Prince William Sound Area consists of all waters of the Gulf of Alaska and its drainages, west of the longitude of Cape Suckling (144° W. long.), and east of the longitude of Cape Fairfield (148° 50.25' W. long.), excluding the Copper River drainage upstream of a line crossing the Copper River between the south

bank of the confluence of Haley Creek and the south bank of the confluence of Canyon Creek in Wood Canyon.

5 AAC 55.022 PWS general bag and possession limits, methods and means

(b) PWS shellfish

(5) shrimp may be taken as follows:

- (A) Season April 15 - Sept 15, no bag or possession
- (B) no more than 5 pots per person and per vessel may be used
- (C) pot description, escape, mesh and coverings
- (D) harvest recording form is required

**5 AAC 55.035 Methods, means, and general provisions - shellfish
(REPEALED)**

5 AAC 55.055 PWS non-commercial shrimp fishery management plan

(a) The department shall manage the sport and other noncommercial shrimp fisheries in the Prince William Sound Area as follows:

- (1) GHL set at 60%
- (2) Harvest record required
- (3) Shrimp may be taken as follows:
 - (A) April 15-Sept 15
 - (B) no bag or possession limit
 - (C) no more than 5 pots per vessel can be used to take shrimp

5 AAC 75.016 Shellfish harvest recording form provisions

- (3) must have permit retained in possession
- (5) shall keep accurate daily records
- (6) sport fishing harvest records shall be completed on the harvest recording form provided by the department, at the time specified by the department for each particular area and fishery, and shall be submitted to the department office from which the harvest record was issued

Appendix B - Reference

Department Mission, Principles, Core Services and Goals

The following agency declarations and founding principles are provided for reference. The following elements are highlighted and noted below, to identify their directed intent and provide context:

Yellow = Maximum Sustainable Yield

Green = Evaluate and manage to the best economic benefit for stakeholders

Purple = Equity among user groups

Gray = Protect and Prioritize State interests

Orange = Protect Public involvement in decision making processes

ADFG Mission:

To protect, maintain, and improve the fish, game, and aquatic plant resources of the state , and manage their the well-being of the people of the consistent with use and state, the development in the best interest of the economy and sustained yield principle .

Guiding Principles:

Seeking excellence in carrying out its responsibilities under state and federal law, the department will:

1. Provide for the **greatest long-term opportunities** for people to use and enjoy Alaska's fish, wildlife, and habitat resources.
2. **Improve public accessibility to, and encourage active involvement by the public in, the department's decision-making processes** .
3. Build a working environment based on mutual trust and respect between the department and the public, and among department staff.
4. Maintain the highest standards of scientific integrity and provide the most accurate and current information possible.
5. Foster professionalism in department staff, **promote innovative and creative resource management** , and provide ongoing training and education for career development.

Core Services:

- **Provide opportunities to utilize fish and wildlife resources.**
- **Ensure sustainability and harvestable surplus of fish and wildlife resources** .
- Provide information on Alaska fish and wildlife resources to all customers.
- **Involve the public in management of fish and wildlife resources** . • Protect the state's sovereignty to manage fish and wildlife resources.
- Protect important fish and wildlife habitat during permit and project review. Goals:
- **Optimize economic benefits from fish and wildlife resources** .

- **Optimize public participation in fish and wildlife resources**.
- Increase public knowledge and confidence that wild populations of fish and wildlife are responsibly managed.

CFEC Mission:

The mission of the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission is to control entry into Alaska's commercial fisheries **to promote conservation of Alaska's fishery resources** and **economic health of commercial fishing**.

Board of Fish Mission:

The Board of Fisheries' main role is to **conserve and develop the fishery resources of the state**. **This involves setting seasons, bag limits, methods and means for the state's subsistence, commercial, sport, guided sport, and personal use fisheries**, and **it also involves setting policy and direction for the management of the state's fishery resources**. The board is charged with making allocative decisions, and the department is responsible for management based on those decisions.

Alaska Board of Fisheries Statewide Shellfish, Prince William Sound Shrimp, and Supplemental Issues Meeting Proposals March 11-March 16, 2025 Anchorage, AK Comment Deadline February 25, 2025			
Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal, Voting Notes
<i>Note: Effective September 2019, when abstentions occur, the action or decision of a majority of the remaining members at a meeting at which a quorum is present is an act of the committee. For example, a vote tally of 7-6-2 means the motion carries. Members abstaining from voting must provide an explanation that is included in the committee record.</i>			
299	Approve the record copy submission for proposal 299 as written as an advisory committee submission		
Support	6	0	The meeting focused on discussing various components of the FMP in proposal 299 with particular emphasis on sustainable practices and equitable distribution of resources. Participants debated the merits of different management approaches, including

Alaska Board of Fisheries Statewide Shellfish, Prince William Sound Shrimp, and Supplemental Issues Meeting Proposals

March 11-March 16, 2025 | Anchorage, AK | Comment Deadline February 25, 2025

Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal, Voting Notes
			changes to fishing seasons, rotation systems, and allocation processes, while also considering the needs of various stakeholders such as commercial fishers, sport fishers, and subsistence users. The committee reviewed data on shrimp biomass and fishing participation, discussed potential changes to existing management plans, and considered the importance of board approval for any significant modifications to current practices.

- XI. Select representative(s) for board meeting: Brett Wilbanks for Board of Fisheries Statewide meeting
- XII. Set next meeting date
- XIII. Other
- XIV. Adjourn: 7:32 pm

Minutes Recorded By: Bruce Bowman

Minutes Approved By: Nick Crump

Date: 03/24/25