

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-SHR-6-19-26

Issued at: Anchorage, Thursday, February 26, 2026

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Friday, May 1, 2026

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, September 15, 2026, unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order decreases the number of shrimp pots allowed to harvest shrimp in the Prince William Sound noncommercial (sport and subsistence) shrimp fishery from five pots per person with a maximum of five pots per vessel to two pots per person with a maximum of two pots per vessel. A vessel may still have only one spare pot onboard. Additionally, this emergency order reduces the open season for the Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery from May 1 – September 15 to May 1 – June 8.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 55.022(b)(5)(A) and (B) and 5 AAC 55.055(a)(3)(A) and (C) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, May 1 through 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, September 15, 2026:

5 AAC 55.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area.

(b) Unless specified in 5 AAC 55.023, or by an emergency order issued under AS 16.05.060, the following are the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means that apply to sport fishing for shellfish in the Prince William Sound Area:

(5) shrimp may be taken as follows:

(A) may be taken from May 1 – June 8; no bag, possession, or size limits;

(B) no more than two pots per person, with no more than two pots per vessel, may be used to take shrimp.

5 AAC 55.055. Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery management plan

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

(3) shrimp may be taken with pots as follows:

(A) only from May 1 through June 8;

(C) no more than two pots per vessel may be used to take shrimp;

Douglas Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Brittany Blain-Roth
Brittany Blain-Roth
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The Prince William Sound (PWS) noncommercial management plan (5 AAC 55.055) allocates 60% of the total allowable harvest (TAH) of shrimp in the area to noncommercial fisheries (sport and subsistence). This 60% of the TAH represents the guideline harvest levels (GHL) for the noncommercial shrimp fisheries.

In 2025, the PWS spot shrimp stock status was estimated at 56% of carrying capacity, which resulted in a GHL of 48,388 pounds for the noncommercial shrimp fishery. With a restriction of two pots and a reduced season of May 1 – July 31, harvest was estimated at 54,311 pounds of shrimp and was over the GHL by 5,923 pounds or by 12%. Based on a stock status of 36% of carrying capacity, the TAH is 49,637 pounds of shrimp in 2026, providing the noncommercial fishery a GHL of 29,782 pounds (60% of the TAH). The 2026 noncommercial GHL is a 38% reduction from the 2025 GHL and the lowest since the Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery management plan was implemented in 2009. While there is shrimp biomass available for harvest, Prince William Sound shrimp are in a period of low productivity based on the post-season pot survey data and surplus production model results.

Due to the decrease in the 2026 GHL, a longer seasonal restriction is warranted for 2026. Based on effort and harvest data from 2025, a 2-pot limit and season reduction to May 1 – June 8 would reduce harvest by an estimated 57%.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 2 Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.