

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 1-SHR-E-01-25

Issued at: Juneau, Tuesday,
December 17, 2024

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Wednesday,
January 1, 2025

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m.
Wednesday, December 31, 2025, unless
superseded by subsequent emergency
order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes the sport fishery for shrimp in the Southeast Alaska salt waters of Juneau area Section 11-A, and Tenakee Inlet.

REGULATION:

Under this emergency order the provisions of 5 AAC 47.021(e)(4) and 5 AAC 47.021(l) are added. The following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, January 1 through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, December 31, 2025:

5 AAC 47.021. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the salt waters of the Southeast Alaska Area.

(e)(4) in the Juneau area Section 11-A, as described in 5 AAC 33.200(k)(1), sport fishing for shrimp is closed.

(l) in the waters of Tenakee Inlet west of the longitude of Corner Point at 135° 06.50' W. long., sport fishing for shrimp is closed.

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Daniel J. Teske
Juneau Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

The decline in commercial shrimp fishery catch per unit of effort (CPUE) in the Juneau area Section 11-A indicated low abundance levels and resulted in the closure of the commercial fishery in July 2013. Creel census data from 2003–2007 showed the sport and personal use shrimp fishery harvest are approximately equal to the commercial harvest. Closure of the sport and personal use fishery has occurred annually since July 2013 and is necessary to rebuild stocks. Tagging studies have shown spot shrimp (the primary target species in all shrimp fisheries in the area) are relatively long lived and move little as adults, rendering them vulnerable to localized depletion. Spot shrimp begin life as males and convert to females after several years. Shrimp fishermen tend to target larger, predominantly female shrimp and fishery impacts are greatest to this most reproductively significant segment of the population. The department conducted five surveys of Section 11-A from 2018–2024 to gather data on spot shrimp population size and structure, and results of these surveys indicated a decline in spot shrimp abundance and a lack of recruitment to replace large size shrimp. The department will continue to conduct surveys in 11-A in future years. Shrimp fisheries will reopen when stocks have rebounded to sustainable levels.

The Tenakee Inlet spot shrimp stock has been annually surveyed by the department since 2000. The Tenakee Inlet commercial shrimp pot fishery was closed in 2011 based on the lowest observed catch per unit effort (CPUE) in the department's shrimp surveys since 2000. The personal use and sport fisheries remained open in 2011; however, because CPUE in the survey declined even further in 2012, the personal use and sport shrimp fisheries were closed effective October 1, 2012. Personal use and sport shrimp pot fisheries remained closed for five years until they were reopened in December 2017 after steadily increasing survey CPUE. Limited, two-day, commercial shrimp pot fisheries occurred in October 2018 – 2020, and a similar opening was scheduled to occur in 2021 but was canceled due to plummeting survey CPUE and an apparent lack of small shrimp recruiting into the population. The 2022 and 2023 surveys showed substantial declines in CPUE of all size classes of shrimp to the lowest levels on record, likely due to decrease in abundance of recruits and prerecruits in previous years. Although the 2024 Tenakee Inlet survey had a small increase in CPUE of small size shrimp compared to the previous two years, it was still well below the survey baseline.

Therefore, closure of all shrimp pot fisheries that harvest spot shrimp in this area are necessary to rebuild the population. Tenakee Inlet will continued to be monitored annually and will reopen when stocks have rebounded to sustainable levels.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 1 office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, P.O. Box 110024, Juneau, AK 99811, (907) 465-4270.