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## **Advisory Announcement**

***For Immediate Release: January 25, 2021***

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### **UPPER COOK INLET COMMERCIAL FISHING ANNOUNCEMENT No. 1 EMERGENCY ORDER NUMBER 2S-01-21**

Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 1 restricts the hours that the Northern District directed king salmon commercial set gillnet fishery is open from 12 to 6 hours. In 2021 the fishery will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. By regulation, the fishery is open on Mondays only. Fishing dates affected by this time change are May 31, and June 7, 14, and 21.

Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fishing Announcement No. 1 also closes commercial set gillnet salmon fishing in those waters of the Northern District of Upper Cook Inlet from the wood chip dock, located approximately at 61° 02.77' N. lat., 151° 10.04' W. long., to the Susitna River during the 2021 directed king salmon fishing season (Figure 1).

Unless changed by subsequent emergency order, all waters of the Northern District, including the closed waters identified in this announcement, will be open for the regular salmon fishing season from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays, beginning on Monday, June 28, 2021.

The 2021 preseason run forecast for Deshka River king salmon is approximately 11,464 fish, which suggests harvest must be limited in order to achieve the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 9,000–18,000 fish. Based on this forecast, and recent low king salmon production throughout the Susitna Drainage, the Division of Sport Fish issued two Emergency Orders implementing restrictions to catch and release angling only, with single unbaited hooks. EO No. 2-KS-2-07-21 restricts angling in areas 1,2,3,4,5, and 6 of the Susitna River drainages, and EO No. 2-KS-2-06-21 restricts angling in the Little Susitna River. The Chuitna River is also closed to sport fishing for king salmon by regulation.

The *Northern District King Salmon Management Plan* states that when the Deshka River king salmon sport fishery is restricted to non-retention, the commercial king salmon set gillnet fishery shall be restricted to 6-hour fishing periods that occur from 7:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Mondays. This management plan also stipulates that if the Chuitna River is closed to sport fishing for king salmon, the area from the wood chip dock to the Susitna River shall be closed during the commercial set gillnet king salmon season. The above announcements follow these regulations.

Escapement of king salmon in the Deshka River will be closely monitored during the 2021 season. If runs are stronger than expected and retention of king salmon is allowed in the Deshka River sport fishery, reestablishing 9 or 12 hour openings in the directed king salmon commercial fishery will occur.

## COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 5, 6, and 8, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-order/>

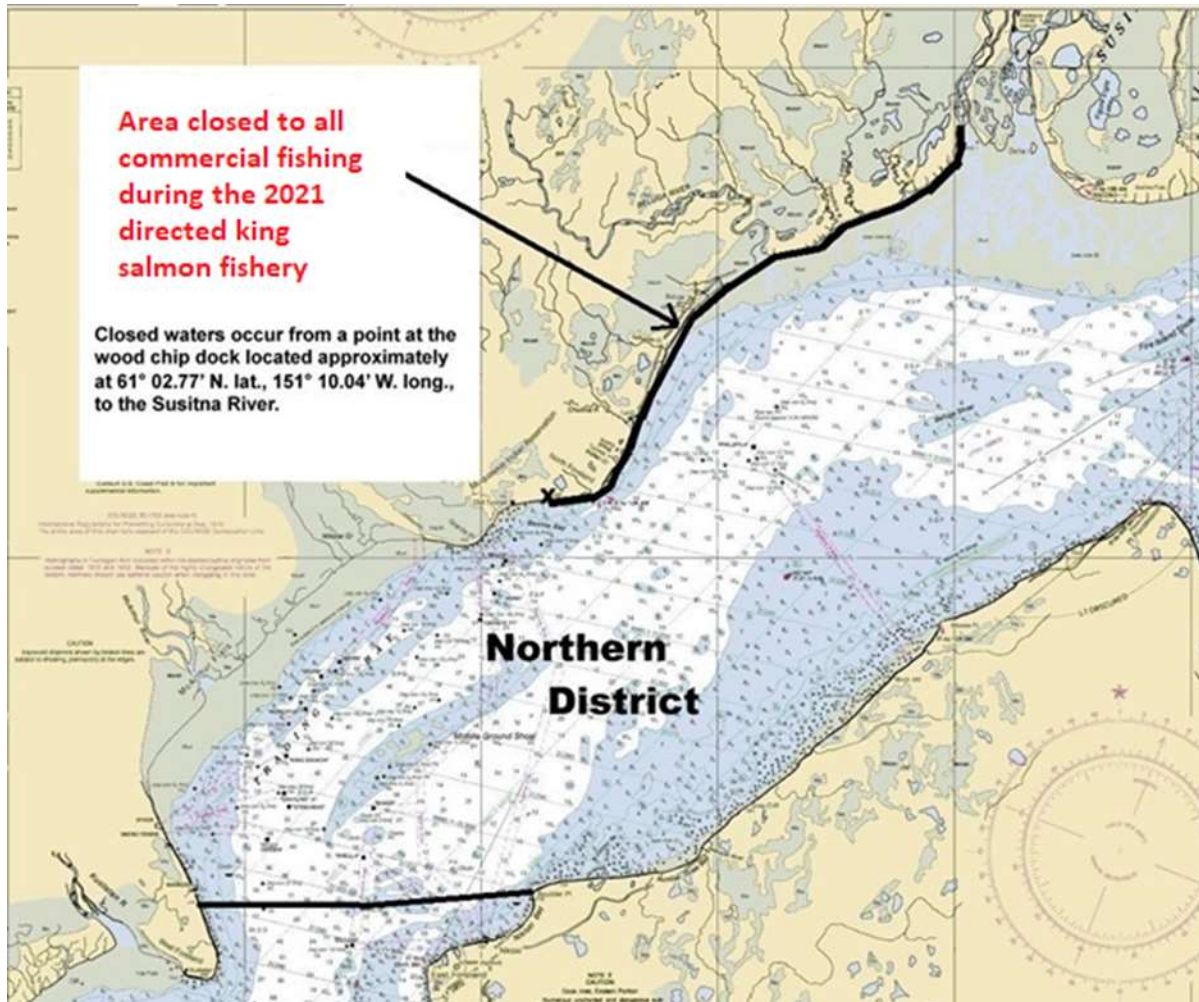


Figure 1.—Map of the area closed to commercial fishing during the 2021 Northern District set gillnet directed king salmon fishery.