

**PROPOSAL 162 - 5 AAC 28.650. Closed waters in Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands Area.**  
Close all waters of Unalaska Bay to groundfish fishing with pelagic trawl gear as follows:

5 AAC 28.650. Closed waters in Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands Area (a) All waters of Alaska surrounding St. Matthew, Hall, and Pinnacle Islands are closed to commercial groundfish fishing.

(b) The waters of Unalaska Bay are closed to groundfish fishing with pelagic trawl gear, {as follows:} south of a line from Cape Kalekta at 54° 00.50' N. lat., 166° 22.50' W. long. to Cape Cheerful at 54° 01' N. lat., 166° 40' W. long.

[(1) FROM JUNE 10 THROUGH JULY 31, SOUTH OF A LINE FROM CAPE KALEKTA AT 54° 00.50' N. LAT., 166° 22.50' W. LONG. TO CAPE CHEERFUL AT 54° 01' N. LAT., 166° 40' W. LONG.];

[(2) BEGINNING AUGUST 1 UNTIL THE CLOSURE OF THE PARALLEL BERING SEA WALLEYE POLLOCK 'B' SEASON, SOUTH OF A LINE FROM CAPE KALEKTA AT 54° 00.50' N. LAT., 166° 22.50' W. LONG. TO A POINT NEAR HOG ISLAND AT 53° 55.42' N. LAT., 166° 34.25' W. LONG. TO A POINT IN BROAD BAY AT 53° 55.42' N. LAT., 166° 38.80' W. LONG.; FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS PARAGRAPH, "PARALLEL BERING

SEA WALLEYE POLLOCK 'B' SEASON" MEANS THE PARALLEL SEASON CONDUCTED FROM JUNE 10 THROUGH NOVEMBER 1].

**ISSUE:** Since 2002, large-scale trawling in Unalaska Bay has unacceptably impacted an area traditionally used by subsistence, sport, and non-trawl commercial fishers and hunters. Reacting to rising fuel costs and a lack of pollock where they historically fish, conditions not likely to change in the near future, trawlers have harvested an average of 4.2 million pounds of pollock from Unalaska Bay each of the last ten years. The State of Alaska opens these waters to trawling from Aug. 1 to Nov. 1 as a parallel fishery to the eastern Bering Sea catcher vessel pollock fishery that is managed by the National Marine Fishery Service. There is no cap on what percentage of the B season catcher vessel trawl quota can come out of Unalaska Bay. Just under 12 million pounds of pollock were harvested inside the bay in 2004. No research has been done to understand the local pollock biomass. It is not known how many pollock typically inhabit these waters, or what level of harvest, if any, the ecosystem can sustain. The huge trawl nets that are used to prosecute the fishery are putting excessive pressure on a sensitive area already fully utilized by local fishers and hunters. Based on observations made by local people it appears fish and game are being scattered and/or driven out of the bay, coincidentally as this trawl season is