

We Need Help Fixing a Regulation Adversely Affecting Nome, Alaska

The US Coast Guard has recently chosen to change their interpretation of regulations and laws in a way that adversely affects over 200 jobs in Nome, Alaska, but results in little, if any, improvement to safety.

USCG “Safety Bulletins”

- MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN 02-17
- “COMMERCIAL STATUS: The Coast Guard considers all gold dredges operating in the vicinity of Nome to be commercial (vice recreational) vessels”
- Because ALL waters offshore Nome are considered “at sea”, all rules for “Commercial Vessels At Sea” now apply.
- This ruling kills jobs and hampers new investments in this rural Alaska village.
- Provides no meaningful increase in safety; at great expense to the small business owners.

Examples of “Commercial Vessels” under this new definition



Easiest/Fasted Solution: Adjust the “Boundary Line”

- Defined under: CFR Title 46, Chapter I, Subchapter A, Part 7
- 35 Adjustments are currently in place.
- Example: Entire Gulf of Mexico is excluded to 12 miles from shore.
- Nome, Alaska: Currently “Boundary Line” is the shoreline, and rules written for the high seas apply to all vessels that are wet, even when they stay close to shore.

Examples of East Coast “Boundary Line” Adjustments



Atlantic Coast (§§ 7.10 - 7.100)

§ 7.10 Eastport, ME to Cape Ann, MA.

§ 7.15 Massachusetts Bay, MA.

§ 7.20 Nantucket Sound, Vineyard Sound, Buzzards Bay, Narragansett Bay, MA, Block Island Sound and easterly entrance to Long Island Sound, NY.

§ 7.25 Montauk Point, NY to Atlantic Beach, NY.

§ 7.30 New York Harbor, NY.

§ 7.35 Sandy Hook, NJ to Cape May, NJ.

§ 7.40 Delaware Bay and tributaries.

§ 7.45 Cape Henlopen, DE to Cape Charles, VA.

§ 7.50 Chesapeake Bay and tributaries.

§ 7.55 Cape Henry, VA to Cape Fear, NC.

§ 7.60 Cape Fear, NC to Sullivans Island, SC.

§ 7.65 Charleston Harbor, SC.

§ 7.70 Folly Island, SC to Hilton Head Island, SC.

§ 7.75 Savannah River/Tybee Roads.

§ 7.80 Tybee Island, GA to St. Simons Island, GA.

§ 7.85 St. Simons Island, GA to Little Talbot Island, FL.

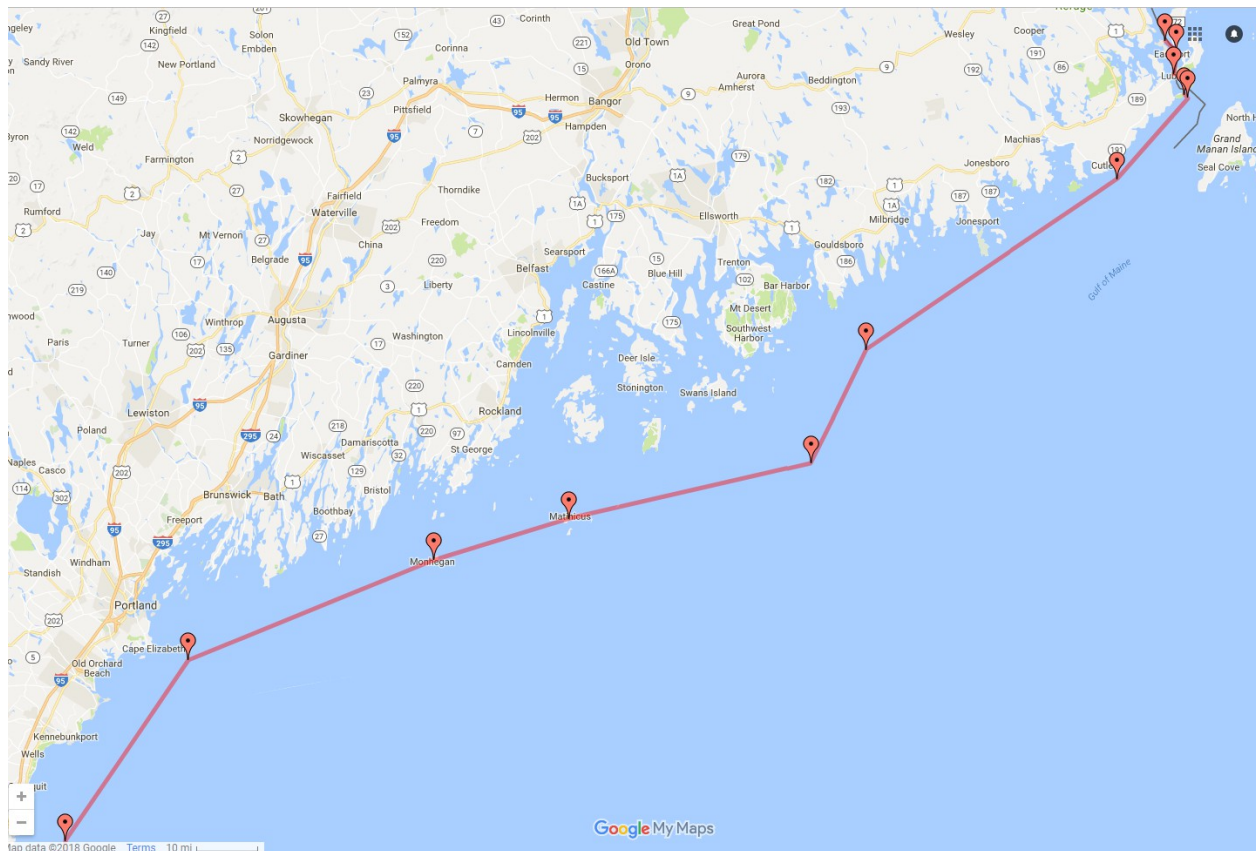
§ 7.90 St. Johns River, FL.

§ 7.95 St. Johns Point, FL to Miami Beach, FL.

§ 7.100 Florida Reefs and Keys from Miami, FL to Marquesas Keys, FL.

Examples of East Coast “Boundary Line” Adjustments

46 CFR 7.10 Eastport, ME to Cape Ann, MA.



Coasts of Maine and Massachusetts are almost completely exempt, out to an average of 10 miles.

Gulf Of Mexico

“Boundary Line” Adjustment

§ 7.105 Marquesas Keys, FL to Rio Grande, TX.

A line drawn from Marquesas Keys, Florida at approximate position latitude $24^{\circ}47.5' N$, longitude $82^{\circ}11.2' W$; along the 12-mile line which marks the seaward limits of the territorial sea (as defined in 33 CFR 2.22(a)(1)) to Rio Grande, Texas at approximate position latitude $25^{\circ}58.6' N$, longitude $96^{\circ}55.5' W$.



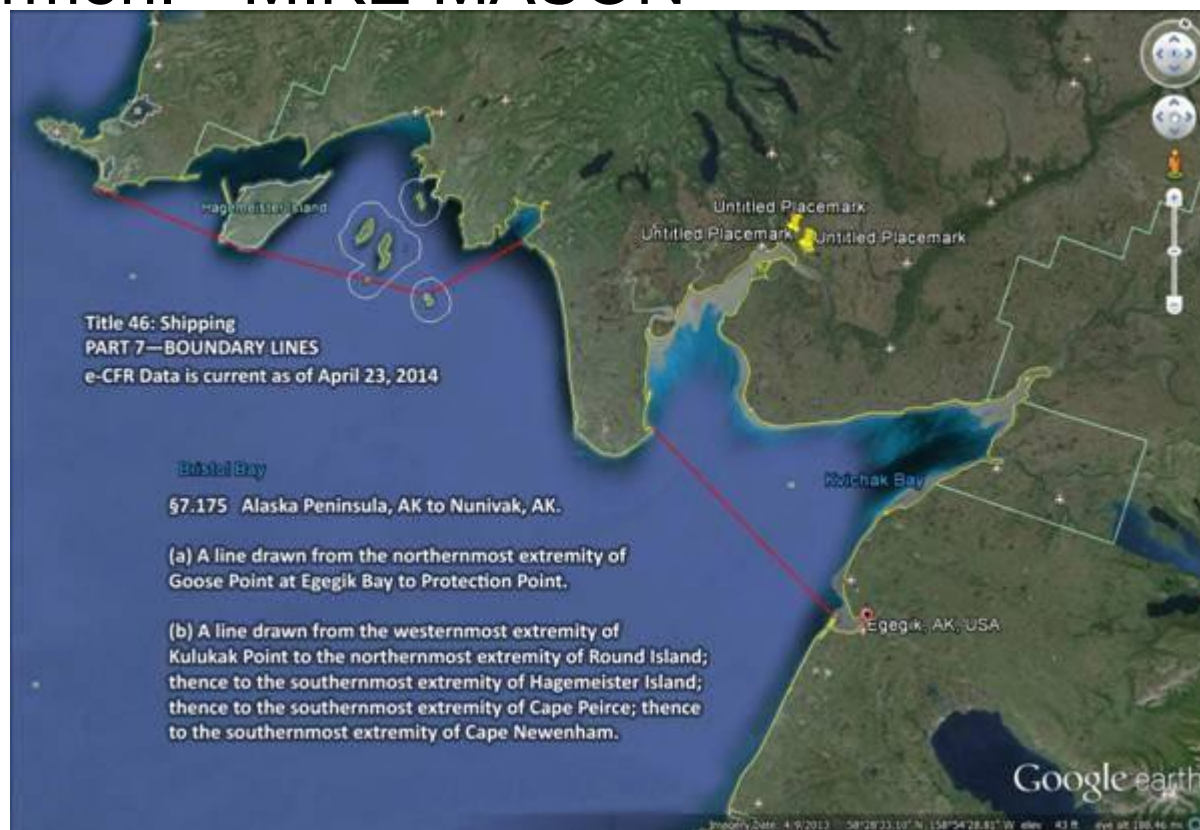
The entire Gulf of Mexico is exempt out to 12 miles from shore

Existing Alaska Coast “Boundary Line” Adjustments



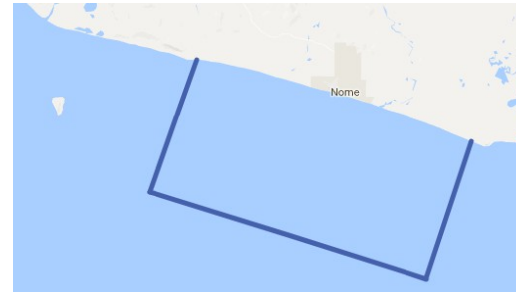
Boundary Line Confusion in Bristol Bay

- “Commercial fishing vessels in Bristol Bay have different requirements to meet depending on whether or not they are used inside or outside of a particular line on the map. The so-called “Boundary Line” can be confusing to fishermen.” -MIKE MASON



Possible Ways to Fix Regulation

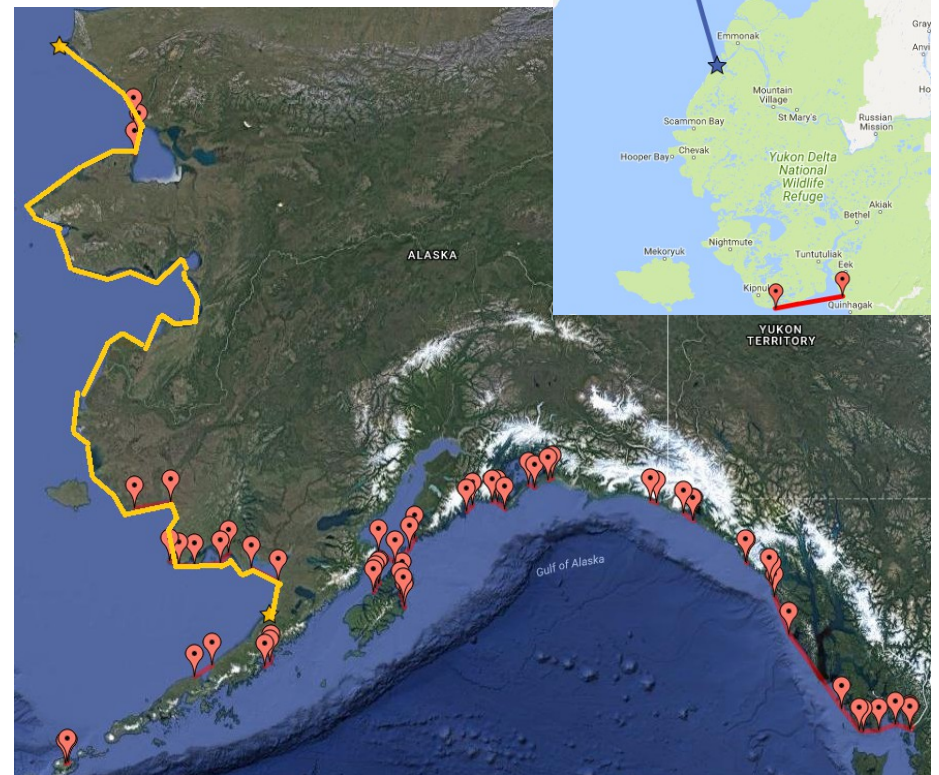
Exempt 12-mile box
around Port of Nome,
Rodney Creek to
Cape Nome



Exempt Norton Sound,
from Cape Rodney to
Sheldon Point



Exempt 12-miles out,
shallow waters of
Alaska's West Coast
from Cape Menshikof
to Point Hope



Exempt 12-mile radius from Port of Nome

- Benefits all offshore miners and creates new opportunities for local tugboat, lightering and other service providers.
- Very safe waters, in sight of Nome, shallower than 90 feet, mostly shallower than 45 feet.
- Similar to other small port exemptions, creates area outside of the harbor where commercial work can be done, like dredging and secondary tugboat assists, without excessively burdensome regulations

Exempt Norton Sound, from Cape Rodney to Sheldon Point

- Duplicates the existing Kotzebue Sound exemption benefits for Norton Sound.
- Boosts economic development opportunity in and between Nome, Golovin, Shaktoolik, Unalakeet, St Micheals
- Benefits all local fishermen, offshore miners, and creates new opportunities for local tugboat, cargo, and other service providers.
- Norton Sound is all shallower than 100 feet.

Exempt 12-miles out, shallow waters of Alaska's West Coast from Cape Menshikof to Point Hope

- Helps local fishermen all along the coast
- Water is shallower and safer than Gulf Coast exemption area; mostly less than 120 feet deep.
- Opens up an array of local regional service providers, boosts economic development for the entire region.