

# DANGEROUS CONDITIONS BEWARE of the China Poot **RIP!**

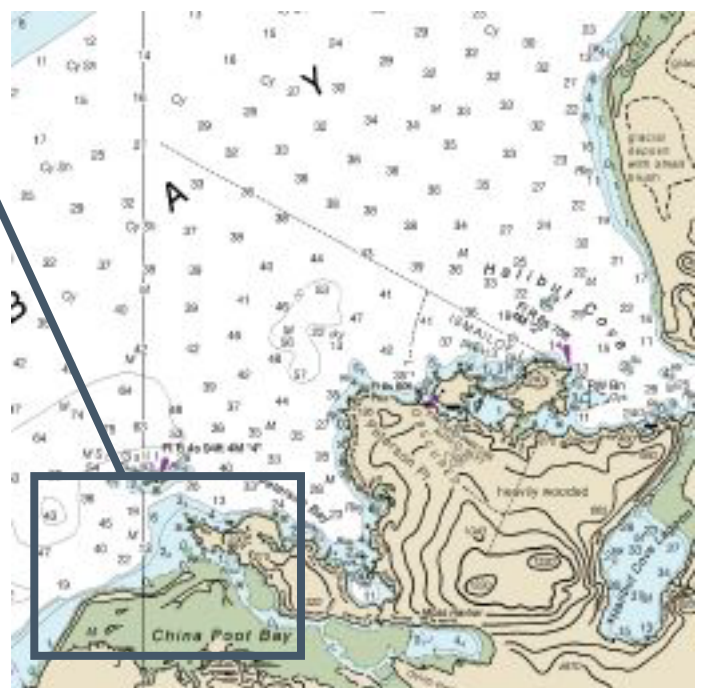


Strong outgoing currents meeting South West winds create standing waves and **dangerous conditions** that have capsized boats causing injury and death.

**BE PREPARED** - Familiarize yourself with the nautical charts for the area

**BE AWARE** - Check current tide and wind information

**BE SAFE**- Make sure ALL boaters have lifejackets and safety equipment!



# 1 dead, 2 rescued after boat capsizes near China Poot Bay

By [Michael Armstrong](#) and [Megan Pacer](#)

Wednesday, July 8, 2020 6:49pm

HOMER NEWS



A Homer Volunteer Fire Department emergency medical technician, left, assists a person who was involved in a boat capsizing, center, as they walk up the load-launch ramp on Wednesday, July 8, 2020, at the Homer Harbor in Homer, Alaska. The crew of the F/V Captain Cook helped rescue the person. The crew of the F/V Casino rescued the other two people who were aboard the 14-foot skiff when it capsized near the entrance of China Poot Bay. (Photo by Michael Armstrong/Homer News)

One person is dead and another two were rescued Wednesday from the waters of Kachemak Bay by commercial fishermen and a surfer when their boat capsized near the mouth of China Poot Bay.

A 14-foot skiff carrying three people overturned near Gull Island in the mouth of China Poot Bay, according to Harbormaster Bryan Hawkins and Deputy Harbormaster Matt Clarke, who was on the scene at the Homer Harbor. It was reported shortly after 10 a.m., Hawkins said, via a combination of cell phone messages and the police dispatch system. Personal boats in the area responded to help three people, including a small aluminum boat called Ice, which was carrying a group of surfers. The Homer Volunteer Fire Department and Homer Police Department responded to the harbor.

Upon their return to the harbor, two of the people involved were hypothermic but able to walk themselves up the Homer Harbor load-launch ramp, said HVFD Chief Mark Kirko. The third person, a man, was in

serious condition and was taken to South Peninsula Hospital. Lt. Ryan Browning from the Homer Police Department confirmed Wednesday afternoon that the man had died.

Clem Tillion Jr. was one of the surfers who happened to be nearby when the skiff flipped. He responded first, Clarke said. Around the same time, Chief Warrant Officer Angela Hollis, a marine inspector for the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment based in Homer, was leaving the harbor aboard the F/V Casino for an emergency drill.

“And we sure had an emergency,” she said.

Hollis and the others aboard heard about the accident over the radio. Captain Gabe Linegar asked if they could detour to lend a hand, so they did. When the Casino arrived on scene, Hollis said the three people from the capsized skiff had already been moved into the Ice and that Tillion was administering CPR to the man who later died.

The capsized boat was partly underwater, but was still visible near Gull Island at the entrance to China Poot Bay, Hollis said.

“And the waves were really rough, I can tell you that,” she said.

The crew of the Casino took two males on board, including the one being given CPR by Tillion. The Casino is faster and was able to get them back to the harbor more quickly, Hollis said.

“Everybody responded very well,” Hollis said of Tillion, Linegar and his deckhand.

Crew from the F/V Captain Cook, captained by Malcom Milne, brought the third person back to the harbor.

Staff at the harbor are trained as emergency trauma technicians and can respond in maritime emergencies, Hawkins said. In this case, harbor personnel got to the launch ramp at about the same time as the first responders from the fire department. Harbor staff are able to help ready stretchers and other equipment and assist wherever needed, Hawkins said.

Other responders came from the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Hickory to help at the launch ramp.

Clarke said the skiff is still out in the bay and that other mariners should be cautious going through that area.

China Poot Bay is a popular dipnetting spot for salmon, but the entrance to the bay can be challenging in high winds. Seas were about 2-3 feet on July 8. Hawkins explained that the combination of tide currents and southwest winds can make for a dangerous traverse. The winds on Wednesday were coming from the southwest, he said.

“It does require local knowledge,” Hawkins said of the area. “I would say that, watch your tides on that approach. There are publications that explain better as far as how to navigate through tidal areas like that. As a rule of thumb, any time the wind is blowing southwest, approach with care. And small, open boats probably shouldn’t even be using that area during a southwesterly.”

All three passengers aboard the skiff were reported to have been wearing life jackets. The identities of the three people aboard the capsized skiff have not been released.

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