



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N, Olympia WA 98501-1091, (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207
Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia WA

November 24, 2008

Dear Coastal Dungeness Crab Fisher:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with the details relative to the opening of the 2008-2009 coastal Dungeness crab fishery. Washington, Oregon and California have all completed pre-season test fishing necessary to set the season opening date. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has been working to finalize management agreements with the Makah Tribe, the Quileute Tribe, and the Quinault Indian Nation (QIN). Although our discussions have not been completed with the Makah tribe and the QIN, we are attempting to work out the remaining issues so that we can implement our fishery regulations based on agreed to management plans.

The management measures described in this letter have not been agreed to by all of the tribes but represent the state's management intent. You should be mindful that our ongoing discussions with the tribes might result in additional changes to the special management area (SMA) boundaries.

Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the management measures described below before you begin your fishing operations and stay informed relative to additional changes.

OPENING DATES AND FAIR START PROVISIONS:

Klipsan Beach to WA/OR Border including Willapa Bay:

The coastal Dungeness crab fishery will open to state fishers from Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to the WA/OR border (46°15.00), including Willapa Bay (*note the new western boundary description), on **December 1, 2008**. A 64-hour gear pre-set period starting at 8:00 AM, November 28, 2008 will precede the opening. Vessel hold inspections will be conducted on November 30, 2008, starting at noon. Fishers can begin fishing in this area at 12:01 a.m. on December 1, 2008

- Fishers participating in the fishery south of Klipsan Beach or in Willapa Bay are subject to reduced pot limits. Fishers with permanent pot limits of 500 and 300 will be allowed to use 400 or 250 pots, respectively. Unused buoy tags must be on board vessels engaged in fishing in these areas through the opening of the fishery in the area from Klipsan Beach to Destruction Island.



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- Vessels that fish in the area between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach and/or in Willapa Bay before the ocean area north of Klipsan Beach opens are subject to the fair start provisions described below.
- The boundary between the Willapa Bay and the ocean waters is distinguished by a strait line connecting the following coordinates:

*Cape Shoalwater: 46°44.76 N - 124°05.76 W
Leadbetter Point: 46°38.93 N - 124°04.33 W

Klipsan Beach to Destruction Island:

The opening date has not been determined for this area pending the completion of our discussions with the Quinault Indian Nation. You should anticipate that this area will not open earlier than January 1 and not later than January 15. We will provide you with an additional letter containing the specific regulations for this area no later than December 12, 2008.

Destruction Island to U.S.-Canadian Border:

The state commercial fishery from Destruction Island to the U.S. Canadian border will not open before on **12:01 AM, January 15, 2009**. **The opening in this area may be delayed past January 15 as necessary to provide 20 fishable days between December 1, 2008 and January 15, 2009.** There will not be a 64-hour pre-set period before the opening in this area.

Fair Start Provisions:

- **Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to Oysterville (46°33.00):** Vessels that fish between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens will be allowed to fish in the area between Klipsan Beach and Oysterville **10-days** after the area from Klipsan Beach to Oysterville opens.
- **Oysterville (46°33.00) to Destruction Island:** Vessels that participate in the fishery between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Oysterville opens may not fish in the area between Oysterville and Destruction Island until **35-days** after the area from Oysterville to Destruction Island opens.
- **Destruction Island to U.S.- Canadian Border:** Vessels that participate in the fishery between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Destruction Island opens may not fish in the area between



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Destruction Island and the U.S. Canadian border until **20-days** after the area from Destruction Island and the U.S. Canadian border opens.

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS:

Quinault:

The specifics of the Quinault special management areas are still under discussion between the state and the Quinault Indian Nation. The specifics of the SMA's for this area will be described in the follow-up letter referenced above.

Quileute:

The Quileute SMA will be closed to state fishers beginning immediately upon the opening of the state fishery in the area from Destruction Island to U.S. Canadian border. The Quileute SMA will open to state fishers beginning at 8:00 AM, May 1, 2009.

The Quileute SMA is described as the area from Cape Johnson to Destruction Island shoreward of a line approximating 30 fathoms according to the following points:

- Northeast Corner; Cape Johnson 47°58.00 - 124°40.40
- Northwest Corner; 47°58.00 N. - 124°49.00W.
- Southwest Corner; 47°40.50 N. - 124°40.00'W.
- Southeast Corner; Destruction Island 47°40.50 - 124° 24.43

There will be a 100-pot limit in the SMA from May 1, 2009, through May 31, 2009. Fishers must pre-register with the Department prior to deploying gear in this area.

Makah SMA:

The Makah SMA will be closed to state fishers immediately upon the opening of the state fishery in the area between Destruction Island and U.S. Canadian border and will remain closed for 30-days.

There will be a 200-pot limit in the SMA for the first 30-days following the opening of the SMA to state fishers. Fishers must pre-register with the Department prior to deploying gear in this area.

The Makah SMA is described as the coastal waters between 48°02.15N. to 48°19.50N. east of a line connecting those points approximating the 25-fathom line according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner; Tatoosh Island



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- Northwest Corner; 48°19.50 N. – 124°50.45 W.
- Southwest Corner; 48°02.15 N. – 124°50.45 W.
- Southeast Corner, 48°02.15 N. – 124°41.00 W.

Other Requirements:

- a. Vessels not designated on a coastal Dungeness crab fishery license are permitted to transport or deploy up to 250 pots during the pre-soak period. The primary operator of the vessel associated with the pots being transported must be aboard the vessel while they are being deployed.
- b. Vessel hold inspections will be scheduled for all vessels that have not fished in the area from Klipsan Beach to Point Arena, CA prior to the opening of the fishery between Oysterville and the U.S. Canadian border.
- c. All license holders will be required to carry, complete, and submit logbooks to the Department. This information will greatly assist us in managing our fishery in the future.
- d. Notification to Department Enforcement is required when transiting crab through closed areas. Notification is to be made 24-hours prior to entering the area north of 47°00.00 N. Latitude by calling 360-581-3337, and reporting the vessel name, operator name, estimated amount of crab to be delivered in pounds, and the estimated date, time, and location of delivery. The following situations will require notification.
 - a. Vessels transiting north of Grays Harbor with crab caught south of Klipsan beach (46°28.00) or Willapa Bay prior to the area north of Klipsan beach opening.
 - b. Vessels transiting north of Grays Harbor with crab caught south of Destruction Island (47°40.50) prior to the area north of Destruction Island opening.
- e. A hold inspection certificate number is required on all fish tickets through January 31, 2009.
- f. WDFW staff and industry have been working to clarify the current language describing the requirement to register buoy colors. To gather additional information, staff will be surveying the fleet during hold inspections. We will



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also have cameras available during hold inspections if you would like to update your buoy photo.

- g. Make sure that your escape mechanism meets the requirements of WAC 220-52-035; this regulation is intended to allow crab to escape when a crab pot becomes lost or abandoned. You will have through the end of March to change your escape mechanism so that it meets this requirement.
- h. The Department would like your help, please call the coastal crab hotline (360-249-4628, extension 260) if you witness or have information regarding enforcement violations including fishing in closed areas, starting early, pots without buoy tags, etc.

This information and future updates will also be available on the Department web page:
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/comcrab/coast/>

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this letter or other regulations pertaining to the coastal Dungeness crab fishery, please contact Brandon Bryant at (360) 249-4628 ext. 229. Thank you for your patience and your help as we continue to work through this year's preseason management process.

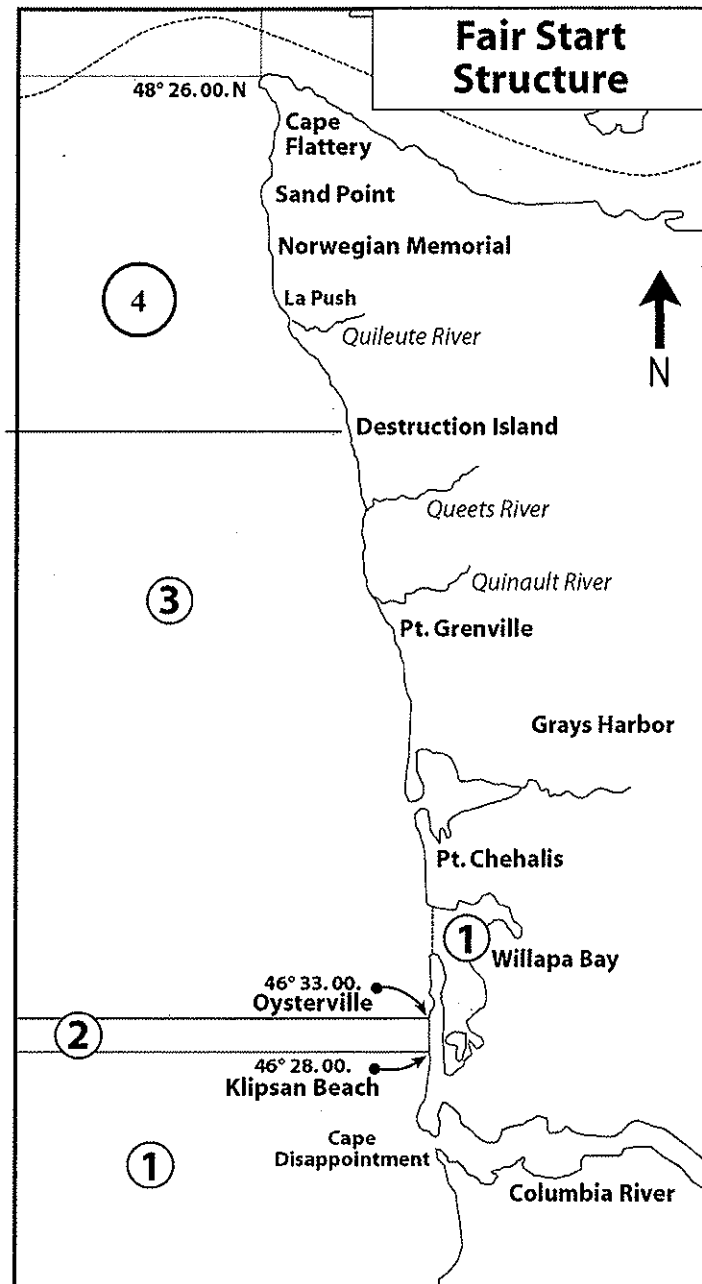
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Reed".

Heather Reed
Coastal Marine Resources Policy Coordinator
WDFW

Enclosures

cc: Jeff Koenings
Phil Anderson
Michele Culver
Kirt Hughes
Dan Ayres
Brandon Bryant



Area 1: Point Arena, CA. to Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay

Open on December 1, 2008

Area 2: Klipsan Beach, WA. to Oysterville, WA

If a vessel fished in Area 1, that vessel may not fish in Area 2 for 10 days after Area 2 opens.

Area 3: Oysterville, WA. to Destruction Island, WA, including Grays Harbor

If a vessel fished in Area 1, that vessel may not fish in Area 3 for 35 days after Area 3 opens.

Area 4: Destruction Island WA, to U. S. Canadian border: If a vessel fished in Area 1, that vessel may not fish in Area 4 for 20 days after area 4 opens.

WAC 220-52-035

Commercial shellfish pot gear — Escape mechanism required.

It is unlawful to fish for or possess crab, shrimp, or crawfish taken for commercial purposes with shellfish pot gear unless the gear allows for escapement using at least one of the following methods:

(1) Attachment of pot lid hooks or tie down straps with a single strand or loop of untreated cotton twine or other natural fiber no larger than thread size 120 so that the pot lid will open freely if the twine or fiber is broken.

(2) An opening in the pot mesh no less than three inches by five inches which is laced or sewn closed with untreated cotton twine or other natural fiber no larger than thread size 120. The opening must be located within the top half of the pot and be unimpeded by the entry tunnels, bait boxes, or any other structures or materials.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.12.047, 06-07-044 (Order 06-38), § 220-52-035, filed 3/9/06, effective 4/9/06; 03-16-097 (Order 03-180), § 220-52-035, filed 8/6/03, effective 9/6/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 75.08.080, 87-23-006 (Order 87-187), § 220-52-035, filed 11/6/87.]

