



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

Changes to coastal Dungeness crab regulations:

- **Effective August 15, 2010 a weekly landing limit of 4,000 is in effect.**

It is unlawful for any person licensed to fish under a Dungeness crab-coastal fishery license to possess or land crab in excess of 4,000 pounds taken during each of the following coastal crab accounting periods:

August 15, 2010 through August 21, 2010
August 22, 2010 through August 28, 2010
August 29, 20201 through September 4, 2010
September 5 through September 11, 2010
September 12 through September 15, 2010

Any crab taken prior to August 15, 2010, and not landed before 11:59 p.m. August 14, 2010, become part of the August 15 through August 21, 2010 accounting period catch.

It is unlawful for any person to fish for crab during any accounting period while having on board any crab taken in a different accounting period. **NOTE: It is also unlawful to possess crab in excess of the weekly landing limit at any time.**

JUSTIFICATION:

The Summer Fishery Management Plan calls for the implementation of management measures intended to protect the Dungeness crab resource when significant amounts of soft shelled crab are present during the commercial crab fishery. In a letter sent to all commercial crab license holders dated June 18, 2010 WDFW outlined revisions in the Summer Fishery Management Plan. The Plan describes that starting the third week in June and continuing through September 15 WDFW will collect shell condition data at both dockside buying facilities and on board commercial vessels.

Based on data collected in June and early July, WDFW imposed a 2,500 lb weekly landing limit on July 18, 2010. Subsequent sampling has shown some improvement in crab condition allowing WDFW to raise the weekly landing limit to 4,000 pounds – in accordance with the provisions of the Summer Fishery Management Plan.

WDFW is aware that crab condition is variable along the coast and that our sampling results from both dockside and shipboard trips are reflective of a significant amount of effort on the part of most fishers currently participating in the fishery to avoid areas of soft crab. WDFW will continue to test the condition of crab at dockside buying stations and on shipboard ride along trips throughout the close of the season. If the data shows that shell conditions degrade – the landing limit will be dropped back to 2,500 pounds – as described in the Summer Fishery Management Plan.

Please Note: It remains unlawful to place gear, fish for, or possess Dungeness crab for commercial purposes in the area outside 4 miles through September 15, 2010.