



State of Washington  
**Department of Fish and Wildlife**

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**WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE**

WDFW is implementing the following change to coastal commercial Dungeness crab regulations effective August 21, 2016:

**It is unlawful for any person licensed to fish under a Dungeness crab-coastal fishery license to possess or land crab in excess of 1,200 pounds during any weekly catch accounting period (Sunday through Saturday). See the list of catch accounting periods below.**

Any crab taken prior to August 21, 2016, and not landed before 11:59 p.m. August 20, 2016, become part of the August 21-27, 2016 accounting period catch.

Weekly Catch Accounting Periods:

- August 21 – August 27, 2016
- August 28 – September 3, 2016
- September 4 – September 10, 2016
- September 11 – September 15, 2016

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The Summer Fishery Management Plan (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.

Specifically, the Plan states: If any single shell condition test conducted during a ride-along trip indicates that less than 50% of the male crabs sampled are grades 1A and/or 1B OR, if any three shell condition tests conducted during random dockside sampling within a two week period as described in Appendix B indicates that less than 75% of the crab sampled are grades 1A and 1B, WDFW will impose a 1,200 pound weekly landing limit.

This week crab condition data has met the above criteria. Sampling by WDFW staff found less than 50% hard crab in one shipboard trip, triggering a reduced weekly landing limit. In addition, two dockside samples from different vessels fishing in different areas found less than 75% hard crab confirming that soft crab are widespread.

After the imposition of landing limits, the Plan directs WDFW to continue sampling.

If any single shell condition test conducted during a ride-along trip indicates that more than 50% of the male crabs sampled are grades 1A and/or 1B AND, if any three shell condition tests conducted during random dockside sampling within a two week period following the implementation of the 1,200 pound landing limit indicate that more than 75% of the crab in the sample are grades 1A and 1B, WDFW will increase the weekly landing limit to 2,500 pounds.