



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

48 Devonshire Road, Montesano, Washington 98563-9618 (360) 249-4628 FAX (360) 249-1229

Contact: Dan Ayres 360-249-4628 (ext. 209)
December 21, 2018

WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

Meat Recovery Testing along the South Coast of Washington

The purpose of this notice is to provide an update on our expectations relative to completing our test fishing and announcing the season opening date in the area south of Klipsan Beach, Washington. In our last communication with you, we indicated that conducting a test fishery in a manner that follows the Tri-State season protocols is important in making a final decision about the 2018-2019 season opening, which we still believe is the case. However, challenges with very poor ocean conditions have prevented us from completing our test this week.

Following discussions with our Coastal Crab Advisory Group, the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee has agreed to exercise flexibility by continuing to attempt test fishing in an effort to open the fishery as soon as possible. We also understand the angst associated with the uncertainty of when the fishery will open. To try to balance these objectives, our intent is to test as soon as possible following the Christmas holiday.

Based on weather forecast information available to us today, we plan to begin our Long Beach test on December 26 and expect to have results on December 28. **If** the results from that test show that crab condition has improved sufficiently to open the fishery, then the season would open at 9:00 am on January 3, 2019, with a 73-hour gear set beginning at 8:00 am on December 31, 2018.

We will notify you immediately if the results of the test show that crab do not meet the 23 percent meat recovery or if weather prohibits us from completing the test in the period described above. In either case, the Tri-State protocols prescribe a delay until January 15. However, the Tri-State Committee has agreed to have another discussion relative to a final decision on the season opening date.

Because of the upcoming holidays, mail delivery may be delayed so we encourage you to utilize these additional ways to access season opening information.

- The WDFW Coastal Crab Email List (if your email is not on this list, you can have it added by sending a request to Daniel.Ayres@dfw.wa.gov).
- WDFW Web Site (go to <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/coastal/> look under “Letters to Crab Fishers”).
- Use the WDFW Montesano Office Crab Hotline: 360-249-4628 (extension 279).