



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

Season Opening from Point Arena, CA to Klipsan Beach, WA

The third round of pre-season meat recovery test results for all stations in Washington, Oregon and California that had previously tested below minimum criteria are all complete. The minimum meat recovery has now been met in all areas.

Based on this recent test, the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee has agreed to open **the commercial Dungeness crab season in the area between Point Arena, CA to Klipsan Beach, WA at 9:00 am December 31, 2019, with a 73-hour gear set beginning at 8:00 am on December 28, 2019. Hold inspections will be conducted beginning at noon December 30, 2019.**

The opening includes Willapa Bay, WA. 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 until the temporary pot limit is lifted.

As described in the Tri-State protocols, fishers that chose to fish in an area that opens before another area are subject to fair start provisions. Details of the fair start provisions for the 2019-2020 season opening are described below.

Klipsan Beach to Destruction Island:

Based on a co-management agreement with the Quinault Indian Nation (QIN), state fishers will be able to set gear in this area as early as January 22, 2020 and no later than January 24, 2020. WDFW will meet with QIN in early January to review early season catch by QIN fishers. WDFW will provide a detailed description of the state season for this area as soon as possible following that meeting, including the special management area (SMA) boundaries.

Destruction Island to U.S.-Canadian Border:

The state commercial fishery from Destruction Island to the U.S. Canadian border will not open before **January 15, 2020**. We will provide you with follow-up information with the specific regulations including Makah and Quileute SMA boundaries and closure periods for this area as soon as possible.

FAIR START PROVISIONS:

Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery in the waters from Point Arena, CA, to Klipsan Beach, WA, (including Willapa Bay) before the area north of Klipsan Beach, WA opens will be subject to the **Fair Start Provisions** described below.

Fair Start Provisions:

- **Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to Oysterville (46°33.00):** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the fishery between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens will not be allowed to fish in the area between Klipsan Beach and Oysterville until **10 days** after the area north of Klipsan opens.
- **Oysterville (46°33.00) to Destruction Island:** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the fishery between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Oysterville opens will not be allowed to fish in the area between Oysterville and Destruction Island until **35 days** after the area north of Klipsan opens.
- **WAC 220-340-400 Definition—Commercial crab fishing:** “Commercial crab fishing” means any taking, fishing, use, or operation of gear to fish for crab for commercial purposes, and includes the possession of crab on the water for commercial purposes, and the landing or initial delivery of crab for commercial purposes.

Other Requirements:

- All commercial crab license holders will be required to carry, complete, and submit logbooks to WDFW. This information will greatly assist us in managing our fishery in the future.
- Notification to WDFW 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 Capt. Dan Chadwick at 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.
- A **Washington Gear Transfer Permit** issued by WDFW is required to transport through Washington State waters, crab pots or buoys bearing the tags issued by another state. Contact Captain Dan Chadwick at 360-581-3337 for issuance of this permit.
- A hold inspection certificate number is required on all fish tickets until further notice.
- WDFW 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 WDFW web page:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/coastal/>

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this letter or other regulations pertaining to the coastal Dungeness crab fishery, please contact Dan Ayres at (360) 249-4628 ext. 209.