

December 9, 2005

**WDFW INDUSTRY NOTICE TO:
COASTAL COMMERCIAL DUNGENESS CRAB FISHERS AND
PROCESSORS**

**THE COASTAL COMMERCIAL DUNGENESS CRAB FISHERY IS
SCHEDULED TO OPEN AT 12:01 AM DECEMBER 31, 2005***

Washington completed the third round of pre-season testing fishing for coastal Dungeness crab condition on December 5. Meat pick-out results for the Long Beach area was 22.3%. The season start date and management strategy is designed to ensure an orderly fishery that provides a quality product to the market place. A quality product has been judged to be present when crabs achieve a minimum meat pick-out rate of 23%.

Policy representatives from the California Department of Fish and Game, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife discussed the results of the final round of coast wide test fishing and issues associated with crab condition during a conference call on Thursday, December 8, 2005. The three state representatives discussed the merits of a coordinated coast-wide season opening date that achieves a fair start for all crab fishers on high quality crab. **Based on those discussions and the latest test fishery data, the three states agreed to a coast wide opening date for the 2005-2006 coastal crab fishery of December 31, 2005.** Oregon and Washington will provide a 64-hour gear set period prior to the opening date beginning at 8:00 AM on December 28, 2005. Washington will conduct hold inspections on December 30, 2005. California will provide their fishers with a 36-hour pre-soak period.

The Quileute Tribe has filed an objection with the federal court regarding the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's intent to open its fishery prior to January 15, 2006. Until this issue is resolved, ***the opening of the coastal crab fishery on December 31, 2005 will not apply to the area from Destruction Island to Sandpoint (48°07.00 N.)**

You will receive more information on this issue and tribal special management areas in a letter later next week.

If you have any questions pertaining to this notice please call Heather Reed (360) 249-4628 ext. 202.