



State of Washington

Department of Fish and Wildlife

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November 21, 2007

Dear Coastal Dungeness Crab Fisher:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with the details relative to the opening of the coastal Dungeness crab fishery for the 2007-2008 season. Washington, Oregon, and California have all completed the required amount of test fishing necessary to set the season opening date. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has been working to finalize management agreements with the Makah Tribe, the Quileute Tribe, and the Quinault Indian Nation (QIN). Although our discussions have not been completed with the Makah Tribe and the QIN, we are attempting to work out the remaining issues so that we can implement our fishery regulations based on agreed to management plans. The management measures described in this letter have not been agreed to by all of the tribes, but represent the state's management intent. You should be mindful that our ongoing discussions with the tribes might result in additional changes to the special management area (SMA) boundaries. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the management measures described below before you begin your fishing operations and stay informed relative to additional changes.

OPENING DATES AND FAIR START PROVISIONS:

Klipsan Beach to WA/OR Border including Willapa Bay:

The coastal Dungeness crab fishery will open to state fishers from Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to the WA/OR border (46°15.00), including Willapa Bay, on **December 1, 2007**. A 64-hour gear pre-set period starting at 8:00 a.m., November 28, 2007, will precede the opening. Vessel hold inspections will be conducted on November 30, 2007, at noon. Fishers can begin fishing in this area at 12:01 a.m. on December 1, 2007.

- 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 engaged in fishing in the area through December 25, 2007. **The temporary pot limits will be removed at 8:00 a.m., December 26, 2007.**
- Vessels that fish in the area between Point Arena, CA, and Klipsan Beach and/or in Willapa Bay before the ocean area north of Klipsan Beach opens are subject to the fair start provisions described below.

Klipsan Beach to Destruction Island:

Except within the SMAs described below, or as adjusted pending the outcome of state/tribal negotiations, the state commercial fishery will open from Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to Destruction Island (47°40.50) beginning with a 64-hour gear pre-set period starting at **8:00 a.m., December 26, 2007**. Vessel hold inspections will be conducted on December 28, 2007, at noon. Fishers can begin fishing at 12:01 a.m. on December 29, 2007.

Destruction Island to U.S.-Canadian Border:

The state commercial fishery will open from Destruction Island to the U.S. Canadian border at **12:01 a.m., January 15, 2008**. There will **not** be a 64-hour pre-set period before the opening. Vessel hold inspections will be conducted on December 28, 2007, at noon.

Fair Start Provisions:

- **Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to Oysterville (46°33.00):** Vessels that fish between Point Arena, CA, and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens (December 26, 2007) will be allowed to fish in the area between Klipsan Beach and Oysterville beginning at 8:00 a.m., January 6, 2008.
- **Oysterville (46°33.00) to U.S. Canadian Border:** Vessels that participate in the fishery between Point Arena, CA, and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens (December 26, 2007) may not fish in the area between Oysterville and the U.S. Canadian border until 8:00 a.m., January 25, 2008.

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS:

Quinault:

The Quinault **primary SMA** will be closed to state fishers beginning at 12:01 a.m., December 26, 2007. The **primary SMA** is scheduled to remain closed to state fishers through February 28, 2008; however, is subject to change based on actual state and tribal catches observed inseason.

The Quinault **primary SMA** is described as the coastal waters shoreward of a line approximating the 27-fathom depth curve between Raft River (47°28.00) and Copalis River (47°08.00) according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner: 47°28.00N. – 124° 20.70
- Northwest Corner: 47°28.00N. – 124°34.00
- Southwest Corner: 47°08.00N. – 124°24.75
- Southeast Corner: 47°08.00N. – 124° 11.20

This description may be adjusted as a result of ongoing state/tribal negotiations.

There will be a 100-pot limit in the areas opened to the state fishery shoreward of 27 fathoms from Raft River to Copalis River through April 30, 2008. Fishers must pre-register with the

Department prior to deploying gear in this area. Specific details regarding SMA openings and pot limits will be made available prior to opening.

A Quinault **secondary SMA** (SSMA) will be established to include the area shoreward of a line approximating the 27-fathom depth curve between the mouth of the Copalis River and Point Grenville according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner: 47°18.35N. - 124°16.00
- Northwest Corner: 47°18.35N. – 124°29.55
- Southwest Corner: 47°08.00N. – 124°24.75
- Southeast Corner: 47°08.00N. – 124°11.20

This description may be adjusted as a result of ongoing state/tribal negotiations.

This area will be closed to the state fishery from the time the primary SMA closure ends until such time that QIN and the Department determine that QIN will harvest 50% of the annual catch projection within the 60A-1 catch reporting area.

A second Quinault SSMA will be established to include the area shoreward of a line approximating the 27-fathom depth curve from Point Grenville to Split Rock according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner: 47°24.50N. - 124°20.00
- Northwest Corner: 47°24.50N. - 124°32.40
- Southwest Corner: 47°18.35N. - 124°29.55
- Southeast Corner: 47°18.35N. – 124°16.00

This description may be adjusted as a result of ongoing state/tribal negotiations.

This area will be closed to the state fishery from the time the PSMA closure ends until such time that QIN and state policy representatives determine that QIN will harvest 50% of the annual catch projection within the 59A-2 catch reporting area.

Quileute:

The Quileute SMA will be closed to state fishers beginning 12:01 a.m., January 15, 2008. The Quileute SMA will open to state fishers beginning at 8:00 a.m., May 1, 2008.

The Quileute SMA is described as the area from Cape Johnson to Destruction Island shoreward of a line approximating 30 fathoms according to the following points:

- Northeast Corner; Cape Johnson 47°58.00 - 124°40.40
- Northwest Corner; 47°58.00 N. - 124°49.00W.
- Southwest Corner; 47°40.50 N. - 124°40.00' W.
- Southeast Corner; Destruction Island 47°40.50 - 124° 24.43

There will be a 100-pot limit in the SMA from May 1, 2008, through May 31, 2008. Fishers must pre-register with the Department prior to deploying gear in this area.

Makah SMA:

The Makah SMA will be closed to state fishers beginning at 12:01 a.m., January 15, 2008. The SMA will open to state fishers at 8:00 a.m., February 12, 2008.

The Makah SMA is described as the coastal waters between 48°02.15N. to 48°20.00N. east of a line connecting those points approximating the 25-fathom line according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner; Tatoosh Island
- Northwest Corner; 48°19.50 N. – 124°50.45 W.
- Southwest Corner; 48°02.15 N. – 124°50.45 W.
- Southeast Corner, 48°02.15 N. – 124°41.00 W.

Other Requirements:

- a. There will be a 64-hour pre-soak period starting at 8:00 a.m., December 26, 2007, between Klipsan Beach and Destruction Island prior to the opening at 12:01 a.m., December 29, 2007.
- b. Vessels not designated on a coastal Dungeness crab fishery license are permitted to transport or deploy up to 250 pots during the pre-soak period. The primary operator of the vessel associated with the pots being transported must be aboard the vessel while they are being deployed.
- c. Vessel hold inspections will be conducted at noon on December 28, 2007, for all vessels that have not fished in the area from Klipsan Beach to Point Arena, CA, prior to December 26, 2007.
- d. All license holders will be required to carry, complete, and submit logbooks to the Department. At the time of the hold inspection, vessel operators will be provided a logbook and instructions. This information will greatly assist us in managing our fishery in the future.
- e. Notification to the Department's Enforcement Program 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 360-249-4628, extension 253, 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.
- f. A hold inspection certificate number is required on all fish tickets through January 31, 2008.
- g. The Department 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 the Department's web page:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crabreg/comcrab/coast/>

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this letter or other regulations pertaining to the coastal Dungeness crab fishery, please contact Brandon Bryant at (360) 249-4628, ext. 229. Thank you for your patience and your help as we have worked through this challenging preseason management process.

Sincerely,



Philip Anderson

Deputy Director – Resource Policy

cc: Jeff Koenings
Lew Atkins
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