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UPDATE – INCREASE IN WEEKLY LANDING LIMIT
August 31, 2009

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Changes to coastal Dungeness crab regulations effective September 1, 2009:

The Summer Fishery Management 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. The Plan calls for a 2,500 pound weekly landing limit to minimize encounters with soft-shelled Dungeness crab while continuing to allow for some commercial fishing opportunity.

WDFW acknowledges the economic importance of this fishery to the participants and the difficult season that it has been for many fishermen, particularly in the area north of Grays Harbor. To address mortality associated with handling soft-shelled crab while allowing the commercial fishery to operate economically during the last two weeks of the 2008-09 season, WDFW is increasing the weekly landing limit from 2,500 to 4,500 pounds.

Effective September 1 through September 15, 2009 the weekly landing limit will be increased from 2,500 to 4,500 pounds.

Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-52-040, effective September 1, 2009 until further notice, it is unlawful for non-Indian commercial fishers to possess or land crab in excess of 4,500 pounds taken during the following accounting periods.

The following are the coastal crab accounting periods:

September 1 through September 7;
September 8 through September 15, 2009.

Any crab taken prior to September 1, 2009 and not landed before 11:59 p.m. August 31, 2009, become part of the September 1 through September 7 accounting period catch. It is unlawful for any person to fish for crab during any accounting period while having on board any crab taken in a different accounting period.

The 2008/2009 Coastal Dungeness Crab Fishery will close at 11:59 p.m. on September 15, 2009.