



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

48 Devonshire Road, Montesano, Washington 98563-9618 (360) 249-4628 FAX (360) 664-0689

June 17, 2009

Dear Coastal Dungeness Crab License Owner:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information regarding proposed changes to regulations for Washington's coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery.

Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1516 was passed by the Washington State Legislature during their 2009 session and was recently signed by Governor Gregoire. The intent of this bill is to allow for additional crab pot recovery opportunities for the coastal commercial crab industry. The bill requires the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to develop a permit that allows coastal commercial crab fishermen to recover any state commercial crab gear remaining in the ocean 15 days after the close of the season, regardless of who owns the gear.

WDFW developed proposed regulation changes (enclosed) that will allow for the recovery of gear through a WDFW issued permit. The proposed regulations do not include the specific requirements of the gear recovery permit. WDFW is working with the Coastal Dungeness crab Advisory Board to develop the final permit which will include provisions that must be followed in order to participate in any post season gear recovery. Permit requirements will include reporting of gear recovered, time and area restrictions and may include registration of all gear recovered. The permit provisions will allow for the continued protection of license holders from legitimate gear theft while still allowing for post season gear recovery.

The proposed rule changes are scheduled to be presented to the Fish and Wildlife Commission at their July meeting. There will be an opportunity for interested parties to comment at that time. The July 10-11, 2009 Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting is being held at the Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington St. SE; First Floor, Room 172 Olympia, Washington 98501.

The proposed rules for Coastal Dungeness crab are tentatively scheduled for Friday, July 10 at 2:40 p.m., but keep in mind that scheduled times and the agenda are subject to change. Revisions, updates and additional information are posted on the Commission Web page: www.wdfw.wa.gov/commission/meetings.htm. Contact the Commission Office with questions and to identify special accommodation needs: (360) 902-2267, TDD (360) 902-2207.

If you have any questions about this notice please contact me at 360-249-1202 or Heather.Reed@dfw.wa.gov

Sincerely,



Heather J. Reed
Coastal Marine Resources Policy Coordinator

Cc: Phil Anderson
Michele Culver
Bruce Bjork
Mike Cenci
Lisa Veneroso
Kirt Hughes
Dan Ayres

Directions and Access to the Natural Resources Building: From I-5, take State Capitol exit (105). The exit puts you on 14th Avenue. Go through the tunnel and turn right onto Capitol Way. Turn right onto 11th Avenue. Turn right onto Washington and into the visitor parking lot. Parking costs 50 cents per hour, payable at the meters. There is no charge for parking in the NRB visitor lot on weekends.

Public access to the Natural Resources Building after 5:00 p.m. and on Saturday will be available only through the rotunda doors located on the west end of the building. Contact Susan Yeager at (360) 902-2267 if assistance for persons with disabilities is needed.