



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photos Available

“ANOTHER STELLAR CRAB SEASON ENDS”

Coos Bay, OR – The annual Dungeness crab harvest along the Oregon coast ended this past Sunday, with the 325-boat crab fleet landing in excess of 21.2 million lbs. of the ‘official state Crustacean’ over the past 8½ months since the fishery got underway in mid-December.

This is the fifth time in the past decade that landings have exceeded 20 million lbs., with fishermen and biologists alike agreeing that conditions off the Oregon coast and in the state’s bays and estuaries have been favorable for healthy crab stocks. The ‘average’ annual harvest over the last 30 years is closer to 12 million lbs.

“The real story is the landed value of this season’s catch” said Nick Furman, Executive Director of the industry-funded Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission (ODCC). “Strong demand in the marketplace pushed boat prices up and although fishermen caught fewer crabs than last season, they made more money.”

The harvest was worth nearly \$49 million dollars to coastal crabbers, and will go down in the record books as the second most valuable crab season in Oregon history. Commercial fishermen landed 33.6 million lbs. of crab worth \$52.9 million dollars during the record-setting harvest in 2004/05.

Crab-related activity in the processing sector raised the associated economic impact in coastal communities to \$100+ million dollars, with Newport living up to its ‘Crab Capitol’ designation once again this year with 7.5 million lbs. delivered to seafood processors in that port. Charleston was #2 with 5.3 million lbs., followed by Astoria, which saw landings of 4.3 million lbs.

Oregon’s Dungeness fishery received Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification in early December of last year, becoming the only Dungeness crab fishery in the range (central CA to the Gulf of AK) to be recognized for its good management practices, sustainable harvest methods and neutral environmental impacts. The certification has led to additional opportunities for Oregon crab in the marketplace as more retailers and food-service operators, both nationally and internationally, embrace the concept of sustainable fisheries verified by independent, third-party evaluation.

Organized efforts conducted by the ODCC, in partnership with NOAA, to recover crab pots lost in the ocean during the season will begin in early September. The industry-led program follows a successful two-year project funded by NOAA and coordinated by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to tackle the marine debris problem, and is designed to provide additional incentives for what will hopefully become an annual ‘cleanup’ activity.

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The ODCC is an industry-funded commodity commission under the umbrella of the Oregon Department of Agriculture, representing 429 limited-entry Oregon crab permit holders harvesting a renewable resource in a sustainable fishery. Our mission is to enhance the image of Oregon’s Dungeness crab industry and increase opportunities for profitability through promotion, education and research.