



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N · Olympia, WA 98501-1091 · (360) 902-2200, TTY (800) 833-6388
Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building · 1111 Washington Street SE · Olympia, WA

January 24, 2014

Dear Washington Hagfish Trial Fishery License Holders and Alternate Operators,

You have received this letter because you were licensed in the Coastal Hagfish Trial Fishery in 2013. This letter provides important information for the 2014 fishing year.

New for 2014

This year WDFW will resume routine sampling to collect species composition and biological data from hagfish. WDFW groundfish port samplers already cover coastal ports and will coordinate with fishers and buyers. A typical sample size is 50-60 hagfish and these can be live or frozen. The objective is to collect about 1000 hagfish annually to support statistical analyses. For each hagfish, length, weight, sex, and maturity will be determined, and when present, egg length will be measured. In addition, catch may need to be sampled to determine the species mix, i.e. percent Pacific hagfish versus black hagfish. Species composition sampling does not require retaining any specimens, but does involve handling hagfish.

Advance Notification

One condition of the trial hagfish permit is for hagfish fishers to notify WDFW in advance of landing. The purpose of this notification is to facilitate sampling. To streamline communication, I will no longer be the single point of contact for fishers actively participating in the fishery. Instead of calling me, each fisher will be assigned to one of the WDFW port samplers. New permits will be issued, in the meantime, please begin using your assigned port sampler. I will remain the primary contact for license holders not actively fishing.

Otherwise, the procedure remains unchanged: simply call *or* send a text message to the port sampler and report when and where you are going to land. It is helpful if you state the date specifically rather than saying "today" or "Wednesday" for example. To provide advance notification of landing contact:

Brian Walker
360 580 6286

For all messages provide the following information:

Skipper
Vessel
Port of landing
Date
Time

Once this information is provided, no further action is required on your part; the port sampler will contact you if/as necessary. As always, you may contact me with any questions you might have.

Fishery Logbook

A new logbook is enclosed. Additional logbooks can be obtained from port samplers, WDFW Commercial Licensing or by calling the Region 6 office at Montesano at 360.249.4628.

When filling out the logbook, please know that these data will be used to evaluate the fishery. The more accurate you can be the better. Especially important are the number of pots fished on a string, how long they were soaked and the catch per string, along with string location. Under state law, logbook data are confidential. No individual's data can be shared without consent. It is permissible to share logbook data summarized for the entire fishery. If you have concerns, please contact me.

Logbooks may only be returned by mail to the Region 6 office at Montesano or given directly to a WDFW groundfish port sampler. Please be prompt in turning your logbooks in, it is much easier to process them throughout the year.

Finally, please review your Hagfish Trial Fishery Permit carefully. It lists conditions which all hagfish trial license holders and alternate operators in the hagfish fishery must abide by, or be subject to fines or permit revocation for failure to do so. Additionally, permits for subsequent years may be denied if license holders fail to comply with the requirement to submit logbooks and provide advance notification as described in permit conditions #8 and #11.

It is essential that fishers support the efforts to collect the catch and biological data necessary to evaluate the sustainability of the hagfish fishery. The commercial hagfish fishery in Washington is conducted under the Emerging Commercial Fishery Act (ECFA). Fisheries established under the ECFA are not permanent and can be closed if deemed necessary to protect and preserve the target species, in particular, or more broadly marine ecosystem habitat or health.

For more information, contact Lorna Wargo at 360.249.1221 or 360.489.4679.

Sincerely,



Lorna Wargo
Marine Fisheries Biologist
Coastal Marine Fish Science