



Amending Coastal Dungeness Crab Rules - Briefing

Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
November 7-8, 2014



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Background

Revisions to coastal commercial
Dungeness crab regulations are need
to:



- Improve the intent and enforceability of existing regulations
- Allow for a consistent season opening with Oregon
- Minimize lost or derelict crab gear
- Improve safety for the coastal Dungeness crab fishery

Streamline Season Opening Date

WAC 220-52-045

- Current rule language is specific to a December 1 season opening date
- The season is often delayed due to state – tribal harvest agreements or crab shell condition.



Information subject to changes and amendments over time

Modify Replacement Buoy Tag Program

WAC 220-52-042

- Recent investigations show system abuse
- Current eligibility for replacement tags is the first day of the season
- Proposal restricts eligibility to 15 days after the season opens
- Total number of replacement tags issued would be reduced from 15 percent to 10 percent

Modify Logbook Reporting Requirements



WAC 220-52-041

- **Current regulations require crab caught in waters adjacent to WA coast, the Columbia River, Grays Harbor and Willapa Bay to be reported in a WA logbook.**
- **Crab caught off Oregon but landed into a WA port are not included**
- **As a result, as much as one million pounds of crab are not being reported on logbooks**



Establish a Gear Tending Requirement

WAC 220-52-045

- **Currently no restriction on amount of time crab gear can be left in ocean without being fished**
- **Some gear is left in ocean unattended for months at a time while a fisher participates in other fisheries**
- **Proposed gear tending regulation requires gear to be fished every 21 days beginning May 1**
- **Reduces unlawful fishing of another's gear and the potential for becoming lost or derelict**



Extend Pre-Season Gear Set Period

- **Washington, Oregon and California coordinate coastal Dungeness crab management through the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee.**
- **The Committee agreed to revise the pre-season gear set period in Washington and Oregon from 64 hours to 73 hours prior to the season opening.**
- **Allow gear setting and gear retrieval to occur in daylight hours improving the enforceability of the season opening and improving safety.**



Next Steps

- A public hearing will be held on November 25, 2014 at the Region Six headquarters in Montesano.
- The Commission will be provided a summary of the public comments prior to Commission decision making at the December 12-13 Commission meeting.



Questions?



Information subject to change over time

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Commission Meeting Presentation