

Concise Explanatory Statement (CES)

Recreational Clam and Oyster Seasons

WAC 220-56-350, Clams other than razor clams, mussels – Areas and seasons; and

WAC 220-56-380, Oysters – Areas and seasons.

A. Reasons for adopting the rule:

The department must annually amend recreational clam and oyster season rules on some public tidelands in response to shellfish population changes, shifts in recreational effort, conservation issues, and negotiations with treaty tribes and other state agencies. Public health considerations and in-house administrative changes were also considered. Such amendments are designed to perpetuate shellfish resources while maximizing recreational fishing opportunity. For 2016, intertidal bivalve staff recommend that 9 beaches have longer seasons compared to 2015, 3 beaches have shorter seasons, and 2 beaches have their opening dates shifted. In addition, 19 beaches will be closed based on public health considerations, 6 beaches will be removed from the WACs based on land ownership, and 12 beaches will have revised text in the WACs.

B. Differences between the text of the proposed rule and the text of the rule as adopted:

None.

C. Summary of comments and WDFW response and consideration for the comments:

Season change recommendations were coordinated where appropriate with Washington State Department of Health and Washington State Parks staff. All season change recommendations were announced on the agency web site and the Shellfish Rule Change phone hotline. The Fish & Wildlife Commission held a public rule change hearing on February 26, 2016. No written comments were received and no public testimony was given regarding the rule changes.