



State of Washington  
Department of Fish and Wildlife

*48 Devonshire Road, Montesano, Washington 98563-9618 (360) 249-4628 FAX (360) 249-1229*

December 2, 2014

Dear Coastal Dungeness Crab Fisher:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with final details relative to the 2014-15 coastal Dungeness crab fishery **including information on the opening of the state fishery north of Klipsan Beach.**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Quinault Indian Nation (QIN) have recently agreed to the terms of a Harvest Management Agreement for the 2014-15 season. WDFW has also finalized management agreements with the Makah and Quileute Tribes. The specific details of locations of the agreed to Special Management Areas (SMA), and the dates they are closed to non-tribal fishers are provided below.

The 2014-15 management agreement with QIN includes a two day reduction in the number of head-start days provided to Quinault fishers prior to the state season opening and, sixteen fewer days that the Primary Special Management Area (PSMA) is closed to state fishermen compared to what was in place for the 2013-2014 season. In addition, the agreement includes a provision that managers and policy makers will meet the first week in March to discuss preliminary harvest sharing results. The purpose of this meeting is to evaluate state and QIN catch early in the season and gauge the potential need for inseason adjustments needed to reach each our respective harvest sharing goals.

We are hopeful that the changes to the head-start days and PSMA closure will achieve balanced sharing of the crab resources in our co-managed area but are committed to discussing and implementing inseason adjustments early on if harvest sharing is significantly off track.

The provisions in the agreements with Makah and Quileute are the same as those that have been in place in recent years.

**STATE SEASON OPENING NORTH OF KLIPSAN BEACH:**

The area between Destruction Island and the U.S. - Canada border will not open prior to January 15, 2015. The harvest management plan with the Quileute Tribe includes a provision to ensure that there are 20 fishable days for Quileute fishers between December 1 and January 15<sup>th</sup> prior to opening the state fishery north of Destruction Island. Details

regarding the opening north of Destruction Island will be provided in a future letter when the specific opening date has been determined.

- **The state coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery between Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) and Destruction Island will open at 12:01 am, January 3, 2015.**
- A **64-hour** gear pre-set period will begin at 8:00 am December 31, 2014.
- **Hold inspections** will be conducted starting at noon on January 2, 2015.
- Temporary pot limits in place south of Klipsan Beach will be removed at 8:00 am December 31, 2014.

Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the management measures described below before you begin your fishing operations and stay informed relative to additional changes.

### **SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS:**

#### **Quinault:**

The Quinault **primary SMA** will be closed to state fishers beginning at 8:00 AM December 31, 2014. The **primary SMA** is scheduled to remain closed to state fishers until 8:00 am on April 3, 2015.

The Quinault **primary SMA** is described as the coastal waters shoreward of a line approximating the 27-fathom depth curve between Raft River (47°28.00) and Copalis River (47°08.00) according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner: 47°28.00' N. Lat. – 124°20.70' W. Lon.
- Northwest Corner: 47°28.00' N. Lat. – 124°34.00' W. Lon.
- Southwest Corner: 47°08.00' N. Lat. – 124°25.50' W. Lon.
- Southeast Corner: 47°08.00' N. Lat. – 124°11.20' W. Lon.

A Quinault **secondary SMA** (SSMA) will be established on 8:00 am April 3, 2015 to include the area shoreward of a line approximating the 27-fathom depth curve between the mouth of the Copalis River (47°08.00) and Split Rock (47°24.50) according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner (Split Rock): 47°24.50' N. Lat. 124°20.00' W. Lon.
- Northwest Corner: 47°24.50' N. Lat. 124°32.40' W. Lon.
- Southwest Corner: 47°08.00' N. Lat. 124°25.50' W. Lon.
- Southeast Corner (Copalis River): 47°08.00' N. Lat. 124°11.20' W. Lon.

When the area between Split Rock and Raft River opens, state fishers must pre-register with WDFW prior to deploying gear in this area. Specific details regarding SMA openings and pot limits will be made available prior to opening.

**FAIR START PROVISIONS:**

Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-52-036) in the coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery in the waters from Point Arena, California, to Klipsan Beach, Washington, (including Willapa Bay) before January 15, 2014 are subject to the **Fair Start Provisions** described below.

**Fair Start Provisions:**

- **Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to Oysterville (46°33.00):** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-52-036) in the fishery between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens will be allowed to fish in the area between Klipsan Beach and Oysterville at **8:00 am on January 13, 2015**
- **Oysterville (46°33.00) to the U.S. - Canada Border:** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-52-036) in the fishery between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Oysterville opens will be allowed to fish in the area between Oysterville and Destruction Island at **8:00 am on February 7, 2015.**
- **WAC 220-52-036 Definition—Commercial crab fishing:** “Commercial crab fishing” means any taking, fishing, use, or operation of gear to fish for crab for commercial purposes, and includes the possession of crab on the water for commercial purposes, and the landing or initial delivery of crab for commercial purposes.

**Other Requirements:**

- a. Vessels not designated on a coastal Dungeness crab fishery license are permitted to transport or deploy up to 250 pots during the pre-soak period. The primary operator or the alternate operator of the vessel associated with the pots being transported must be aboard the vessel while they are being deployed.
- b. All license holders will be required to carry, complete, and submit logbooks to WDFW. This information will greatly assist us in managing our fishery in the future.
- c. Notification to WDFW Enforcement is required when transiting crab through closed areas. Notification is to be made 24-hours prior to entering the area

north of 47°00.00 N. Latitude by calling 360-581-3337, and reporting the vessel name, operator name, estimated amount of crab to be delivered in pounds, and the estimated date, time, and location of delivery. The following situation will require notification:

- i. Vessels transiting north of Grays Harbor with crab caught south of Klipsan beach (46°28.00) or Willapa Bay prior to the area north of Klipsan beach opening.
- d. A hold inspection certificate number is required on all fish tickets through February 7, 2015.
- e. WDFW would like your help, please call the coastal crab hotline (360-249-4628, extension 260) if you witness or have information regarding enforcement violations including fishing in closed areas, starting early, pots without buoy tags, etc.

This information and future updates will also be available on WDFW web page:  
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/coastal/>

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this letter or other regulations pertaining to the coastal Dungeness crab fishery, please contact Dan Ayres at (360) 249-4628 ext. 209.

I appreciate the input and support from the Coastal Dungeness crab Advisory Board and industry members during this year's test fishing and season setting process. I hope you have a safe and successful 2014-15 crab season.

Sincerely,



Heather Reed  
Coastal Marine Resources Policy Coordinator

cc: Phil Anderson  
Michele Culver  
Steve Thiesfeld  
Dan Ayres