



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

Continued Season Opening Delay in Washington and Oregon (North of Cape Falcon)

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Yesterday, coastal Dungeness crab Tri-State policy representatives from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) agreed to further delay the opening of the 2020-21 coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery from Cape Falcon, Oregon (45° 46' .00 N. Lat.) north to the US/Canada border. While we anticipate the delay of the Washington fishery to be through the end of the month, a specific opening date will depend on the results of Washington domoic acid tests of crab in the area south of Klipsan. Actual sampling dates are unknown, as we do our best to work around on-going poor ocean conditions that have hampered sample collection.

The latest results of domoic acid tests of Dungeness crab collected by WDFW and analyzed by the Washington Department of Health (WDOH) shows that crab tested off Long Beach have viscera that continue to be above the federal domoic acid action level of 30 parts per million (ppm). We are unable to announce the opening of the commercial crab fishery until domoic acid levels drop below the action level. The latest results are posted at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/coastal/letters-notices#general-info>

WDFW follows a biotoxin monitoring plan overseen by Washington Department of Health (WDOH). The monitoring plan requires two samples, seven to ten days apart where domoic acid is below 30 ppm and trending downwards to proceed with opening the fishery. WDFW will continue to sample as ocean conditions allow.

WDFW has been working with WDOH, Washington Department of Agriculture and ODFW to discuss the requirements and enforceability of an opening under a mandatory evisceration requirement should that action be necessary. We agree that without some rule changes that must be made by the Washington Legislature, evisceration is not currently an option in Washington.

WDFW is coordinating closely with the Quinault Indian Nation regarding season opening provisions for the area north of Klipsan Beach, Washington. We will provide more information and details regarding the season opening in that area as soon as possible.