

Summary

Meeting dates: March 14, 2014 (conference call)

Agenda item: Oyster Drill Restricted Areas Changes (rule change action)

Presenter(s): Rich Childers, Puget sound shellfish Manager, Fish Program

Background summary:

The Japanese oyster drill (*Ocenebrellus inornatus*) most likely came to Washington state in the early 1900s, along with the importation of the first Japanese oysters. Oyster drills prey on both native and non-native species of oysters. Oyster drills expand their range very slowly under natural circumstances, since they are not broadcast spawners. Females lay eggs on rocks or oysters thus restricting the spread of the localized populations.

The Department must periodically amend Washington Administration Codes designating tideland areas infested with Japanese oyster drills in order to protect currently un-infested tidelands from the transfer of shellfish harboring oyster drills or their egg cases. Surveys indicate that in two areas, Japanese oyster drills have expanded their range to include previously un-infested tidelands.

The Department also seeks to correct several errors in the latitude/longitude descriptions of current drill-infested areas. These corrections will help perpetuate shellfish resources by minimizing the chances that Japanese oyster drills are spread through shellfish transfers.

Staff presented rule change proposals to the Commission at a public hearing on February 7, 2014 to expand the range of oyster drills in two areas and correct latitude/longitude descriptions for several areas

Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

None

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

Rule change proposals were posted on the agency web site. No comments were received from the public. The commercial shellfish aquaculture industry supports department efforts to control the spread of oyster drills.

Action requested:

Commission action on proposed rule changes to WAC 220-72-011 Oyster drill restricted shellfish areas—Puget Sound.

Draft motion language:

Move to adopt permanent amendments to WAC 220-72-011 as recommended by

Department staff (attached).

Justification for Commission action:

This action is justified under RCW 77.12.047.

Communications Plan:

Agency web site and Shellfish Rule Change phone hotline, news releases, beach signage, and the 2013-2014 Sport Fishing Rules pamphlet.
