



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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November 17, 2023

WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

Season Opening Delayed in Washington, Oregon, and California (North of Point Arena)

On November 17, 2023, 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 delay the opening of the 2023-24 Coastal Dungeness crab fishery from Point Arena, California north to the US/Canada border through at least December 15th. This decision was based on crab condition tests conducted by WDFW, ODFW, and CDFW which shows that test results at multiple sites across the region do not currently meet the minimum meat recovery criteria.

The Tri-State Dungeness Crab Pre-Season Testing Protocols specify that after the first round of testing, if any area does not meet the minimum meat recovery criteria (23% north of Cascade Head and 24% south of Cascade Head) a delay is required, and additional testing is conducted before a season opening date can be confirmed. A second round of meat recovery is scheduled to be conducted in early December. WDFW will provide additional information regarding the season opening as soon as possible following the completion of the upcoming tests.

WASHINGTON TEST RESULTS

Sampling within the Long Beach and Westport Test Areas were completed on November 8, 2023, and November 9, 2023, respectively. The results for all stations are summarized below.

Test Area	Date	Shell Grade				Meat Recovery	Domoic Acid (ppm) levels per crab
		1A	1B	II	III		
Long Beach	11/8/23	9.2%	14.0%	76.8%	0%	18.4%	1
Westport	11/9/23	19.7%	19.3%	61.0%	0%	22.6%	1

Definition of shell grades:

- 1A: no flex in body or legs; marketable
- 1B: slight flex in either body or leg; marketable
- II: some flex in both body and leg; not marketable
- III: extreme flex in body and legs; not marketable

COASTWIDE TEST RESULTS

Coastwide test meat recovery results to date are summarized below and can also be found at this link: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-11/tri-statepreseasoncoastwideresults-2023.pdf>

2023 Preseason Coastal Dungeness crab Test Fishery Results for WA, OR and CA									
* Date is the date the pots were pulled									
Test Area	Number of pots	Optional Early Round		Round 1		Round 2		Round 3	
		Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %
Washington									
Northern		NT	NT	NT	NT				
Westport	54	10/23/23	19.9%	11/9/23	22.6%				
Long Beach	54	10/22/23	17.8%	11/8/23	18.4%				
Oregon									
Astoria (50-A)	18	NT	NT	11/9/23	18.9%				
Garibaldi (50-B)	18	NT	NT	11/9/23	21.2%				
Newport North (50-C and 50-D)	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	21.6%				
Newport South (50-E and 50-F)	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	24.6%				
Coos Bay North (50-G and 50-H)	36	NT	NT	11/14/23	24.0%				
Coos Bay South (50-I and 50-J)	36	NT	NT	11/14/23	23.2%				
Port Orford (50-K)	18	NT	NT	11/8/23	24.1%				
Brookings (50-L)	18	NT	NT	11/8/23	25.2%				
California									
Crescent City	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	26.8%				
Trinidad	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	24.8%				
Eureka	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	23.4%				
District 10 (not bound by Tri-State)									
Bodega Bay	n/a	NT	NT	NT	NT				
San Francisco	n/a	NT	NT	NT	NT				

WDFW is grateful to the fishers and processors that work cooperatively with WDFW to successfully complete this important work.

If you have any questions pertaining to this notice, contact Matt George at Matthew.George@dfw.wa.gov or 360-640-1066.