



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

WDFW is implementing the following change to coastal commercial Dungeness crab regulations effective July 21, 2013:

It is unlawful for any person licensed to fish under a Dungeness crab-coastal fishery license to possess or land crab in excess of 2,500 pounds during any weekly catch accounting period (Sunday through Saturday). See the list of catch accounting periods below.

Any crab taken prior to July 21, 2013, and not landed before 11:59 p.m. July 20, 2013, become part of the July 21 through July 27, 2013 accounting period catch.

JUSTIFICATION:

The Summer Fishery Management Plan calls for the implementation of management measures intended to protect the Dungeness crab resource when significant amounts of soft shelled crab are present during the commercial crab fishery.

Shell condition data collected on a shipboard ride along trip during the most recent summer management sampling period showed that more than 50% of the crabs sampled were soft shelled. According to the terms of the Summer Dungeness crab Management Plan, this amount of soft shelled crab calls for the implementation of a 2,500 pound weekly landing limit. In addition, two dockside samples collected during the same sampling period showed that 25 and 28 percent of the landed crab that were sampled were soft-shelled.

Following the terms of the Summer Management Plan, WDFW will continue to test the shell condition of crab both at dockside buying facilities and on shipboard ride along trips. If any three shell condition tests conducted during random dockside sampling during the two week period following the implementation of the 2,500 pound landing limit indicate that less than 75% of the crab in the sample are grades 1A and 1B (hard-shelled) WDFW will reduce the weekly landing limit to 1,200 pounds.

The Department is committed to following the terms of the Summer Management Plan and believes this measure is in the best interest of the coastal Dungeness crab resource and industry.

Weekly Catch Accounting Periods:

- July 21 through July 27, 2013;
- July 28 through August 3, 2013;
- August 4 through August 10, 2013;
- August 11 through August 17, 2013;
- August 18, 2013 through August 24, 2013
- August 25, 2013 through August 31, 2013
- September 1 through September 7, 2013
- September 8 through September 14, 2013
- September 15 through September 15, 2013