



October 9, 2008

Steve Williams  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
3406 Cherry Ave., NE  
Salem, OR 97303

Dear Steve:

On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Crab Commission held a public meeting via conference call to discuss, among other things, the rule implementation request put forth to the Fish and Wildlife Commission that would make a 'voluntary' U.S. Coast Guard vessel safety inspection a 'mandatory' requirement for renewing a limited-entry permit in the Dungeness crab fishery.

After much discussion, the commissioners voted unanimously against lending their support to the proposal, citing among other things, the lack of any communication with the crab fleet about this issue. In addition, their instincts told them that the proposal would undoubtedly meet with significant opposition from a majority of permit holders who would view this as an inappropriate 'regulatory reaction' to an issue that can't be mandated, namely good judgment.

As you know, the Crab Commission took very seriously, last spring's CDC report that singled out the 'Northwest Dungeness crab fishery' as having the most fatalities over the previous six-year reporting period. In an attempt to make the fleet aware of those sobering statistics and encourage a higher degree of safety consciousness within the crab fishery, we have started a program to encourage Oregon crabbers and their crews to participate in U.S. Coast Guard-approved 'Marine Safety & Survival Training' classes using the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association (AMSEA) curriculum.

To date, we have conducted two three-day training sessions - one held in Charleston and one in Newport - with plans to take the classes to all the other major ports along the Oregon coast during the upcoming months. While the turnout has been admittedly 'light', due mainly to timing, we hope to generate significant participation as the word gets out and the benefits of 'hands-on' training of this nature sink in. As an added incentive, the classes are offered 'free-of-charge' and include lunch...

Please feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions about the Commission's decision on this matter.

Regards,

Nick Furman  
ODCC

