



June 25, 2009

TO: Oregon Dungeness Crab Industry Participants and Interested Persons

FROM: Caren Braby, Manager, Marine Resources Program, ODFW
Nick Furman, Executive Director, Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission

RE: 2009 Oregon Dungeness Crab Industry Summit

You are invited to attend the 2009 Oregon Commercial Dungeness Crab Industry Summit at the Best Western Agate Beach Inn in Newport, Oregon on July 28th and 29th. The Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission (ODCC) and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) are pleased to jointly sponsor the 2009 Summit to both provide information and to get your input concerning this very important fishery. **The Summit is an excellent opportunity for you to influence the future of crab management and your fishery and we look forward to seeing you there.**

Your participation is critical to the success of the 2009 Crab Summit. We will have the leadership of ODFW headquarters staff and some of our Fish and Wildlife Commissioners attending. Oregon Department of Agriculture staff will be there along with the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission staff. In addition there will be representatives from the Oregon State Police, Attorney General's office and the ODFW License Services to help address any issues we discuss during the course of the summit.

Your influence on decisions made at the summit will be an important part of the October 2009 Fish and Wildlife Commission's 3-year review of the pot limit program in the crab fishery; the Commission may also have vessel safety and derelict gear on their October 2009 agenda. As we have learned in the past, those who show up and participate in the process can significantly influence the outcome of policy decisions. **This is your fishery and we need your knowledge and advice on these complex and controversial issues.**

Why is the Fish and Wildlife Commission reviewing the crab fishery in October 2009?

When pot limits were adopted, the Fish and Wildlife Commission instructed ODFW staff to present to them a review of the pot limit program after three years. That presentation will be provided at the Commission's October meeting. ODFW staff will present preliminary results for this three year review on the first day of the crab summit and will be collecting feedback from members of the fleet to pass on to the Commission in October.

What else will be discussed at the summit?

Three other major issues will be discussed during the 2-day summit. The issue of derelict crab gear will be addressed, including an overview of past efforts to retrieve gear and an opportunity to give suggestions on how industry will deal with the problem of derelict gear in the future. We will

be convening small breakout group discussions on derelict gear, in an effort to promote focused and creative brainstorming. During the second day of the summit, we will address the topics of vessel safety and changing the December 1 season start date. We will also have time on the second day for updates on other issues that will affect the economics of the crab industry and an opportunity for you to put additional items on the floor for discussion.

In this mailing we enclosed:

- Proposed Agenda
- Issue Sheet: background information on the issues to be discussed
- RSVP Card – your entry for the drawing!

Is there really a drawing for prizes at the Crab Summit this year?

Yes! The Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission has generously donated two major prizes for a drawing for *Oregon Dungeness permit holders only* (a hunting rifle and a life-raft repacking/certification), as well as other minor prizes. The enclosed RSVP card is your way of entering the drawing – if your RSVP card with permit number is *postmarked by July 21*, your name goes in the hat. Note: The drawing can happen at any time during the summit (including the banquet for all participants on Tuesday night) and YES, you do need to be present to win.

Things you need to do now:

- Please call the hotel ASAP for arrangements (it IS summer in Newport – see hotel info below)
- Send in your RSVP card (we are providing a FREE dinner banquet and FREE lunches to all attendees, so please help us spend your money wisely by telling us if you will be attending)
- Please call if you have any questions:
 - ODFW: Cyreis Schmitt, Mitch Vance, or Caren Braby (541-867-4741)
 - ODCC: Hugh Link or Nick Furman (541-267-5810)

We look forward to seeing you July 28-29 at the 2009 Crab Summit!

Best Western Agate Beach Inn
3019 North Coast Highway, Newport, Oregon 97365
Reservations: 800-547-3310
Local: 541-265-9411
Fax: 541-265-5342



2009 CRAB SUMMIT
Best Western, Agate Beach Inn
Newport, Oregon



AGENDA
Tuesday, July 28 (Day 1)

7:30 am	Registration – coffee & refreshments	
8:30 am	Welcome & Introductions	Caren Braby
8:45 am	Ground Rules & Process	Caren Braby
	Review Briefing Packet Materials / Updates	
9:00 am	Pot Limit Review Presentation	Cyreis Schmitt
	Enforcement Update	Jeff Samuels
	Q&A and Discussion	Cyreis Schmitt
10:00 am	Break – coffee / tea	
10:15 am	Pot Limit Review Discussion – Continued	Cyreis Schmitt
Noon	Boxed Lunches Provided	
1:00 pm	Derelict Gear Presentation	Cyreis Schmitt & Nick Furman
	Break-out Groups for Derelict Gear Discussion	Group Leaders
3:00 pm	Break — coffee / tea	
3:15 pm	Break Out Group Reports	Group Leaders
	Q&A Discussion	Cyreis Schmitt
5:00 pm	Adjourn for the day	
	Optional: no-host bar and informal discussion in hotel	
6:30 pm	Reception and Dinner at hotel	



2009 CRAB SUMMIT
Best Western, Agate Beach Inn
Newport, Oregon



AGENDA
Wednesday, July 29 (Day 2)

7:30 am	Registration for newcomers	
8:00 am	Opening Comments / Follow-up from Day 1	Caren Braby
8:30 am	Vessel Safety Presentation	Mitch Vance
9:00 am	Vessel Safety Panel Discussion	Panelists
10:00 am	Break – coffee / tea	
10:15 am	Season Start Date Change Presentation	Mitch Vance
	Oregon Department of Agriculture input	ODA representative
	Q&A and Discussion	
Noon	Boxed Lunches Provided	
1:00 pm	Other Issues/Updates	
	ODFW Budget Outcome (Fee bill & crab manager)	Caren Braby
	Crab Logbook Update	Mitch Vance
	WA Crab Buyback Program	Nick Furman
	Marine Stewardship Council Certification	Nick Furman
2:15 pm	Break – coffee / tea	
2:30 pm	Open Forum – Industry	Caren Braby
	Opportunity to Identify and Discuss Other Issues	
3:30 pm	Wrap-up & Next Steps	Caren Braby
4:00 pm	Adjourn	



ISSUE SHEET BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Pot Limit Program – 3-year Review

When the pot limit program was adopted, ODFW committed to review the program after three years. Starting with the 2006-07 crab season, three seasons under the pot limit program are nearly complete. At the Crab Summit, we will review the goals of the program and present information to help evaluate how well the program is working. Most importantly, we need your input for a full review and to make decisions on the next steps.

How well is the pot limit program achieving its goals?

Oregon's pot limit program was developed to address a variety of problems. We will summarize fishing effort information to help evaluate how well the program is working to address those problems. However, this information only provides a partial picture. We need industry input, too. For example, a concern often expressed by industry before pot limits were put in place is that gear was being used to "reserve real estate" on the ocean floor during the first few months of the fishery. Is that still as big a concern?

Are there significant changes that should be considered to improve the program?

The three-year review may show that improvements are needed and/or desired. For example, should a permit or pot stacking plan be reconsidered? At the 2007 Crab Industry Summit, industry did not reach a consensus on one and stacking was not implemented. However, many participants at that Summit stated a need to revisit stacking during the three-year review. Again, industry input at our 2009 Summit is critical in deciding whether or not to pursue a stacking plan or other changes to the pot limit program. And if so, a potential timeline could be developed.

What are the next steps?

On October 2, 2009, ODFW staff will present its pot limit program review and the summit results to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission. We will not propose significant changes to the pot limit program in time for the upcoming 2009-10 season, but will seek their guidance on whether or not to work on any changes next year.

Derelict Crab Gear Recovery Program

There is mounting pressure internationally, nationally, and regionally to address marine debris and the problems it causes. As a result, solutions are being developed and implemented to address these problems. Off Oregon, derelict crab gear is a major contributor to marine debris and pressures to address it are growing, too. The Oregon Dungeness crab industry has the opportunity now to develop solutions, before solutions are imposed by others.

At the Summit, ODFW and ODCC staff will review past and current efforts to recover derelict gear and provide information for small break-out groups to use in designing an industry-driven, long-term program to recover derelict fishing gear. Industry participation at the Summit will be very influential in designing this program.

Vessel Safety

In the spring of 2008, Mrs. Michele Longo Eder contacted the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission expressing her concerns about the safety of the Dungeness crab fishery and suggested that the Commission adopt rules requiring USCG vessel safety inspections for permit renewals. Since then, the concept has been discussed several times at a variety of meetings that have included representatives from ODFW, the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission, the US Coast Guard, Tri-State representatives, and the Oregon Dungeness Crab Advisory Committee. While there is broad support for increasing the safety of the crab fleet, some people feel that additional rules would not be the best solution. During the Crab Summit, we will provide information on the discussions that have taken place so far and get your input on ways to reduce the loss of life and vessels in this fishery. We will conduct a discussion with panelists representing different perspectives of the Dungeness crab industry.

Season Start Date

It has been suggested that by establishing a start date later than December 1, there would be fewer issues with delayed openers due to crab condition. Other reasons suggested for delaying season start date include: higher quality crab, more time for price negotiations, a higher price, a lower chance of a strike, and a better chance at having a nice Thanksgiving with family. Oregon Department of Agriculture and ODFW staff would like to determine how much support there is from industry members to investigate such a change and, if there is support, what alternate start date is most desirable. Identifying a later season start date will not necessarily eliminate the need for pre-season testing, depending on what date is chosen by industry. We realize that with different issues driving opinions on start date on Oregon's north coast vs. the south coast, there will be differing opinions on this topic. Please come and help us understand all of the perspectives involved so that we can determine whether or not the entire crab industry would like to pursue this change. Any change in the rules pertaining to crab season opening would have to be supported by all ports and all parts of the industry as well as acceptance from the other members of the Tri-State Dungeness Management Committee. This process would take some time, and the earliest we could see a change would be the start of the 2010-11 season, but the Crab Summit is an excellent venue for determining if this is desired by the fleet.

Dungeness Crab Logbook Program

We are winding down the second season in which logbooks have been required in the Dungeness fishery. ODFW staff is making progress with the organization and data entry of logbook information but there is much work to be done. We have created a database and so far have entered information on over 12,000 unique strings of gear. At the Summit, we will report on the progress that has been made and have a discussion about how to improve logbook design, submission compliance, and how logbook data may or may not be used in the future. For the opening month of this season, Dec. 2008, there was a submission rate of only 62%. Logbook information will be analyzed to document which specific areas of the ocean are used by the crab fleet; therefore we need to improve the submission rate and the quality of the information

provided. Please bring to the Summit your ideas on how to improve the logbook system and how you would like to see this data used.