



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

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Oregon Bay Commercial Crabbers, Ocean Commercial Dungeness Crab Permit Holders, Processors, Buyers, and Interested Persons:

This mailer is notification of the upcoming informational briefing and rule-making exhibit to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) regarding the draft Dungeness Crab Fishery Management Plan (FMP) on October 15, 2021. The Department's management of Dungeness crab harvest has developed over decades of participation, includes three separate sectors (sport, bay commercial and ocean commercial), and is customized to support sustainable populations and meet the unique harvest desires and needs of each sector. The purpose of the FMP is to provide management transparency and facilitate continuance of good governance.

The plan assesses the current knowledge of Dungeness crab and describes the current management strategy for harvest of the resource. Dungeness crab are a priority species for FMP development because the sectors overlap in both season and geography and these fisheries are entirely state managed. The fishery currently faces a range of complex management challenges that are also described throughout the FMP, along with the tools and strategies employed to address them. In documenting the management approach, the Department strives to increase awareness among the sectors of the differing management strategies and goals. Background and summary materials from recent public meetings about the FMP are on the Department's website noted at the end of this notice.

The FMP is organized into two main sections – the Resource Analysis and Harvest Management Strategy. The FMP is written to describe the status of the species and the current management but is not intended to promote broadscale change in management approaches. As such, the Department is only proposing relatively minor regulatory changes for the commercial bay and ocean sectors; each of the proposed changes noted in the FMP draft, is listed below, and will be considered by the Commission on October 15, 2021 for adoption (no sport changes). The proposed regulatory changes are:

Marine Reserves fixed fishing gear definition proposed regulatory change (applies to all commercial fixed gear)

1. Clarify the marine reserve definition of “fishing gear” to include surface buoys of bottom contact gear which prohibits surface gear within marine reserves boundaries. (FMP Section B.III.e) (OAR 635-012-0030)

Ocean Commercial Sector proposed regulatory changes

1. Marine life risk reduction measure (FMP Section B.III.e)

- a. Prohibit landing of crab after May 1 unless late season tags are purchased (OAR 635-005-0480)
 - b. Extend time allowed to attach late-season tags to buoys (OAR 635-005-0480)
2. Biotxin Management (FMP Section B.IV.b)
 - a. Allow landing of crab into Oregon for evisceration if they are from an area in another state that is under an evisceration order (OAR 635-005-0466)
 - b. Update of harvest areas map to refine WA areas (OAR 635-006-0201)

Bay Commercial Sector proposed regulatory change

1. Require logbook (FMP Section A.III.b) (OAR 635-005-0502)

The Commission meeting will be held virtually and meeting materials that detail the rationale for the proposed regulatory changes will be posted on the Department's website (see link below). Instructions for registering for public testimony at the meeting will also be located on this page in the Agenda for the meeting once it is posted, approximately two weeks in advance of the meeting. The full draft FMP will be posted on the Department's webpage (see link below) on September 15, 2021 to commence a 30-day public comment period ahead of the Commission meeting. If you would like to submit public comment on the draft FMP in advance of the meeting, please contact the crab management team at the phone numbers or emails at the end of this notice or email the Commission at odfw.commission@odfw.oregon.gov.

Public input received during the 30-day comment period or through testimony at the briefing, and input from the Commission will be considered by the Department during finalization of the FMP later this year.

Where to find information online

1. Commission meeting materials and instructions for registering to provide public testimony – <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/>
2. Public meeting background/summary information and draft Dungeness Crab Fishery Management Plan – <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/management/dungeness.asp>

Thank you for reviewing all of this information. Please contact us if you have any questions.

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