



State of California -The Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
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December 20, 2012

Commercial Dungeness Crab Season: Third Delay Notification – Date Revision

Fish and Game Code (FGC) Section 8276.2 (c) provides the Director with the authority to delay the season opening, due to soft-shell or poor quality crab conditions, in Fish and Game Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9 (Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties) to a date no later than January 15, 2013.

Crab quality tests conducted in northern California on October 22 and November 6 indicated the crabs would not be ready for harvest on December 1. Additional testing completed on December 6 projected that the crab would not be ready to harvest until December 31, 2012, pending further testing. **Results from a quality test from the Trinidad area completed on December 18 projected that poor crab quality conditions would persist into the new year. Based on these results and following discussions with Dungeness crab fishery representatives and fishery managers from Oregon and Washington, I am delaying the opening of the commercial Dungeness crab season in northern California (Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9) until 12:01 AM January 15, 2013.**

Pursuant to FGC Section 8276.3 (b), the opening date in Districts 6, 7, 8 and 9 shall be preceded by a 36-hour gear setting period. Therefore, crab gear may be set beginning no earlier than 12:01 PM on January 13, 2013.

As provided in FGC Section 8276.3 no vessel may take or land crab within Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9 during the closure period. **In addition, FGC Section 8279.1 prohibits anyone who landed crab from ocean waters outside of Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9 from participating in the crab fishery in Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9 for 30 days following the opening of those districts.**

Charlton H. Bonham
Director