

Another delay for California, Oregon commercial crabbing

December 11, 2019



The opening of the commercial Dungeness crab season from Point Area, California north along the Oregon coast has been delayed again, now at least Dec. 31, following testing that shows crabs are still too low in meat yield in half of the areas along the coast.

The Oregon and California departments of fish and wildlife had announced Nov. 14 that the season would be delayed until Dec. 16 because of the low meat yield.

The ocean commercial Dungeness crab season, in an agreement among Washington, Oregon and California, normally is targeted to open Dec. 1, but can be delayed to ensure a high-quality product to consumers and to avoid wastage of the resource.

Crab quality testing in late November and early December showed that many areas within the tri-state region still did not meet the criteria for an opening.

The delayed opening will allow for crabs to fill with more meat — 23% for crab north of Cascade Head, Oregon, and 25% for crab south of Cascade Head.

A third round of testing will be conducted sometime in mid-December, with a targeted completion by Dec. 20.

Testing will continue to determine if the season should open on Dec. 31, be further delayed, or be split into separate areas with different opening dates.

In conjunction with the delayed ocean commercial season, the commercial harvest of Dungeness crab in Oregon and California bays is now closed for the remainder of the year.

Recreational crab harvesting is open coastwide in the ocean, bays and estuaries, and on beaches, docks, piers and jetties.