



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
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EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



December 12, 2017

Subject: Dungeness Crab Season Delay Notification – Date Revision

Fish and Game Code (FGC) Section 8276.2 (c) provides the Director with the authority to delay the December 1 season opening of the commercial Dungeness crab fishery, 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, 2018.

Crab quality tests conducted in northern California on November 6, 2017 indicated the crabs would not be ready for harvest on December 1, 2017, and I therefore delayed the opening of the season until December 16, 2017, pending further testing results. **Based on tests completed on December 5, 2017, poor quality conditions persist and therefore, I am further delaying the opening of the Dungeness crab season in northern California (Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9) until 12:01 am December 31, 2017.** Further testing will be scheduled to occur by December 22 to determine whether an additional and final delay of 15 days is warranted.

Pursuant to FGC Section 8276.3 (b), the opening date in Districts 6, 7, 8 and 9 shall be preceded by a 64-hour gear-setting period. Therefore, assuming there is no additional delay, crab gear may be set no earlier than 8:01 am on December 28, 2017.

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 (a) prohibits a vessel that took, possessed onboard, or 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 areas.** For additional information on the quality testing and application of FGC Section 8279.1, please see the [FAQ](#) released by the Department on November 16, 2017 and that has been updated on December 8, 2017.

Sincerely,

Charlton H. Bonham
Director