



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



December 9, 2019

**Subject: 2019-20 Commercial Dungeness Crab Northern 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, due to soft-shell or poor quality crab conditions, in Fish and Game Districts 6, 7, 8 & 9 (Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte counties) for a minimum of 15 days.

Crab quality tests conducted in northern California on November 3, 2019 indicate the crabs would not be ready for harvest on December 1, 2019, and I therefore delayed the opening of the season until December 16, 2019, pending further testing results. **Based on tests completed on December 3, 2019 and in the interest of cooperatively managing the interstate Dungeness crab fishery, 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, 2019.** Further testing will be scheduled to occur for completion by December 20 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, 2019.

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.**

Sincerely,

Charlton H. Bonham
Director