

Successful price negotiations result in coast-wide commercial crab fishing Oregon Dungeness crab season fully underway

January 9, 2017... A Dungeness crab fishermen's strike that started before Christmas has ended with Oregon commercial fishermen and processors agreeing to an ex-vessel crab price of \$2.875 per pound. The successful state-supervised price negotiations means freshly-caught Oregon Dungeness crab should be available to consumers this week and beyond.

“The final outcome showed an extraordinary level of cooperation and compromise,” said Hugh Link, Executive Director of the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission.

The parties were able to reach an agreement last Friday during the fifth round of negotiations that began in November.

Fishermen in Port Orford and Brookings started fishing south of Cape Blanco, Oregon on December 18, 2016. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife notified the fleet and the public on December 21 that the rest of the state would open to commercial crabbing on January 1, 2017, with a pre-soak period that would begin on December 29, 2016. The fishermen’s strike delayed the coast-wide harvest of Dungeness crab until the recent agreement.

The \$2.875 is a starting price only, but the fishermen's marketing associations involved in the negotiations agreed to allow for a 72-hour pre-soak period that began Saturday, January 7. The first crab deliveries from areas that have not been fished yet, Cape Blanco to the Oregon/Washington border, will likely be tomorrow, Tuesday, January 10. Areas in which fishermen already have set gear, south of Cape Blanco to the Oregon/California border, will return to fishing immediately.

By law, Oregon allows dealers and fishermen to convene supervised price negotiations of the duly elected or appointed representatives of the fishermen and dealers with oversight from the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Dungeness crab, the official “State Crustacean”, is the most valuable single species commercial fishery on the Oregon coast. Last season’s harvest produced landings of 14.2 million pounds and an ‘ex-vessel’ value of \$51 million dollars.

For more information, contact Hugh Link, Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission, at (541) 267-5810.

