



November 26, 2018  
Volume 1, Issue 4  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

# The Dungeness Dispatch

## COMMISSION FUNDS VITAL WHALE STUDY

As the court battle continues to heat-up in California over whale entanglement, the Oregon fleet tried to stay ahead of things by entering into a landmark agreement with a researcher from Oregon State University, the ODFW and the Coast Guard.

The Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission voted unanimously, during a special meeting in October, to fund the first year of a three-year aerial survey of humpbacks, gray whales and blue whales off the coast. The commission also voted to send a letter of support for Dr. Leigh Torres and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, as they hope to win a federal grant to cover years two and three.

"One of the best known ways to reduce whale entanglements is to reduce the overlap between where fishing gear is and where whales are," [Torres told a reporter, after the meeting.](#) "In the state of Oregon, we have pretty good information about where the fishing gear is, but not that great information about whale distribution in our waters. So that is really the knowledge gap that this project wants to fill."

Torres said the best way to track whales is typically from the air.

The commission approved to fund up to \$45,000 to cover the first year of what will likely be a more than \$300,000 project.

"This is important to the industry right now. It's important to the whales. It's important to the general public," said commission chair John Corbin, a commercial crab fisherman from Astoria. "I think this is a great project."

## LIGHT CRAB DELAYS START OF SEASON

The opening of the commercial Dungeness crab season [will be delayed](#) until at least December 16, along the entire Oregon coast, as testing shows crabs are too low in meat yield in most areas.

The delayed opening will allow for crab to continue to fill. A second round of crab quality testing will occur in late November or early December, and the results will be used to determine if the season should open Dec. 16, be further delayed, or be split into areas with different opening dates.

"Delays are always tough," ODCS Executive Director Hugh Link said, "but, they protect our brand. We only want the best and fullest Oregon Dungeness crab going to market."



*Oregon Dungeness Crab:  
Sustainable - Marketable - Delicious*



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or "catch us" on

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### Our Mission

- To enhance the image of the Oregon Dungeness crab industry, and to increase opportunities for profitability through promotion, education and research.



## STATE OF THE COAST: HYPOXIA

Hypoxia is when the ocean water close to the seafloor has extremely low levels of dissolved oxygen.

It is also showing up with increasing regularity off of our coast.

It was one of the topics addressed at the [October 27th State of the Coast conference in Coos Bay](#). The ODCC Communication Manager Tim Novotny participated in that event, sitting in on a panel discussion with the UofO's Julie Schram, Liz Lee from OSU, and Steve Rumrill from ODFW.

The conference coincided with [a story](#) that hit from NPR noting a dire change.

"We can now say that Oregon has a hypoxia season much like the wildfire season," says Francis Chan, co-chair of the

California Hypoxia Science Task Force.

According to that report, "Deep Pacific waters 50 miles off the coast have always been hypoxic. And it's hardly surprising...But in 2002, fishers started to notice hypoxic waters moving closer-in — to just a couple of miles off the coast"

OSU oceanographer Jack Barth is collecting data to draw the first hypoxia maps of Oregon's coast, noting that the crabbing and the oyster industries were among the first to notice that the ocean just off our coast was changing.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration just issued a grant for about 40 new oxygen sensors to be distributed among crabbers so they can gather data where they put their pots.

*"Hypoxia is something we rarely saw throughout the 20th century," Chan says, "but have seen almost annually since the year 2002."*

### BOARD OF AG VISIT

The Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission joined others from the Oregon seafood industry in a panel discussion with the Oregon State Board of Agriculture in North Bend, in September.

Among the topics discussed was the need to continue to try to find an influx of new employees for all aspects of the seafood industry.

"We went to help educate the board on all of our fisheries, and help stress the importance of our fisheries to Oregon's economy," Hugh Link said.



## TRI STATE PROTOCOL MODIFICATIONS

The Tri-State meeting, held in Portland in July, brought the Dungeness fishery leadership from California, Oregon and Washington together under one roof. You can click [here for a link to the full summary of that meeting](#).

The group found common ground on a number of short and long-term modifications to the pre-season testing and season opening protocol.

The short term modifications, already in place for this season, involved formalizing fair start provisions and additional processing guidelines within the testing protocol.

The primary long-term modifications included allowing for more than two fishing zones with different opening dates, and extending the latest possible opening date to February 1st.

All of these changes are designed to improve consistency, transparency and flexibility of the protocols among the three states.

One potential addition could also be coming for our neighbors to the north and south. Washington and California representatives said they would be considering enhanced crab traceability measures similar to our recent crab records requirements. That would give them the same types of additional options and flexibility, such as harvesting under an evisceration, in future biotoxin events that may affect the region.

Whale entanglements were also addressed during the Tri-State meeting. All three states committed to developing a joint Tri-State statement supporting efforts to improve in that area. That includes developing cooperative approaches and helping each other achieve progress, and realizing the need for further entanglement research within the Tri-State region, to better understand whale entanglements in fishing gear and the development of effective mechanisms for reducing entanglement risk.



*It was time to saddle-up and return to Texas for the opportunity to sponsor the VIP Lounge at Zest in the West. The trip also allowed for visits with a number of local chefs/businesses.*

## MARKETING REPORT: ZEST AND GRAPES

Efforts to continue to build an Oregon Dungeness crab market foothold in the Houston area resumed in October, with a return to Texas for a high-roller fundraising event called Zest in the West.

The trip also included a variety of other business, like sit-down discussions with local food critic Eric Sandler and Neal Cox, the Executive Chef at the elite Houstonian Hotel, Club & Spa. Representing the crab commission on the trip were executive director Hugh Link, Tim Novotny, Chef Leif Benson, and Erick Garmen, on loan from the ODA.

Celebrity chef Omar Pereney, a widely acclaimed chef, restaurateur and television personality, and one of the most recognized culinary faces from Latin America and Houston, also spent a lot of time with the group. He was cooking with our product and highlighted it on local media.

Discussions also were held with both Chef Randy, of the Bazille (in Nordstrom's at the Galleria), and Jason Howard of Jaxton's in Cypress, Texas, - and, both indicated a desire to create wine and Oregon Dungeness pairing events. Several people drove home the point that Houston is a strong "foodie" community. They would love to be able to utilize Oregon Dungeness, if they could create a dependable pipeline, and they also believe that surrounding areas, including Austin and Dallas, will also be willing to get on-board for Oregon Dungeness.

Lastly, but by no means least, the commission is excited about the potential of a new partnership with [Willamette Valley Vineyards](#). The legendary Oregon vineyard is highlighting our product, starting in January, for three months. That has prompted other discussions of promotional teamwork at events around the country and around the globe. Stay tuned.



## Savor Oregon Dungeness Crab Month in Cannon Beach

For the first time, Oregon Dungeness crab is going to be playing a major role in the [Savor Cannon Beach Wine & Culinary Festival](#) when it comes around in 2019.

Traditionally, a four day event that is full of wine tastings, culinary events and a wine walk showcasing Northwest wineries in Cannon Beach, this year it will also kick-off Oregon Dungeness Crab month.

Restaurants will highlight recipes featuring our crab, during the month of March, for Savor Oregon Dungeness Crab Month. Each participating restaurant will offer one or more Dungeness Crab preparations intended to present this great local product in the hands of talented chefs when it is at its freshest and most abundant.

Those recipes will be used on our social media pages, their social media pages, and later gathered to be included on our own website's recipe page.

We are excited about yet another new partnership, and can't wait to see where this leads.

## VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

As I write this, we have just finished round one of preseason testing. I think the takeaway is that it's just another crab season. There is no such thing as normal anymore. "Normal", is a setting on your dryer!!

There are a lot of things that go into the opening of crab season. Quality testing, Bio-toxin testing, price negotiations, port meetings, management meetings. A lot of people are working overtime to try to get the fleet on the water as soon as possible and ensure a quality product that is safe and yummy to the public. If you're not involved in the process, please get involved, or at least thank those that are. There is a lot going on this time of year.

I would like to say a big "Thank You" to those of you that participated in the post season derelict gear program. 31 boats brought in 858 lost pots. A special thanks goes out to those in the Columbia River area who brought in 400 of them. Cleaning up lost gear is all of our responsibility. Good job all!!

The fall Crabber/Tow lane meeting was held recently in Astoria. There are many people involved in the process. It's a big ocean out there, but there are a lot of different user groups that need a place to be. Crabbers and towboats don't do well in the same space, so please don't put your gear in their lane. Talk to any towboats you see that are not in the lanes. Also, please monitor channels VHF 13 and 16 when you are around the bar and turn on your AIS if you have one. Do everything you can do to be seen by other traffic. Safety first!!

I wish you all a safe and prosperous crab season!!

-John Corbin/Commission Chair



## DERELICT GEAR ROLLS IN TO DOCKS

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife reports the removal of 858 pots from the waters off Oregon, thanks to this year's Post-Season Derelict Gear Recovery Program.

Between September 5 and October 12, 66 permits were issued and just under half were able to recover gear. They say the recovered gear was originally from at least 197 different vessels, with the majority coming from this past season, and more

than 90 percent were in fair or better condition.

All gear was registered and tagged by ODFW or OSP at the dock and all gear registration forms are posted online at [dfw.state.or.us/mrp/shellfish/commercial/crab/](http://dfw.state.or.us/mrp/shellfish/commercial/crab/)

**This allows any previous gear owners interested in negotiating for retrieved pots to contact retrieving vessels directly.**

## JORDAN COVE HOLDS WORKSHOP

A meeting room at the Coos History Museum was recently packed, as local mariners and maritime officials gathered to hear from Jordan Cove LNG and KBJ officials about requirements for small vessels employed on the LNG project.

Work is expected to pick-up in earnest in 2020, and there will be a lot of marine vessel support needed to finish the project. The types of vessels involved will include tugs, passenger vessels, barges, security pilot boats, and dive boats.

What they need the vessel owners and operators to understand is that the federal and state requirements for this project are many and they will need to pay close attention. More than once during the meeting it was said that this project will be taking place under a microscope.

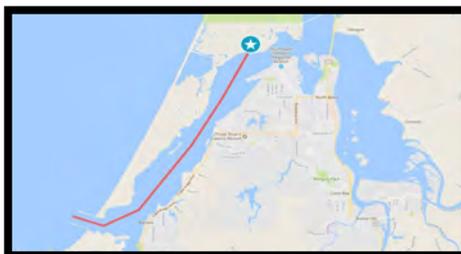
Coast Guard personnel were also on hand to deliver the message that even though you may be up to code for a fishing vessel, if you want to assist with the project, you may need to be in compliance with other requirements. For example, a fishing vessel may also have to comply as a cargo vessel or as a dive boat. And, they remind, it is always the owners responsibility to be in compliance.

Anyone considering assisting should be working towards compliance now, because things like safety management system requirements, and proof of specific insurance requirements, will require having written proof to pass an audit.

Contractor KBJ will also need to inspect vessels before service begins, and that will include breaks of a month or more between contracts with them. Which means, even if they inspected you once and you went away to fish, they will likely need to inspect you a second time if you look to enter multiple contracts.

Chuck Noble, Construction Director, said one thing that sometimes gets overlooked is that there will be a tremendous need of ship husbandry. Vessels that will be working in the area of the project will be in need of getting supplies, mail, and other cargo delivered.

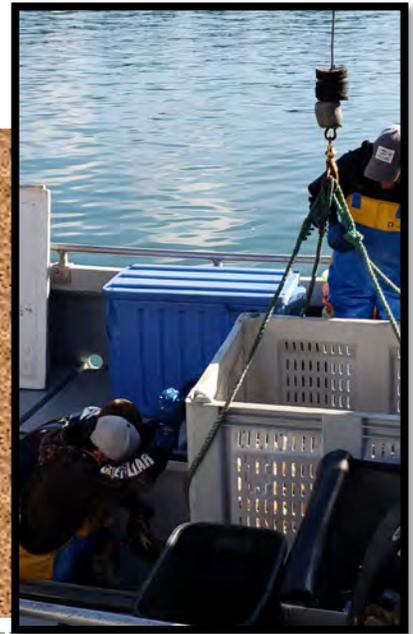
For more information, contact Rajnish Kelkar, Marine Manager with Jordan Cove LNG, at 832-255-3844 - or by e-mail at [rajnish.kelkar@jordancovelng.com](mailto:rajnish.kelkar@jordancovelng.com).



## BULLETIN BOARD MATERIAL

To improve the efficiency of harvest area tracking on fish tickets the ODFW is planning to require electronic fish tickets for crab by the start of the 2019-20 season.

In the longer term, they intend to continue to investigate electronic log-books to further increase harvest area accountability, streamline the crab fishery's fishing effort data collection and reduce the burden of writing down so much information on paper logs. Stay tuned for updates.



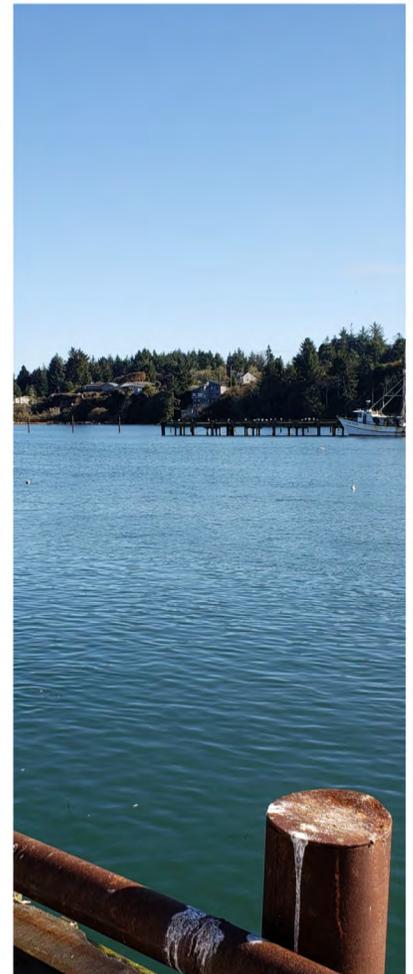
*...Port Orford buoy 46015 is back in service. The data is flowing to all of the usual sources...*

As part of a collaborative project funded by the Eder Family Fund for Dungeness Crab Research, with Oregon State University to better understand the domoic acid producing harmful algal species, *Pseudo-nitzschia*, in bottom waters off of Oregon. ODFW deployed modified time-delayed baiting devices to sample water at the bottom during round one of preseason testing. Ultimately, this will help us better understand the dynamics of annual Harmful Algae Blooms and how they affect Dungeness crab. Thanks to all of the vessels that were willing to help out with this project!

After another delay or two, NOAA was finally able to happily report “that Port Orford buoy 46015 is back in service. The data is flowing to all of the usual sources, including the NWS and NDBC websites, and the NOAA weather radio ‘buoy roundup.’”

Direct data can be accessed here: [https://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station\\_page.php?station=46015](https://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/station_page.php?station=46015)

Maintenance was also expected to be performed on St. Georges buoy 46027, near Crescent City, weather permitting. As we understand it, this maintenance will bring buoy 46027 up-to-date, and should include camera imagery much like several other buoys in the area.



## OREGON DUNGENESS CRAB COMMISSION

JOHN CORBIN/ASTORIA

CRYSTAL ADAMS/  
CHARLESTON (Processor Rep)

DAVE WRIGHT/NEWPORT  
(Processor Rep)

MIKE RETHERFORD/  
NEWPORT

TYLER LONG/CHARLESTON

BRIAN NOLTE/BROOKINGS

RICK LILIENTHAL/  
CHARLESTON

LEIF ERIC BENSON/PUBLIC  
MEMBER

## DAYS OF WINE AND SEAFOOD IN FEBRUARY

### ADD TO YOUR CALENDAR:

Mark this one on your new calendars now! The **Portland Seafood & Wine Festival 2019** is set for February 1 and 2 at the Oregon Convention Center. We will be back with Oregon Dungeness crab, alongside our partners from Seafood Oregon and the Newport Fishermen's Wives.

### NEXT ODCC MEETING:

The Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission (ODCC) will meet in Astoria, at some point after the season opens. Although, a conference call will likely be held before that to go over potential marketing contracts for the upcoming season. Keep an eye out for more information.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET THE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL ONLY, WHERE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE HYPERLINKS, PLEASE SEND YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS TO US AT:

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