

Strike ends, Dungeness crab season now underway

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 \$2.87 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 Friday, Jan. 6, during the fifth round of negotiations that began in November.

Fishermen in Port Orford and Brookings started fishing

south of Cape Blanco, Ore., on Dec. 18, 2016.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife notified the fleet and the public on Dec. 21, that the rest of the state would open to commercial crabbing Jan. 1, 2017, with a pre-soak period that would begin Dec. 29, 2016.

The fishermen's strike delayed the coast-wide harvest of Dungeness crab until the

recent agreement.

The \$2.87 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, Jan. 7.

The first crab deliveries from areas that have not been fished yet, Cape Blanco to the Oregon and Washington border, began yesterday.

Areas in which fishermen

already have set gear, south of Cape Blanco to the Oregon and 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.

Oregon Marine Board seeks public input on new facility plan

SALEM — Every six years, the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) solicits feedback from boaters and facility owners to create a catalog of boating facility needs, and then assigns priorities to sites for grant funding.

This information is compiled into the "Statewide Boating Access Improvement Plan,"

commonly referred to as the "Six-Year Plan."

The agency invites boaters to participate in a survey to help identify where the needs are around the state.

"With over 1,100 boating access sites in Oregon operated and owned by more than 160 different recreational boating facility owners, the Marine

Board relies heavily on feedback about the condition of boating facilities from all recreational boaters; motorized and non-motorized," said Janine Belleque, Boating Facility Manager for the Marine Board. "We leverage the dollars brought in through boat registration fees and marine gas tax with federal grants and match-

ing dollars from facility owners to maintain, as well as build, new recreational boating access in the state."

The Marine Board does not own or operate any boating facilities in the state; however, the Marine Board's Boating Facilities Section provides technical assistance to boating facility owners in the form of

design, facility engineering, surveying, waterway permitting and grant funding to facility owners.

The Oregon Marine Board invites recreational boaters to complete an online survey and provide feedback on how to improve the area where you boat.

Boaters can access an online

survey at www.boatoregon.com, or go to the survey directly at www.surveymonkey.com/r/GWGC7L6.

The survey will be available online through March 31.

For more information, contact the Marine Board's Facility Section at 503-378-2727.

New NOAA recovery plan aims for delisting coho on Oregon coast

NOAA Fisheries have released a recovery plan for Oregon Coast coho salmon that calls for public-private partnerships to conserve habitat for the threatened species, positioning coho for possible removal from the federal list of threatened and endangered species within the next 10 years.

If the plan is successful, Oregon Coast coho could become the first of 28 threatened and endangered species of salmon and steelhead on the West Coast to recover to the point they can be delisted from the Endangered Species Act.

"We can see that recovery is in reach for Oregon Coast coho, which is a testament to

the hard work by the state, coastal communities and landowners to restore habitat and reduce threats from hatcheries and harvest," said Barry Thom, Regional Administrator of NOAA Fisheries' West Coast Region. "Strong partnerships have brought us this far, and they will be critical to get the rest of the way to delisting."

As many as one to two million coho once returned to rivers and streams on the Oregon Coast, supporting fisheries that helped anchor local economies. Intensive fishing and heavy logging through the 1900s contributed to declines, and the number of spawning adults dropped below 15,000 in

the 1980s.

NOAA Fisheries initially listed Oregon Coast coho as a threatened species in 1998.

The condition of the species has since improved as state fish and wildlife officials reduced the risks posed by harvest and hatcheries. Partnerships bridging state, local, tribal and federal levels have helped implement projects to reopen and improve habitat.

Recent numbers have ranged from more than 350,000 spawning adults in 2011 and 2014, dropping back to 57,000 in 2015.

The threats still affecting coho include degraded habitat, especially the loss of floodplain

habitat where many juvenile coho spend their first year growing before migrating to the ocean.

A lack of large wood in rivers that provides rearing habitat for young fish is also a factor. Reduced water quality and barriers such as culverts that block migrating fish pose continuing threats.

"The best available science tells us that habitat is the bottom line in stabilizing and rebuilding coho to the point they can sustain themselves," said Rob Walton, recovery coordinator for NOAA Fisheries' West Coast Region in western Oregon. Coho remain vulnerable to the effects of cli-

mate change on the rivers and streams where they spawn and rear, but improved habitat can help mitigate those impacts.

The plan is voluntary, not regulatory, and hinges on local support and collaboration. Coho recovery, and ultimately delisting, will depend in large part on voluntary actions by partners implementing the recovery plan, complemented by regulatory protections under the Endangered Species Act and other state and local directives.

The plan promotes a network of partnerships that integrate the needs of Oregon Coast coho with the needs of coastal communities.

"The plan recognizes the critical role of local landowners and communities in bringing about recovery," said Guido Rahr, president and CEO of the Wild Salmon Center in Portland, which is leading development of a business plan to guide local recovery measures. "We all must be part of a solution that will deliver multiple benefits for Oregon in the form of resilient communities, improved habitat and healthy fish populations."

For more details and to view the recovery plan, visit NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region website at www.go.usa.gov/x8w53.

WINTER RV CAMPING REQUIRES PLANNING, BEING PREPARED FOR WEATHER

From wilderness backpackers in pop-up tents to campers who find cooking and sleeping in an RV more civilized, winter camping is gaining momentum.

There is nothing quite like having almost an entire campground to yourself to hike, cross-country ski, view nature and enjoy the serenity of the location.

Winter camping takes more prep work than warm weather outings, but outdoor enthusiasts say it's worth it. Just remember: before heading to your favorite campground, check ahead.

Campgrounds in higher elevations often close as early as mid-September until springtime.

Here are some tips to consider before heading to the great — but cold — outdoors.

Before beginning your trip, check with your RV dealer or the many various RV associations for insulating hoses and water sources to properly operate in freezing temps.

Your RV may be well-equipped but in the winter, prepare for a scenario where you could be stranded due to winter storms. In that case, a portable generator is indispensable.

"A generator can keep the RV batteries topped off and allow you to use the RV furnace and keep your cellphone and laptops charged, something you will appreciate in an emergency," said Dorrance Noonan of A-iPower, a manufacturer of portable power equipment.

Safety First:

- When in a cold or freezing environment, it's natural to want to seal your space tightly to keep out drafts. But, portable generators exhaust carbon monoxide (CO), a tasteless, odorless, and deadly gas. That makes it extremely important to keep your generator running away from your RV with the exhaust pointed in the opposite direction.

- Never run your generator when you or someone else is sleeping.

- Always have a working carbon monoxide (CO) detector in your RV. This is important not only when using the generator, but in other instances when the lethal gas is present. Because CO is odorless, colorless, and otherwise undetectable to the human senses, people may not know that they are being exposed.

To that end, never use a generator, grill, camp stove or charcoal burning device inside or in any partially enclosed area; keep these devices at least 20 feet from doors, windows, and vents.

- At high levels, carbon monoxide can cause death within minutes. Symptoms of overexposure to carbon monoxide include headaches, fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, nausea and confusion.

If you suspect you may be experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning or your detector sounds an alarm, head outside immediately for fresh air and call 911.

- Never transport your generator in the back of your RV or your SUV if you are towing a camper. The best way to transport your generator is to have a platform built on the back of your RV.

OSHA recommends that

gasoline and other generator fuels should be stored and transported in approved containers that are properly designed and marked for their contents, and vented.

- Before running your generator, always read the owner's manual for proper operation and safety tips.

Choosing a portable generator for your RV:

- The more watts your generator has, the more items you can power at the same time. To know how much you will need, calculate all the wattage requirements of all the accessories you plan to operate on generator power.

Typically, wattage is listed on the device, on the back or on the bottom. If not, a simple formula for determining watts is multiplying volts x amps. The total will tell you the model of generator you need.

- Another important factor to consider is how long you will be running your generator. The generator run time is found on the generator spec sheet and owner's manual.

Run time is determined at 50 percent load levels and the power used directly impacts the run time. The more power used, the shorter the run time and the sooner you will have to refuel.

"During cold weather camping, you won't need to power

your air-conditioner, so a generator with about 2,000 starting watts should suffice," Noonan said. "Typically this is found in inverter generators, which are lighter, easier to transport, and run quieter than the larger portable generators."

Noonan explained that

inverters are more fuel efficient than regular generators.

"An inverter produces electricity on demand, based on what you are powering. That results in a slower engine speed with less noise and lower fuel consumption," he said. "Users appreciate how inexpensive

inverters are to run."

Noonan advises that when choosing an inverter, look for one that has enough receptacles for all the items you plan to run.

Inverters that have USB adapters will allow you to charge a battery or cellphone.

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