



## Crabber-Towboat Lane Agreement Biannual Meeting Minutes

March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

In-person at Englund Marine in Astoria and virtual

[wsg.washington.edu/crabber-towboat](https://wsg.washington.edu/crabber-towboat)

### In Attendance:

**Steve Ackerman**, Columbia River Bar Pilot

**Dale Beasley**, Columbia River Crab  
Fishermen's Association

**Sam Borth**, National Weather Service

**Bob Eder**, F/V Jimmy Boy, OR Dungeness  
Crab Commission

**Jeffrey Ferguson**, NOAA Office of Coast  
Survey

**Colin Fogarty**, U.S. Coast Guard

**Jamie Fuller**, WA Department of Fish and  
Wildlife

**Chris German**, U.S. Coast Guard

**Junior Goodell**, F/V Pacific Rooster

**Jennifer Hagen**, Marine Policy Advisor  
Quileute Tribe

**Cdr. Brendan Harris**, U.S. Coast Guard

**Treana Jensen**, National Weather Service

**Casey Johnson**, Brusco Tug and Barge

**Dan Jordan**, Columbia River Bar Pilot

**Christy Juhasz**, CA Department of Fish and  
Game

**Jenna Keeton**, WA Sea Grant

**Alden Lundy**, Bureau of Ocean and Energy  
Management

**John Moriarty**, U.S. Coast Guard

**Mike Rudolph**, U.S. Coast Guard

**S. L. Santiago**, U.S. Coast Guard

**C. M. Saylor**, U.S. Coast Guard

**Pete Sawle**, F/V Rocky B

**Ann Skelton**, Pacific Co Marine Resource  
Committee

**Jill Smith**, OR Department of Fish and  
Wildlife

**Daniel Sund**, WDFW, Puget Sound

**Larry Thevik**, WA Dungeness Crab  
Fisherman's Association

**Brad Trammell**, American Waterways  
Operators

**Bridget Trosin**, WA Sea Grant

**John Veentjer**, Marine Exchange and  
Harbor Safety Commission

**David Verlmer**, U.S. Coast Guard

### Attached Documents:

1. Backyard Buoys/Spotter on the Water – Quileute Nation
2. Marine Weather Update – National Weather Service
3. Pacific Port Access Route Study Update – US Coast Guard
4. Status of West Coast Offshore Wind Energy Development Presentation – Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management



**Next hybrid Biannual Meeting:** Friday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, at 10:00 am.

### Meeting Summary:

#### **Partner Updates**

- Colin Fogarty, USCG:
  - Please use AIS for safety and security purposes. It is used for collision avoidance.
  - Q1: Will there be a vessel length change with AIS?
    - A1: There is no intention to change the vessel length requirement.
  - Comment 1: There will be Electronic Monitoring on 12 vessels in WA.
  - Q2: What is point of Electronic Monitoring?
    - A2: This will allow WDFW to understand where and when crab pots are pulled to prevent whale entanglement.
  - Q3: Is the intention to weave AIS regulations into federal regulations? At what point will the Government-to-Government relations happen with Quinault Indian Nation?
    - A3: Congress has yet to weigh in beyond their desire for USCG to use AIS. USCG doesn't anticipate Congress will move forward codifying rules into statute.
  
- Chris German, USCG:
  - Congress told USCG to stop enforcing lack of AIS on fishing gear. However, in the future, this will change. Chris does annual training on patrol boats and has been educating his contacts about the towlanes. When USCG finds tags on pots, they will return the tag to the respective fishermen through state regulatory agencies. If USCG damages gear, the owner can report this incident to get reimbursed.
  
- Dale Beasley, CRCFA:
  - Washington Coast Marine Advisory Committee is not aware of the difference between the proposed fairways and the towlanes. They need to be made aware of the towlanes as they are on the Department of Natural Resources CMSP webpage.



### **Quileute Lander Moorings**

[jennifer.hagen@quileutenation.org](mailto:jennifer.hagen@quileutenation.org)

See presentation.

- Q1: Is there an environmental review going on related to the lander moorings?
  - A1: Yes.
- Q2: Is there an option to submit a public comment?
  - A2: There will be an opportunity to comment later.
- Q3: Is Marine Sanctuary a permitting entity?
  - A3: Yes, this is under the JARPA umbrella.

### **Towlane Logistics Discussion**

- Comment 1: The towlanes are working well for crab fleet. Crab fishing seasons are opening later and later. This could cause conflict when towboats shift to using summer lanes – perhaps in the future we could move summer lane dates a little later.
- Comment 2: There is a need for more education and outreach regarding the towlanes.
  - Some push tugs don't know they are exempt.
  - Canadian tugs need outreach.
  - Make the WA Sea Grant website mobile-friendly.
- Comment 3: There is a need for more thumb drives.

### **Towlane Mapping Project**

[https://wsg.washington.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/TugTow\\_AIS\\_2020\\_monthly\\_map.html](https://wsg.washington.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/TugTow_AIS_2020_monthly_map.html)

- Comment 1: A good addition would be to add the 40-fathom line in Oregon beginning May 1 through September 15 (end of season).

### **Commercial Dungeness Crab In-season Updates**

#### **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Update, Jamie Fuller**

[Jamie.Fuller@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Jamie.Fuller@dfw.wa.gov)

- The 2023 Dungeness Crab season in WA has seen 14.3 million pounds caught so far. The ex-vessel value is an estimated \$31 million. This year, fishermen are seeing a reduction in price. The Washington Dungeness crab season ends on September 15<sup>th</sup>.



### **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Update, Jill Smith**

[jill.m.smith@state.or.us](mailto:jill.m.smith@state.or.us)

- The coast is dealing with a domoic acid issue. The ODFW derelict gear program has been successful in getting gear out of the ocean. The total amount of Dungeness crab caught to date is 22.2 million pounds. (2022: 17.2 million pounds, 2021: 12.2 million pounds). Beginning on May 1<sup>st</sup> all pots need a summer tag. The Oregon Dungeness crab season ends on August 15<sup>th</sup>. The application has gone out to permit holders. Line marking designations will soon be as follows: 1 color per fishery, 1 color per state. Crab, sablefish, prawns in CA all have different colors. The purpose of this is to understand which fishery is responsible for any future whale entanglements.
  - Comment 1: Only 1 line-marking color is necessary to designate the state of origin and that the colors are 6 feet from the buoy and 6 feet from the pot. Crab is the first fishery to adapt line markings and currently we use only one color, and each state has a different color to designate the state of origin. All other fisheries do not have as much rope in the water and it may be OK for them to mark the additional colors. However, there is pushback from the crab fleet.

### **California Department of Fish and Game Update, Christy Juhasz**

[Christy.Juhasz@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Christy.Juhasz@wildlife.ca.gov)

- The Dungeness crab fishery in California was delayed due to humpback whales in the area. There was an additional delay due to meat quality. So far, 17.3 million pounds of crab have been caught in CA with an ex-vessel value of \$41.9 million. Fishers are seeing a low price at dock. The fishery is undergoing a risk assessment scheduled for next week, then every 2 weeks looking at whale and turtle migratory patterns/observations. There has been no entanglement attributed to fishery at this time.

### **National Weather Service Marine Weather Update, Samantha Borth**

[Samantha.borth@noaa.gov](mailto:Samantha.borth@noaa.gov)

See presentation.

- The buoys off of WA are working. There is information about self-contained ocean observing halo on buoys for wave data every 30 minutes here: <https://www.weather.gov/news/23-22-02-marine-WRNA>. The Marine Ambassador Program – Weather Ready Nation Program is soliciting participants.



You can sign up here: <https://www.weather.gov/wrn/amb-tou> or email Sam at [samantha.borth@noaa.gov](mailto:samantha.borth@noaa.gov)

- Comment 1: High praise for buoy availability.

### **U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Port Access Route Study Update, Cdr. Brendan Harris**

[Brendan.J.Harris@uscg.mil](mailto:Brendan.J.Harris@uscg.mil)

See presentation.

- Beginning in August, USCG held a public comment period for draft routing measures. This closed on November 8<sup>th</sup> and received 40,000 signatures and comments. There were 95 full comments and 3 applied to the West Coast area. For District 13: Makah Tribe wants to know impact to usual and accustomed fishing area. There were major changes to the approach fairways. USCG received a comment from BOEM requesting to move fairways to better align with BOEM's plans for offshore wind lease areas and future wind areas.
- Changes to the proposed fairways around the towlanes:
  - Per request by the Columbia River Bar/River Pilots to change the approach at offshore fairway (30 miles wide, narrows to 10 miles wide by the time a vessel transit to the inshore coastal fairway).
  - Slightly moved the northerly approach fairway into the Columbia River eastward. This proposed change still meets the offshore fairway west of the area to be avoided.
  - Removed the approach fairway going south from Columbia River
  - The approach fairways into Coos Bay were consolidated into one funnel approach, like the approach to the Columbia River.
  - There were no changes with regards to coastal fairway and no changes to the offshore fairway (15 miles wide) to support historic vessel traffic.
- Q1: WDCFA appreciates USCG. There is a change to the proposed fairways is concerning related to the area where ships loiter offshore waiting to approach.
  - A1: USCG did not change the coastal fairway at all. They did change the approach to allow for deep draft vessels. USCG will double check and validate the correct data points and share with this group.
- Q2: The USCG proposal would stop the northern end of coastal zone fairway at the southern end of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. It is presumed that no fixed structures would be allowed in the Marine Sanctuary. However, at the WCMAC meeting, a representative from Marine Sanctuary said it is open to change this rule to include offshore wind. A public comment period open now:  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/01/31/2023-01682/initiation-of-review-of-management-plan-for-olympic-coast-national-marine-sanctuary-intent-to>
  - A2: USCG is not familiar with Marine Sanctuary rules but will connect with them.



- Q3: Will there be another opportunity to provide comment again to USCG on the proposed fairways?
  - A3: There is no intention of putting the final recommendation up for additional comment period. Additional comment periods will be put out by USCG Headquarters.

**Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management Offshore Wind Development Update, Alden Lundy**  
[alden.lundy@boem.gov](mailto:alden.lundy@boem.gov)

See presentation.

- Q1: Sablefish fisheries: did we miss a map with activity?
  - A1: Not included. The tracking for VMS/AIS maps is done through different codes that get assigned to types of gear or types of catch, Sablefish crews use a variety of different types of gear for their activities and as such cannot be captured as a discrete category for a map.
- Q2: How much analysis has gone into potential oil spills at sea sub and floating stations?
  - A2: BOEM requires an oil spill response plan with the submission of a COP (a Construction and Operations Plan) and will conduct all required federal analysis when any plan is presented. No OSW COP's have currently been presented to the Pacific Region and when/if they are presented BOEM holds final approval over decisions.
- Comment 1: Encourage people to listen to Pacific Fishery Management Council recording related to [NCCOS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tr89qZhTw4). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tr89qZhTw4>
- Q3: Federal laws protect fishermen from submarine cable damage/destruction/injury. What other forums are available for fishermen to address concerns from eliminating our right of access to our fishing grounds?
  - A3: Depending on the type of cable BOEM does not have authority. In case of potential lease area, BOEM created a fishermen communication plan. A Community Agreement could be in place for fishermen to find funds for creating new channels to communicate through.
- Here are some resources to existing forums: <https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/recent-fisheries-engagement>
- To sign up for stakeholder mailing lists to be notified about upcoming engagement activities.  
[https://visitor.r20.constantcontact.com/manage/optin?v=001s6pS\\_QjvIMMyFsJiyW9qpNCfoe\\_ZgXBHda3HxkhG8nJaQWLJZwaEgcdUVva\\_kK7GQqjR6RHcNi7o1UCEQw1\\_DfqJDiLPTDZdO000oO\\_n\\_s8Jy-HujMa-cQAMWSHQf8aYRdSXY4f4LTDnxWRNArZx4e6Q%3D%3D](https://visitor.r20.constantcontact.com/manage/optin?v=001s6pS_QjvIMMyFsJiyW9qpNCfoe_ZgXBHda3HxkhG8nJaQWLJZwaEgcdUVva_kK7GQqjR6RHcNi7o1UCEQw1_DfqJDiLPTDZdO000oO_n_s8Jy-HujMa-cQAMWSHQf8aYRdSXY4f4LTDnxWRNArZx4e6Q%3D%3D)