

WSR 21-10-002
EMERGENCY RULES
DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE

[Order 21-56—Filed April 21, 2021, 4:25 p.m., effective May 1, 2021]

Effective Date of Rule: May 1, 2021.

Purpose: The purpose of this emergency rule is to open commercial shrimp seasons in Puget Sound.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Amending WAC 220-340-520 and 220-340-030.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.12.045, and 77.12.047.

Under RCW 34.05.350 the agency for good cause finds that immediate adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest.

Reasons for this Finding: Permanent rules regulating state commercial shrimp harvest in Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca require adoption of harvest seasons contained in this emergency rule. This emergency rule:

- (1) Defines the shrimp management areas and regions open to spot and nonspot commercial harvest.
- (2) Defines spot pot gear requirements.
- (3) Defines nonspot gear requirements.
- (4) Implements labeling requirements for groundline pot gear.
- (5) Implements restrictions for the concurrent use of spot shrimp and nonspot shrimp pot gear.
- (6) Implements a fishing declaration requirement for all shrimp pot fisheries in Puget Sound.
- (7) Sets harvest restrictions for and opens the nonspot commercial pot fishery.
- (8) Sets harvest restrictions for and opens the spot commercial pot fishery.
- (9) Sets the harvest and gear limitations for and opens the Puget Sound shrimp trawl fishery.
- (10) Requires purchase of shrimp harvested by the designated fisheries to be done by appropriately licensed dealers.

The emergency regulation is needed to allow adequate flexibility for the state commercial shrimp fisheries to respond to dynamic changes in market conditions and to allow for full utilization of both the commercial spot and nonspot shares. Sections of this regulation add additional reporting requirements to allow managers to track commercial fishing effort. There is insufficient time to adopt permanent rules.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 2, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: April 20, 2021.

Kelly Susewind
Director

NEW SECTION

WAC 220-340-52000D Puget Sound shrimp pot and trawl fishery—

Season. Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-340-520, effective 12:00 a.m. on May 1, 2021, until further notice, or until they expire pursuant to RCW 34.05.350, it is unlawful to fish for shrimp for commercial purposes in Puget Sound except as provided for in this section:

(1) Shrimp Pot Harvests:

(a) All waters of Shrimp Management Areas 1A, 1B, 1C, 2E, 2W and 3 are open to the harvest of all shrimp species, effective immediately, until further notice, except as provided for in this section:

(i) Each sub-area of Marine Fish/Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area 23A (23A-E, 23A-W, 23A-C, and 23A-S) are closed to the commercial harvest of non-spot shrimp until the commercial spot shrimp share is taken.

(ii) Shrimp Management Area 1A is closed to the commercial harvest of non-spot shrimp until the commercial spot shrimp share is taken.

(iii) Discovery Bay Shrimp District is open to the commercial harvest of non-spot shrimp.

(iv) Shrimp Management Areas 1B, 2E, and 2W are closed to the commercial harvest of spot shrimp.

(b) There is no minimum size limit for spot shrimp or non-spot shrimp.

(c) Shrimp pot gear used for commercial harvest must meet the following requirements:

(i) A shrimp pot may not exceed a maximum 153 inch bottom perimeter and a maximum of 24 inch height.

(ii) The entire top, bottom, and sides of the shrimp pot must be constructed of mesh material. Use of liners is prohibited.

(iii) Entrance tunnels to shrimp pots may be constructed of any size mesh material. All entrance tunnels must open into the pot from the side. The sum of the maximum widths of all entrance tunnel openings must not exceed half of the perimeter of the bottom of the pot.

(iv) Spot shrimp may only be harvested using pots with a minimum mesh size of 1 inch. Mesh size of 1 inch is defined as a mesh opening that a 7/8-inch square peg will pass through, excluding the entrance tunnels, except for flexible (web) mesh pots, where the mesh must be a minimum of 1-3/4 inch stretch measure. Stretch measure is defined as the distance between the inside of one knot to the outside of the opposite vertical knot of one mesh, when the mesh is stretched vertically.

(v) Non-spot shrimp may only be harvested using pots with a minimum mesh size 1/2 inch. Mesh of 1/2 inch is defined as a mesh that a 3/8 inch square peg will pass through, excluding the entrance tunnels,

except for flexible (web) mesh pots, where the mesh must be at a minimum 1 1/8 inch stretch measure. Stretch measure is defined as the distance between the inside of one knot to the outside of the opposite vertical knot of one mesh, when the mesh is stretched vertically.

(d) Buoys must have the number of pots deployed per groundline recorded on each end-buoy of a groundline.

(e) It is lawful to concurrently fish spot shrimp pots and non-spot pots with the following restrictions:

(i) Spot pots and non-spot pots may not be deployed concurrently within the same Catch Reporting Area.

(ii) All shrimp harvested must be landed and recorded on a shellfish receiving ticket before subsequent harvest may occur.

(f) Each fisher or alternate operator is required to report their intended catch area of harvest, target species (spot or non-spot), and the amount of pounds that are being targeted prior to the deployment of any shrimp gear to either shrimp.report@dfw.wa.gov or by text message to 360-302-6372.

(g) It is unlawful to harvest non-spot and spot shrimp in the same day.

(h) It is unlawful to harvest shrimp in more than one catch area per day.

(2) Shrimp Non-spot Pot Harvest Restrictions

(a) The non-spot shrimp catch accounting period is weekly from Wednesday through Tuesday, totaling 7 days in length.

(b) It is unlawful for the combined total harvest of non-spot shrimp per license to exceed 600 pounds per non-spot shrimp catch accounting week from Shrimp Management Areas 1A, 1B, 1C, 2E and 2W combined.

(c) Harvest of non-spot shrimp is not permitted deeper than 150 feet in Region 2E. Region 2E is comprised of Catch Areas 24A, 24B, 24C, 24D, and 26AE (26A northerly of a line drawn from the southern tip of Possession Point on Whidbey Island 110° true to the shipwreck on the opposite shore).

(d) Harvest of non-spot shrimp is not permitted deeper than 175 feet in Region 2W. Region 2W is comprised of Catch Areas 25B, 25C, 25D, and 26AW.

(3) Shrimp Spot Pot Harvest Restrictions:

(a) The spot shrimp catch accounting period starts May 1, 2021 at 12:00 a.m. through August 10, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

(b) It is unlawful for the total harvest within the spot shrimp accounting period to exceed 4,500 pounds of spot shrimp per license from Shrimp Management Areas 1A, 1C, and 3 combined.

(c) It is unlawful for more than 3,000 pounds of spot shrimp per license to be landed prior to Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

(4) Shrimp trawl gear:

(a) Shrimp Management Area (SMA) 3 (outside of the Discovery Bay Shrimp District, Sequim Bay and Catch Area 23D) is open, effective immediately, until further notice. Sequim Bay includes those waters of Catch Area 25A south of a line projected west from Travis Spit on the Miller Peninsula.

(b) That portion of Catch Area 22A within SMA 1B east of a line projected 122.47°W longitude and west of a line projected 122.43°W longitude in Rosario Strait is open effective 6:00 a.m. on May 1, 2021.

(c) The waters of south Lopez Sound (the portion of Catch Area 22A south of a line projected east and west from the northern tip of Trump Island) will open at 12:00 a.m. on July 10, 2021.

(d) The remaining portion of Shrimp Management Area 1B and Catch Areas 20B and 22A outside the area described in sections 4 (b, c) above will open effective 12:00 a.m. May 16, 2021.

(e) Catch Area 21A (north and west of a line from the southern tip of Sinclair Island to Carter Point on Lummi Island) will open at 12:00 a.m. on July 1, 2021.

(f) Catch Area 20A (west of a line from the southwest corner of Point Roberts to Sandy Point) will open at 12:00 a.m. on August 1, 2021

(g) Trawling is allowed only in waters deeper than 120 feet in Catch Area 20A.

(5) All shrimp taken under this section must be sold to licensed Washington State wholesale fish dealers.

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Reviser's note: The unnecessary underscoring in the above section occurred in the copy filed by the agency and appears in the Register pursuant to the requirements of RCW 34.08.040.

Reviser's note: The typographical error in the above section occurred in the copy filed by the agency and appears in the Register pursuant to the requirements of RCW 34.08.040.

NEW SECTION

WAC 220-340-03000H Shellfish harvest logs. Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-340-030, effective immediately, until further notice, or until they expire pursuant to RCW 34.05.350, it is unlawful for vessel operators engaged in commercial harvest of shrimp from Puget Sound with shellfish pot gear to fail to report their daily catch by text message, e-mail or FAX to WDFW by 10:00 a.m. the day after the shrimp are harvested. Text message and e-mail daily catch reports must be submitted to shrimp.report@dfw.wa.gov, and FAX reports must be transmitted to FAX number 360-302-3031. Daily catch reports must include the following information as it is recorded on the fish receiving ticket: fisher name, buyer name, pounds landed per shrimp species, catch area, date of harvest, date of sale, and complete fish ticket serial number, including the first alphanumeric letter. If the fish receiving ticket is faxed as the daily harvest report, the date of harvest must be recorded on the bottom half of the ticket.

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