

Next razor-clam digs tentatively set late this month, mid-February

Local News

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OLYMPIA — The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has announced plans for another razor-clam dig this month and one in February, so long as marine toxin tests continue to show the clams are safe to eat. Provided that upcoming tests are favorable, clam diggers will get their next chance to hit the beach Jan. 20-22 at Twin Harbors and Long Beach. The National Park Service has also scheduled a dig Jan. 21-22 at Kalaloch, located inside the Olympic National Park, to coincide with those at the other two beaches. Digging at all three beaches will be restricted to the hours between noon and midnight.

In addition, fishery managers have tentatively scheduled a dig starting Feb. 17 at Twin Harbors and continuing Feb. 18-19 there and at Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks and Kalaloch. Again, no digging will be allowed before noon at any of those days. Tentative digging days and tides for the two proposed openings are: Jan. 20, Thursday — 6:59 p.m. (-1.3 ft.); Long Beach, Twin Harbors Jan. 21, Friday — 7:38 p.m. (-1.1 ft.); Long Beach, Twin Harbors and Kalaloch Jan. 22, Saturday — 8:19 p.m. (-0.6 ft.); Long Beach, Twin Harbors and Kalaloch Feb. 17, Thursday — 5:53 p.m. (-0.9 ft.); Twin Harbors Feb. 18, Friday — 6:33 p.m. (-0.9 ft.); Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks and Kalaloch Feb. 19, Saturday — 7:13 p.m. (-0.5 ft.); Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks and Kalaloch Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager, said the agency will announce spring clam-digging opportunities after assessing how many clams are still available for harvest after the next two digs. “We want to make sure we still have clams available for spring digs, when we can schedule openings on morning tides,” Ayres said. “A lot of people look forward to digging clams on morning tides.” Even so, Ayres noted that 19,000 diggers turned out to harvest razor clams on New Year’s Eve, the first day of the last three-day opening. Despite cold, windy conditions, diggers harvested more clams than on any day this season, he said. Under WDFW rules, harvesters may take no more than 15 razor clams and must keep the first 15 taken, regardless of size or condition. Each digger's limit must be kept in a separate container. All diggers must have an applicable 2010-11 fishing license to dig razor clams on any beach. A license is required for anyone age 15 or older. Anglers can buy a combination license or an annual shellfish/seaweed license. Also available are razor-clam only licenses in annual or three-day only versions. Descriptions of the various licensing options are available on the WDFW website at fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov. A list of state license vendors is available at wdfw.wa.gov/lic/vendors/vendors.htm. Olympic National Park Superintendent Karen Gustin urged diggers to take safety precautions during night digs, especially at Kalaloch. “Kalaloch is considerably more remote than the other clamming beaches, and visitors should be prepared for primitive conditions,” she said. “With no streetlights or lighted buildings in the area, flashlights or lanterns are a necessity.” Beaches in Washington with razor-clam fisheries include: Long Beach, which extends from the Columbia River to Leadbetter Point. Twin Harbors Beach, which extends from the mouth of Willapa Bay north to the south jetty at the mouth of Grays Harbor. Copalis Beach, which extends from the Grays Harbor north jetty to the Copalis River, and includes the Copalis, Ocean Shores, Oyhut, Ocean City and Copalis areas. Mocrocks Beach, which

extends from the Copalis River to the southern boundary of the Quinault Reservation near the Moclips River, including Iron Springs, Roosevelt Beach, Pacific Beach and Moclips. Kalaloch Beach, which extends from the South Beach Campground to Brown's Point (just south of Beach Trail 3) in the Olympic National Park.