

## **Razor Clam Dig Approved for Mid-March**

### **Local News**

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OLYMPIA &dash; Clam diggers today got a green light to proceed with a four-day razor-clam dig scheduled to begin Saturday, March 19, on four beaches. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) approved the dig after marine toxin tests showed that the clams on those beaches are safe to eat. Four beaches &dash; Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis and Mocrocks &dash; will open for digging at noon March 19. However, because of a seasonal shift in the tides, digging will be restricted to the hours *before* noon March 20-22. The dig will start at four beaches March 19-20, then continue at two beaches &dash; Long Beach and Twin Harbors &dash; March 21-22.

No digging will be allowed at Kalaloch Beach, located inside Olympic National Park. The National Park Service, which manages that beach, has closed clam digging at Kalaloch for the rest of the season due to low harvest levels. Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager, advises prospective diggers to pay particular attention to the shift in digging times during this month's razor-clam opening. "It gets a little tricky scheduling digs at this time of year, but the goal is to arrange openings during the best clam tides," Ayres said. "The split schedule also provides an opportunity for back-to-back digs the evening of Saturday, March 19, and the morning of Sunday, March 20." He also notes that the annual Ocean Shores Razor Clam Festival is scheduled March 19. Information on the festival is available at

<http://www.2011clams.com/>. Digging days and low tides for March are: Saturday, March 19, 7:04 p.m. (-0.1 ft); Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks. Sunday, March 20, 7:36 a.m. (-0.5 ft); Long Beach, Twin Harbors, Copalis, Mocrocks. Monday, March 21, 8:23 a.m. (-0.9 ft); Long Beach, Twin Harbors Tuesday March 22, 9:12 a.m. (-1.0 ft); Long Beach, Twin Harbors Under state 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. Diggers age 15 or older are required to have a valid 2010-11 license to participate in the March dig. Ayres reminds diggers that WDFW is tentatively planning another razor-clam opening April 7-9 until noon each day at Long Beach and Twin Harbors if marine toxin tests show the clams are safe to eat. Because current licenses expire March 31, diggers will have to purchase a 2011-12 license to participate in that dig.

WDFW also expects to announce additional digging opportunities in April, so diggers may want to take that into account when they go to purchase a license," Ayres said. Various licenses, ranging from a three-day razor-clam license to a multi-species combination license, are available online (<https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov/>), by phone (1-866-246-9453) and from sporting goods stores and other retail license dealers around the state. The four beaches opening to razor-clam digging this month include: Long Beach, which extends from the Columbia River to Leadbetter Point. Twin Harbors Beach, which extends from Cape Shoalwater 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.