

Last razor clam dig of the season set for May 24-26 at Twin Harbors

Local News

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OLYMPIA - Clam diggers will get one more chance to dig razor clams this season during a three-day opening at Twin Harbors, running Friday through Sunday of Memorial Day weekend. The morning dig scheduled May 24-26 got the green light from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) after marine toxin tests showed the clams at Twin Harbors are safe to eat. All other ocean beaches will remain closed to clam digging, and digging at Twin Harbors must end each day at noon. "This last dig caps off a great season," said Dan Ayres, WDFW coastal shellfish manager. "Since last October, diggers have harvested more than five million razor clams, making this season the most productive in over 20 years." Ayres said annual harvest quotas have been met at all razor-clam beaches except Twin Harbors, which started the season with an exceptionally large population of razor clams. WDFW also adopted a new method to set catch levels at Twin Harbors and Long Beach, which also boosted the allowable harvest at both beaches this season, he said. Harvest limits aside, Ayres said WDFW routinely closes the razor clam fishery by the end of May to give the clams a chance to spawn. The next season will begin in fall, when the older clams have recovered from spawning and a new generation begins to grow beneath the sand.

Low morning tides during the upcoming openings at Twin Harbors are as follows: May 24, Friday, 6:34 a.m., -1.7 ft. May 25, Saturday, 7:21 a.m., -2.2 ft. May 26, Sunday, 8:09 a.m., -2.4 ft. Clam diggers are limited to 15 razor clams per day, and are required to keep the first 15 clams they dig. Each digger's clams must be kept in a separate container. To participate, diggers age 15 or older must have an applicable 2013-14 fishing license to harvest razor clams on any beach. Licenses are available online (<https://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov/>), by phone (1-866-320-9933) and from license dealers around the state. Brock Hoenes, a WDFW wildlife biologist, cautions clam diggers and other beachgoers to avoid disturbing western snowy plovers, which nest on the state's coastal beaches from April through August. The small white birds are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act as threatened and by the state as endangered. Plovers and their eggs are extremely vulnerable at this time of year because the birds nest in the dry sand, Hoenes said. Hoenes also asks that diggers avoid signed upland beach areas at Twin Harbors, which are closed to protect the nesting birds. The closed areas are located from just south of Midway Beach Road to the first beach-access trail at Grayland Beach State Park.