



California Fish and Game Commission

www.fgc.ca.gov

Greetings fish and wildlife stakeholder,

State waters around the Channel Islands are now open to both the recreational and commercial rock crab fisheries.

Today, the director of the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), after consultation with the director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), notified the Commission and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) that consumption of rock crab taken from state waters around the Channel Islands in areas previously closed (between Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa islands) no longer poses a significant threat for domoic acid exposure.

The recreational and commercial rock crab fisheries are also open from 36° 58.72' N lat. at Sand Hill Bluff in Santa Cruz County (approximately nine miles north of Santa Cruz Harbor entrance) to the California/Mexico border. A closure remains in effect north of Sand Hill Bluff.

As a precaution, CDPH and OEHHA recommend that anglers and consumers not eat the viscera (internal organs, also known as "butter" or "guts") of crabs. CDPH and OEHHA are also recommending that water or broth used to cook whole crabs be discarded and not used to prepare dishes such as sauces, broths, soups or stews. The viscera usually contain much higher levels of domoic acid than crab body meat. When whole crabs are cooked in liquid, domoic acid may leach from the viscera into the cooking liquid. This precaution is being recommended to avoid harm in the unlikely event that some crabs taken from an open fishery have elevated levels of domoic acid.

For details about what portion of the crab fisheries are open or closed, see <http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/news>.