



Gulf and Quebec Regions

Notice to Fish Harvesters

SOUTHERN GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE SNOW CRAB – AREAS 12, 12E AND 12F: NEW SEASON OPENING PROTOCOL

Moncton, New Brunswick and Quebec Québec – February 21, 2020 – Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) announces a change in the season opening protocol that will be in place in the snow crab fishery of the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence (sGSL) Crab Fishing Areas (CFAs) 12, 12E and 12F for the 2020 season.

Due to an increased presence of North Atlantic right whales (NARW) in the sGSL in recent years, DFO implemented new fisheries management measures to minimize the risks of interactions with the species.

To accelerate snow crab fishing activities in the sGSL in advance of the arrival of the NARWs, DFO is implementing changes to the season opening protocol.

CFA 12

The Department anticipates a simultaneous opening for all fleets. For 2020, as per the revised Terms of Reference of the Committee for setting the opening date for the fishery in Area 12, considerations to trigger the targeted fishery opening date will be:

- The sGSL (including the Bay of Chaleurs) is ice free and fishing can occur in a safe manner.
- The fishery may open even if some wharves are not entirely free of ice.

The season will open following discussions with the Committee for setting the opening date for the fishery in Area 12 and the Canadian Coast Guard (i.e. ice breaking activities status, availability of Search and Rescue services) and once the weather forecasts are favorable.

The season will close at the end of the day on June 30th.

CFAs 12E and 12F:

The same protocol will be applied in CFAs 12E and 12F.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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