



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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January 6, 2023

WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

On January 6, 2023, coastal Dungeness crab Tri-State policy representatives from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) agreed to **open the commercial Dungeness crab season in the area between Klipsan Beach, Washington (46°28.00) (including Willapa Bay) and Cape Falcon, Oregon (45°46.00) at 9:00 am February 1, 2023, with a 73-hour gear set beginning at 8:00 am on January 29, 2023. Hold inspections in Washington will be conducted beginning at noon January 31, 2023.** The decision to further delay the opening in this area was based on crab condition tests which showed that crab at the Long Beach test areas do not currently meet the minimum meat recovery criteria. The season opening in this area will not be delayed beyond February 1, 2023, consistent with Tri-State Pre-season Testing protocols.

Fishers participating in the fishery south of Klipsan Beach or in Willapa Bay are subject to reduced pot limits. Fishers with permanent pot limits of 500 and 300 will be allowed to use 400 or 250 pots, respectively. Unused buoy tags must be on board vessels until the temporary pot limits are lifted when the area north of Klipsan opens.

Fishers that chose to fish in an area that opens before another area are subject to fair start provisions, details of the fair start provisions are described below.

FAIR START PROVISIONS:

Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery in the waters between Klipsan Beach, Washington (46°28.00) and Point Arena, California, (including Willapa Bay) before the area north of Klipsan opens are subject to the Fair Start Provisions described below.

- **U.S. Canada Border to Oysterville (46°33.00):** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the area between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Oysterville opens will not be allowed to fish in the area between Oysterville and US – Canada Border until 35 days after the area north of Klipsan Beach opens.
- **Oysterville (46°33.00) to Klipsan Beach (46°28.00):** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the area between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens will

not be allowed to fish in the area between Klipsan Beach and Oysterville until 10 days after the area north of Klipsan opens.

- **Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to Cape Falcon, OR:** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the area between Point Arena, CA and Cape Falcon, OR before the area between Cape Falcon and Klipsan Beach opens will not be allowed to fish in this area until 30 days after this area opens.
- WAC 220-340-400 Definition—Commercial crab fishing: “Commercial crab fishing” means any taking, fishing, use, or operation of gear to fish for crab for commercial purposes and includes the possession of crab on the water for commercial purposes, and the landing or initial delivery of crab for commercial purposes.

Additional details on the season opening in the area between Klipsan Beach and the U.S. Canada border, including the special management area (SMA) boundaries will be provided in a follow-up notice.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- Each crab pot must be rigged with line that is marked with 12 inches of red in at least two places. At a minimum, 12 inches of line must be marked in red, no more than one fathom from the main buoy and no more than one fathom from the pot. WAC 220-340-430 (6ii)
- All commercial crab license holders are required to carry, complete, and submit logbooks to WDFW. This information will greatly assist us in managing our fishery in the future.
- License owners **MUST** register one unique buoy color scheme per coastal crab license with WDFW. License owners must complete buoy registration before fishing. If you have not registered your buoy for the 2022-23 season, contact Jamie Fuller at 360-580-0875 to verify your color scheme is available. A new registration app has been developed. It requires that you use a smartphone to take photos of your buoys. To access the registration form visit: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/1a6ae9a42a7342d4884f63a089968aa9>. If you do not have a smartphone or are unable to complete the registration, contact Jamie Fuller at 360-580-0875 or Jamie.Fuller@dfw.wa.gov.
- No deliveries of crab caught south of Cape Falcon will be allowed into any ports north of the Columbia River except the ports of Ilwaco and Chinook, until after February 1, 2023. Vessels must adhere to ODFW’s closed area transit allowance requirements.
- Notification to WDFW Enforcement is required when transiting crab through closed areas. Notification is to be made 24-hours prior by calling Sgt. Brian Alexander 360-580-6200, and reporting the vessel name, operator name, estimated amount of crab to be delivered in pounds, and the estimated date, time, and location of delivery. The following situations will require notification.
 - Vessels transiting north of Grays Harbor with crab caught south of Klipsan beach (46°28.00) or Willapa Bay prior to the area north of Klipsan beach opening.

- A Washington Gear Transfer Permit issued by WDFW is required to transport through Washington State waters, crab pots or buoys bearing the tags issued by another state. Contact Sgt. Brian Alexander 360-580-6200 for issuance of this permit.
- A hold inspection certificate number is required on all fish tickets until further notice.
- WDFW would like your help, please call the WDFW Police Dispatch WildCom Center at (360) 902-2936 (*option 1*) if you witness or have information regarding enforcement violations including fishing in closed areas, starting early, pots without buoy tags, etc.

WASHINGTON TEST RESULTS

The stations in the Long Beach test areas were completed on January 4, 2023. The results are summarized below. Due to weather conditions, pots were pulled after only a short soak and no shell condition data was collected.

Test Area	Date Crab were Landed	Meat Recovery	Domoic Acid (ppm) levels per crab
Long Beach	1/4/23	20.8%	1,1,1,2,2,3

On Sunday December 18, 2022, Quinault Indian Nation (QIN) opened their commercial Dungeness crab fishery within their U&A (between Point Chehalis and Destruction Island) after their final meat recovery test results came back at 23.4%. In addition, on December 15, we finalized our 2022-23 State/Tribal crab management agreement with QIN. This agreement has the same provisions as the 2021-22 agreement. We are required to hold a State/QIN discussion to use the first 30 days of QIN catch to determine the total QIN head-start days. After that discussion, we will provide you with the opening details for the area north of Klipsan.

COASTWIDE TEST RESULTS

Coastwide test meat recovery results to date are summarized below and can also be found at this link: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/coastal/letters-notices#general-info>

2022 Preseason Coastal Dungeness crab Test Fishery Results for WA, OR and CA

* Date is the date the pots were pulled

Test Area	Number of pots	Optional Early Round		Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4	
		Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %
Washington											
Northern		NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT
Westport	54	10/18/22	14.7%	11/14/22	19.8%	12/5/22	21.5%	NT	NT	NT	NT
Long Beach	54	10/19/22	14.3%	11/9/22	16.3%	12/5/22	18.6%	12/21/22	19.9%~	1/4/23	20.8%*
Oregon											
Astoria (50-A)	18	NT	NT	11/9/22	19.6%	12/1/22	21.3%~	12/15/22	21.3%	1/4/23	25.5%~
Garibaldi (50-B)	18	NT	NT	11/10/22	21.7%	12/5/22	24.3%	NT	NT	NT	NT
Newport North (50-C and 50-D)	36	NT	NT	11/9/22	24.8%	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT
Newport South (50-E and 50-F)	36	NT	NT	11/9/22	26.9%	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT
Coos Bay North (50-G and 50-H)	36	NT	NT	11/10/22	26.1%	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT
Coos Bay South (50-I and 50-J)	36	NT	NT	11/10/22	25.6%	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT
Port Orford (50-K)	18	NT	NT	11/9/22	20.7%	11/29/22	20.7%	12/17/22	22.9%^	1/3/23	24.2%
Brookings (50-L)	18	NT	NT	11/7/22	18.6%	11/29/22	21.0%	12/17/22	22.6%^	1/3/23	25.4%
California											
Crescent City		NT	NT	11/10/22	18.7%	12/5/22	21.9%	12/17/22	24.9%	NT	NT
Trinidad		NT	NT	11/10/22	20.4%	12/5/22	23.6%	12/17/22	24.7%	NT	NT
Eureka		NT	NT	11/10/22	19.5%	12/5/22	21.5%	12/17/22	25.8%	NT	NT
District 10 (not bound by Tri-State)											
Bodega Bay		no test	no test								
San Francisco		no test	no test								

~ Soak time 48hrs

^Crab were picked ~64hrs after landing

* short soak

WDFW is grateful to the fishers and processors that work cooperatively with WDFW to successfully complete this important work.

If you have any questions pertaining to this notice, contact Jamie Fuller at Jamie.Fuller@dfw.wa.gov or 360-580-0875 or Dan Ayres at Daniel.Ayres@dfw.wa.gov 360-470-3557