



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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January 18, 2023

WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE
CORRECTION

The Washington coastal Dungeness crab fishery will open from Klipsan Beach to the US - Canada Border (excluding Special Management Areas) to state fishers on February 6, 2023. See details below.

The State-Quinault Harvest Management Plan for 2022-2023 uses a sliding scale based on landings during the first 31 days of the Quinault fishery to determine the head-start for the Quinault fleet. WDFW and Quinault managers reviewed Quinault catch data and agree to a 47-day delay of the state fishery in the area from Point Chehalis north to Destruction Island, implementing the state season opening structure results in a season opening date of February 6, 2023, in the area north of Klipsan Beach.

The State-Quileute Harvest Management Plan uses different criteria to open the state fishery between the Queets River and Destruction Island and for the area north of Destruction Island. The plan uses a sliding scale approach based on Quileute catch in the entire Quileute U&A to determine the opening date in the area between Queets and Destruction Island. Given the low early season catch for Quileute, this area will open on February 6, 2023, concurrent with the opening north of Klipsan Beach.

The opening north of Destruction Island is based on a provision in the State-Quileute Plan that ensures there are 20 fishable days for Quileute fishers between December 1 and January 15, prior to opening the state season north of Destruction Island. This provision has been satisfied. To allow as much area for the state fleet as possible and to avoid the implementation of fair start provisions, the area north of Destruction Island will also open on February 6, 2023.

STATE SEASON OPENING NORTH OF KLIPSAN BEACH:

- **The state coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery between Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) and US – Canada Border will open at 9:00 am, February 6, 2023.**
- A **73-hour** gear pre-set period will begin at 8:00 am February 3, 2023.
- **Hold inspections** will be conducted starting at noon on February 5, 2023.
- Temporary pot limits in place south of Klipsan Beach will be removed at 8:00 am February 3, 2023.

Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the management measures described below before you begin your fishing operations and stay informed relative to additional changes.

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS:

Quinault SMA:

The Quinault **primary SMA** will be closed to non-treaty fishers beginning at 8:00 AM February 3, 2023. The **primary SMA** is scheduled to remain closed to non-treaty fishers until further notice.

The Quinault **primary SMA** is described as the coastal waters shoreward of a line approximating the 27-fathom depth curve between Raft River (47°28.00) and Copalis River (47°08.00) according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner: 47°28.00' N. Lat. – 124°20.70' W. Lon.
- Northwest Corner: 47°28.00' N. Lat. – 124°34.00' W. Lon.
- Southwest Corner: 47°08.00' N. Lat. – 124°25.50' W. Lon.
- Southeast Corner: 47°08.00' N. Lat. – 124°11.20' W. Lon.

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 from Point Arena, California, to Klipsan Beach, Washington, (including Willapa Bay) before February 3, 2023, are subject to the **Fair Start Provisions** described below.

Fair Start Provisions:

- **Klipsan Beach (46°28.00) to Oysterville (46°33.00):** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the fishery between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens will be allowed to fish in the area between Klipsan Beach and Oysterville at **8:00 am on February 16, 2023**
- **Oysterville (46°33.00) to US/Canada border:** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the fishery between Point Arena, CA and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Oysterville opens will be allowed to fish in the area between Oysterville and the US/Canada border at **8:00 am on March 13, 2023.**
- **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.

Other Requirements:

- A hold inspection certificate number is required on all fish tickets until March 13, 2023
- 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)
- Whale entanglements are a serious problem, please implement the recommendations in the Washington Best Practices Guidelines to minimize the risk of entangling marine mammals.
- 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.
- All commercial crab license holders are required to carry, complete, and submit logbooks to WDFW. This information is necessary for managing our fishery today and in the future. New logbooks will be available during Hold Inspections or by calling WDFW at 360-249-4628.
- Notification to WDFW Enforcement is required when transiting crab through closed areas. Notification is to be made 24-hours prior to entering the area north of 47°00.00 N. Latitude 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.
 - a. 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.
 - b. Vessels transiting north of Grays Harbor with crab caught south of Destruction Island (47°40.50) prior to the area north of Destruction Island 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 at 360-580-6200 for issuance of this permit.
- 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.

This information and future updates will also be available on WDFW web page:

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/coastal/>

If you have questions regarding the information contained in this letter or other regulations pertaining to the coastal Dungeness crab fishery, please contact Jamie Fuller at (360) 580-0875.