



State of Washington  
**Department of Fish and Wildlife**

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December 6, 2023

## **WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE**

### **Season Opening Delayed in Washington, Oregon**

On December 5, 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 delay the opening of the 2023-24 Coastal Dungeness crab fishery from Cape Foulweather, OR north to the US/Canada border through at least December 30, 2023. This decision was based on crab condition tests conducted by WDFW and ODFW which show that test results at multiple sites do not currently meet the minimum meat recovery criteria.

Tri-State Dungeness Crab Pre-Season Testing Protocols specify that after the second round of testing, if any area does not meet the minimum meat recovery criteria (23% north of Cascade Head and 24% south of Cascade Head) a delay is required, and additional testing is conducted before a season opening date can be confirmed. WDFW will provide additional information regarding the season opening as soon as possible following the completion of the upcoming tests.

ODFW is expected to announce the opening of the commercial Dungeness crab fishery south of Cape Foulweather, OR on December 16, 2023. CDFW is in the process of assessing marine life entanglement risk for the commercial Dungeness crab fishery using the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Program (RAMP) and is expected to provide more information on openings south of the OR/CA border by the end of the week. In the area north of Point Arena, CA, any vessel that fishes in an area that opens before another area is subject to fair start provisions. Fair start provisions require that vessels beginning their season in an area that opens earlier than others will be prohibited from fishing in a delayed area for at least 30 days after the delayed area opens.

### **WASHINGTON TEST RESULTS**

The stations in the Long Beach test areas were completed on November 28, 2023. The results for all stations are summarized below.

Test Area	Date	Shell Grade				Meat Recovery	Domoic Acid (ppm) levels per crab
		1A	1B	II	III		
Long Beach	11/28/23	13.7%	22.6%	63.7%	0%	19.4%	No Test

WDFW made the decision to delay the Westport test but will conduct a second round of testing as soon as weather conditions allow.

## 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/sites/default/files/2023-12/tri-statepreseasoncoastwideresults-2023-120523.pdf>

2023 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	
		Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %	Date*	Meat Recovery %
<b>Washington</b>									
Northern	n/a	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT	NT		
Westport	54	10/23/23	19.9%	11/9/23	22.6%				
Long Beach	54	10/22/23	17.8%	11/8/23	18.4%	11/28/23	19.4%		
<b>Oregon</b>									
Astoria (50-A)	18	NT	NT	11/9/23	18.9%	11/29/23	21.1%		
Garibaldi (50-B)	18	NT	NT	11/9/23	21.2%	11/29/23	23.0%		
Newport North (50-C and 50-D)	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	21.6%	11/29/23	23.7%		
Newport South (50-E and 50-F)	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	24.6%	NT	NT		
Coos Bay North (50-G and 50-H)	36	NT	NT	11/14/23	24.0%	NT	NT		
Coos Bay South (50-I and 50-J)	36	NT	NT	11/14/23	23.2%	11/29/23	24.8%		
Port Orford (50-K)	18	NT	NT	11/8/23	24.1%	NT	NT		
Brookings (50-L)	18	NT	NT	11/8/23	25.2%	NT	NT		
<b>California</b>									
Crescent City	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	26.8%	NT	NT		
Trinidad	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	24.8%	NT	NT		
Eureka	36	NT	NT	11/8/23	23.4%	11/28/23	25.5%		
<b>District 10 (not bound by Tri-State)</b>									
Bodega Bay	n/a	NT	NT	NT	NT				
San Francisco	n/a	NT	NT	NT	NT				

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 Matt George at [Matthew.George@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Matthew.George@dfw.wa.gov) or 360-640-1066.