



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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March 22, 2024

WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

Since 2020, the WDFW has imposed a reduced pot limit starting May 1 for the Washington coastal Dungeness crab fishery. The intent of this requirement is to reduce the risk of whales becoming entangled in commercial crab gear by reducing the number of lines in the water during the peak time when humpback whales are present off the Washington coast. This notice is a reminder that these reduced pot limits go into effect on May 1, 2024.

Effective May 1 through September 15

- Licenses with a permanent pot limit of 500 will be assigned a reduced pot limit of 330 pots.
- Licenses with a permanent pot limit of 300 will be assigned a reduced pot limit of 200 pots.

In conjunction with the reduced pot limit, license holders that plan to participate on or after May 1 must purchase summer buoy tags. Summer buoy tags will ensure compliance with the reduced pot limit and allow for the removal of lost or abandoned crab gear prior to the end of the season. This in-season gear recovery furthers measures to reduce the risk of entanglements with humpback whales.

If you plan to fish on or after May 1 and choose to have your tags shipped to you, your tag orders must be received by licensing by April 15, 2024, in order to provide you with enough time to get them on your gear by May 1. If you order your summer buoy tags after the April 15, shipping times are not guaranteed for you to receive them by May 1. Regardless of when you acquire your summer tags, they must be attached to any gear deployed on or after May 1.

Vessels can attach summer tags to gear starting April 15. As a reminder, regular season tags must remain on your gear until May 1, so both tags will need to be attached to the gear if a vessel decides to attach summer tags prior to May 1. All regular season tags must be removed from crab gear on May 1 or as soon as possible after May 1. **Gear recovery will begin on May 8, 2024**, to allow time for vessels to remove regular season tags from gear prior to the start of gear recovery. **This in no way allows vessels to fish gear in excess of the reduced pot limits or without summer buoy tags after May 1.** More information about in-season gear recovery will be provided in a future notice.

The preferred method for receiving your buoy tags is shipping via FedEx, however in-person pickup will be available at the WDFW Licensing Office in Olympia, Monday-Friday from 8:30am - 4:45pm. If you choose to pick up your tags in-person in Olympia, please notify licensing 24 hours prior to pick up at commercialsales@dfw.wa.gov or 360-902-2464. If 24-hour prior notice is not provided, in-person pick up will not be allowed and tags will be shipped via FedEx once payment is received.

To order summer buoy tags, fill out the attached payment/order form and mail or email it along with your payment to the contact information provided on the form.



2024 SUMMER COASTAL CRAB BUOY TAG ORDER FORM

License Owner _____ License # _____

Vessel Name _____

Please ship my buoy tags to: (must be a physical address)

Name: _____

Address: _____

300 pot limit – 200 tags at \$1.25 each\$250.00

500 pot limit – 330 tags at \$1.25 each.....\$412.50

Make checks payable to WDFW
Mail to: WDFW Commercial Licensing
PO Box 43154
Olympia WA 98504 or
Fax to: 360-902-2945 or
Email: commercialsales@dfw.wa.gov

Visa
 MasterCard _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ expire _____ - _____

Name on card _____ Phone _____