From:	Fuller, Jamie D (DFW)
To:	Fuller, Jamie D (DFW)
Subject:	WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE
Date:	Monday, April 14, 2025 3:59:01 PM
Attachments:	image005.emz image006.png

You are receiving this message because you have requested to be placed on the WDFW email distribution list for information regarding Washington State's commercial Dungeness crab fishery. If you do not wish to receive future messages, please reply by return e-mail with the word “delete” in the subject heading.

April 14, 2025

WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

Permitted Derelict Gear Recovery to Begin May 1

Beginning at 8:00 am on May 1, 2025, permitted recovery of derelict commercial crab gear will be allowed in coastal waters between the Washington/Oregon border (46^{0} 15.00) and the US / Canada Border, including Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay, and the Columbia River. Gear recovery will not be allowed in any SMA closed to state licensed fisherman. Gear recovery of tribal crab pots is prohibited.

Gear recovery is limited to licensed coastal Dungeness crab fishery participants. If you are interested in participating in gear recovery, you must apply for a permit from WDFW. Permitted vessels are allowed to recover derelict gear that do not have summer buoy tags from May 1, 2025, through October 31, 2025. To prevent your crab pots from being subject to gear recovery, **please remember to remove your regular season tag by May 1, and leave only the summer tag attached to your buoy setup.** Permitted gear recovery participants may keep recovered state derelict gear, with one notable exemption provided in the following section.

Due to multiple violations last season of the summer fishery regulations that take effect on May 1, the start of in-season gear recovery will be returning to the original start date of May 1. Summer tags may be attached 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 your gear if you decide to attach summer tags prior to May 1. If conditions around May 1 prevent the removal of your regular season tags from gear that has a summer tag on it, please remove the regular season tag as soon as conditions allow after May 1. **Please contact department staff immediately with any concerns of gear tampering or recovery of gear that was properly tagged with summer tags. Gear recovery is thoroughly monitored with Electronic Monitoring (EM) and WDFW will enforce non-permitted gear recovery activity.**

GEAR RECOVERY EXEMPTION:
Due to an unexpected hardship this season for the F/V Voyager, all gear belonging to, or fished by, this vessel must be provided to WDFW enforcement or staff upon return to port. Because this hardship abruptly ended this vessels participation this crab season, the vessels crab gear that scattered during the storm at the start of the season was unable to be located and recovered. From May 1 through October 31, permitted gear recovery participants can bring in gear belonging to this vessel, but it must be returned to the owner. WDFW will facilitate the return of all recovered gear to the owner.

Gear containing tags with the license # 58175 must be provided to WDFW upon returning to port. Buoys used by the F/V Voyager are shown in the photo, marked with buoy brand # 57865.

In-season gear recovery: May 1-September 15, 2025

- Participants with a WDFW issued gear recovery permit will be able to recover crab gear owned by state licensed fishers that remains in the ocean that does not have a **summer buoy tag attached**.
- An active Electronic Monitoring system is required on the vessel and must remain on at any time crab pot recovery work is being conducted.
- Retention of crab from recovered pots is only **ALLOWED** for licenses/vessels participating in the summer crab fishery (license/vessel was issued summer buoy tags).
- Retention of crab from recovered pots is **PROHIBITED** for any license/vessel **NOT** participating in the summer crab fishery.

Summer Tags: Not recoverable during the in-season gear recovery May 1 – Sept 15, 2025.

Recoverable Tags: Can be recovered after May 1 with state issued permit.

Post-season gear recovery: September 16-October 31, 2025

- Participants with a WDFW issued gear recovery permit will be able to recover **ALL** crab gear owned by state licensed fishers that remains in the ocean.
- Retention of crab from recovered pots is PROHIBITED for all licenses/vessels.

A PERMIT IS REQUIRED to participate in this program.

- **TO REQUEST A PERMIT contact:**

Jamie Fuller at 360-580-0875
jamie.fuller@dfw.wa.gov

Permit holders will be exempt from lost and found property laws allowing them to keep any crab gear they recover or can return the gear to the original owner. *This permit does not allow the recovery of crab gear owned by tribal fishers.*

Regarding final disposition of recovered gear, remember that it is always an option for those participating in the permitted gear recovery program to give the owner of any gear they recover the right of first refusal.

To allow for data collection and monitoring of the program, gear recovery permits will require:

- That the permit is on board the participating vessel anytime it is engaged in recovery operations or has recovered gear onboard.

- Notification to Department staff **by calling or texting (text is preferred) Sergeant Brian Alexander (Westport) at 360-580-6200 or Sergeant Todd Dielman (Ilwaco/Chinook) at 360-581-3423** 2-hours prior to returning to the dock if any gear was recovered.

- Recording all recovered gear in a special logbook specific to derelict gear recovery (this logbook will be provided with your permit).

- Registration, inspection and marking of all recovered gear prior to removing it from the participating vessel.

Jamie Fuller
Region 6 Coastal Shellfish
Commercial Data Coordinator
Washington Dept of Fish & Wildlife
48 Devonshire Rd
Montesano, WA 98563
(360) 580-0875 – cell
(360) 249-1297 - office