



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission approved the adoption of new rules that impact the WA coastal Dungeness crab fishery on April 4, 2025. A complete description of rule changes can be found at this link: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regulations/adopted/2025/commercial-dungeness-crab>

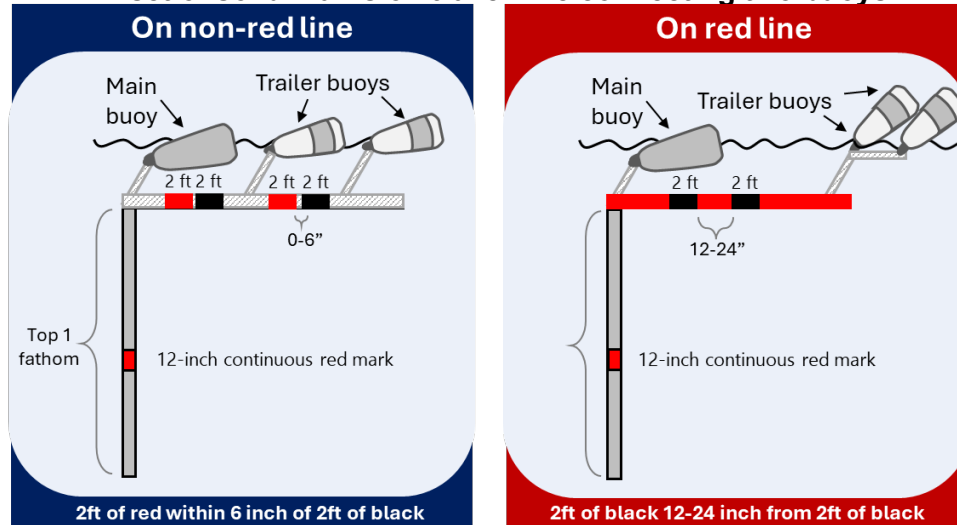
New Line Marking Requirements

For the 2025-2026 season, **all surface line (trailer line) must be marked with red and black.** This requirement can be met using either manufactured red and black line or a set of solid marks on any trailer line connecting two buoys. Buoy gangion lines (aka buoy straps) are exempt from line marking, the buoy gangion lines can be no longer than 4 ft measures from opposing loop ends.

WDFW understands that there have been limitations in the supply of state-fishery specific manufactured line from some manufactures and limited additional manufactured line will be available before December. **If you are unable to purchased state-fishery specific manufactured line before the start of the fishery season, you will need to meet the requirement by solid marking surface/trailer line for the 2025 season.** More details on the solid marking requirements are available in the compliance guide, found at this link: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/compliance-guide-line-marking-v1-1.pdf>. A set of marks is defined as two 2-foot long marks and solid marks must cover the circumference of the line.

Solid marking option:

A set of solid marks on trailer line connecting two buoys



New Surface Gear Requirements

For the 2025-2026 season, regulations **limit the amount of surface gear** that is permitted ([WAC 220-340-430](#)). Regulations limit the number of buoys and the length of gear, in the following ways:

- (1) Surface gear is limited to a total length of 36 feet, measured from the front end of the main buoy to the trailing end of the last trailer buoy.
- (2) Buoy gangion lines are exempt from line marking, as long as they measure 4 ft or less from opposite loops.
- (3) Surface buoys are limited to 2 trailer buoys in addition to the main diver buoy.
- (4) One end marker buoy is allowed, if it is less than 5 inches in diameter and doesn't extend more than 3 feet beyond the last trailer buoy.

For a demonstrated safety risk, vessel operators can apply for a permit exemption for the line length limitation prior to the start of fishing. Contact Megan Hintz at Megan.Hintz@dfw.wa.gov or 564-215-1757 for an application to apply for a permit will be available prior to the start of the 2025-2026 fishing season.

