



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

48 Devonshire Road, Montesano, Washington 98563-9618 (360) 249-4628 FAX (360) 249-1229

January 8, 2026

WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

Season Opening from Destruction Island, WA to US/Canada Border

The 2025–26 Harvest Management Plan with the Quileute Tribe includes a provision requiring that at least 20 fishable days be available to Quileute fishers between December 1 and January 15, prior to the opening of the state fishery. After reviewing weather data and recent ocean forecasts, WDFW and Quileute Dungeness crab managers jointly determined that this 20-fishable-day criterion has been met. As a result, the commercial Dungeness crab season will open within the following area:

Destruction Island, Washington (47° 40' 30" N. Lat.) to the U.S./Canada border (excluding Special Management Areas)

- 73-hour presoak begins (setting gear): 8:00 AM on January 12, 2026
- Hold Inspections: beginning at 12:00 PM on January 14, 2026
- Start date (pulling gear): 9:00 AM on January 15, 2026

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS (SMA):

Quinault SMA:

The Quinault primary SMA will be closed to state fishers beginning at 8:00 AM January 1, 2026. The primary SMA is scheduled to remain closed to state 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 (Raft River):	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 (Copalis River):	47° 08.00' N. Lat.	124° 11.20' W. Lon.

Quileute SMA

The Quileute SMA will be closed to state fishers beginning at 8:00 AM January 12, 2026. The SMA is scheduled to remain closed to state fishers until 8:00 AM, May 1, 2026.

The Quileute SMA is described as the area from Cape Johnson to Destruction Island shoreward of a line approximating 30 fathoms according to the following points:

- Northeast Corner (Cape Johnson): $47^{\circ} 58.00'$ N. Lat. $124^{\circ} 40.40'$ W. Lon.
- Northwest Corner: $47^{\circ} 58.00'$ N. Lat. $124^{\circ} 49.00'$ W. Lon.
- Southwest Corner: $47^{\circ} 40.50'$ N. Lat. $124^{\circ} 40.00'$ W. Lon.
- Southeast Corner (Destruction Island): $47^{\circ} 40.50'$ N. Lat. $124^{\circ} 24.43'$ W. Lon.

There will be a 100-pot limit in the SMA from May 1, 2025, through May 31, 2026. Fishers will be required to pre-register with WDFW prior to deploying gear in this area.

Makah SMA

The Makah SMA will be closed to state fishers beginning at 8:00 AM January 12, 2026. The SMA is scheduled to remain closed to state fishers until 8:00 AM February 14, 2026.

The SMA is described as the coastal waters between $48^{\circ} 02.15' N$ Lat. to $48^{\circ} 19.50' N$ Lat. east of a line connecting those points approximating the 25-fathom line according to the following coordinates:

- Northeast Corner: Tatoosh Island
- Northwest Corner: $48^{\circ} 19.50'$ N. Lat. $124^{\circ} 50.45'$ W. Lon.
- Southwest Corner: $48^{\circ} 02.15'$ N. Lat. $124^{\circ} 50.45'$ W. Lon.
- Southeast Corner: $48^{\circ} 02.15'$ N. Lat. $124^{\circ} 41.00'$ W. Lon.

There will be a 200-pot limit in the SMA for the first 30-days following the opening of the SMA to state fishers. Fishers will be required to pre-register with WDFW prior to deploying gear in this area.

FAIR START PROVISIONS:

- **Oysterville (46° 33.00) to Cape Falcon, OR (45° 46.00):** 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 between CA/OR border and Cape Falcon, OR before this area opens will not be allowed to fish in this area until **9:00 am on January 30, 2026**.
- **Destruction Island (47° 40.50) to U.S./Canada Border:** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the fishery between OR/CA Border and Destruction Island, including Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor, before the area north of Destruction Island opens will not be allowed to fish in this area until **9:00 am on February 8, 2026**.

Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (set gear) in the area between Klipsan Beach, Washington and the OR-CA border prior to 8:00 AM on January 1, 2026, will be subject to the following 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 Cape Falcon, OR and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens will not be allowed to fish in this area until **9:00 am on January 14, 2026**
- **Oysterville (46° 33.00) to Destruction Island (47° 40.50):** Licenses and vessels designated to those licenses that fish (as defined by WAC 220-340-400) in the fishery between OR/CA Border and Klipsan Beach, WA, including Willapa Bay, before the area north of Klipsan Beach opens will not be allowed to fish in this area until **9:00 am on February 8, 2026.**
- **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 **February 8, 2026**.
- All vessels must have a qualifying electronic monitoring (EM) system installed, activated, and transmitting data to the Pacific States Marine Fishery Commission (PSMFC) before participating in the coastal Dungeness crab fishery. More information on EM can be found at this link: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/coastal/electronic-monitoring>
- Each crab pot must be rigged with all surface line (trailer line) marked with red and black, and 12 inches of continuous red, no more than one fathom from the main buoy on the line connecting the main buoy to the pot. [WAC 220-340-430](#)
- New surface gear limitations are in place this season that limit the number of buoys and the length of surface line to 36 ft. More information on surface gear requirements can be found at this link: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-10/20251028-industry-notice-line-marking-reminder-correction.pdf>
- License owners or alternate operators MUST register one unique buoy color scheme **annually** using the WDFW online registration form. Buoy registration must be completed before fishing. If you are a new participant in the coastal Dungeness crab fishery, contact Jamie Fuller at 360-580-0875 to verify your color scheme is available. To access the registration form visit: <http://qrcodes.pro/jDEArX> . 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.

If you have any questions pertaining to this notice, contact Jamie Fuller at Jamie.Fuller@dfw.wa.gov or 360-580-0875 or Matt George at Matthew.George@dfw.wa.gov or 360-640-1066