



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

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March 17, 2026

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

Starting May 1, 2026, a reduced pot limit and 14-day landing requirement will be in effect for the Washington coastal Dungeness crab fishery. The intent of these requirements 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.

### **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.
- It is unlawful to leave Dungeness crab pots deployed in waters of the Pacific Ocean, Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay, or the Columbia River for **more than 14 consecutive days** without making a Dungeness crab landing.

### **Summer Buoy Tags**

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.

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 attach to your gear if you decide to attach summer tags prior to May 1. All regular season tags must be removed from gear by May 1 or as soon as possible after May 1. Gear recovery will begin on May 1, 2026. Any gear left in the ocean after May 1 without summer tags will be subject to gear recovery. More information about in-season gear recovery will be provided in a future notice.

**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.**

Once your order form has been processed, summer buoy tags will be shipped to you via FedEx. Summer buoy tags may also be picked up in person 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](mailto:commercialsales@dfw.wa.gov) or 360-902-2464. If 24-hour prior notice is not provided, in-person pick up may not be allowed and tags will be shipped via FedEx once payment is received.



2026 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](mailto:commercialsales@dfw.wa.gov)

Visa  
 MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ expire \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_