



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Marine Resources Program

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Oregon Ocean Commercial Dungeness Crab Permit Holders, Processors, Buyers, and Interested Persons:

This mailer is notification of the upcoming regulatory exhibit to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) regarding the evaluation, and proposed continuation of previously adopted regulations designed to reduce the risk of marine life entanglements with crab gear. Two additional risk reduction measures will also be proposed in the exhibit, as well as two minor rule amendments to increase operational efficiency in the fishery. The proposed regulatory changes in the exhibit include:

Risk Reduction Measures

- A 20% reduction in the pot limits across all ocean Dungeness crab permits and requirement for an additional late-season buoy tag starting May 1 each season.
- Prohibition on commercial crabbing outside of 40 fathoms starting May 1 each season.
- Restriction on the amount of surface gear allowed (see Figure 1 page 2).
- Allowance for retention of crab from all derelict crab pots.

Operational Efficiency Measures

- Allowance for buoy tag switching and attaching at-sea under an ODFW-issued waiver.
- Exception from purchase of late-season tags to land crab into the ports of Astoria and Brookings after May 1 by multi-state permittees when only fishing with gear in another state but landing crab into Oregon.

This meeting will be held in-person at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) headquarters office in Salem (4034 Fairview Industrial Drive, Salem, OR 97302) on August 4 and will have the option for virtual participation. Materials for the meeting, including proposed regulation language for each of the measures, will be posted on the Commission website here <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/> approximately two weeks in advance of the meeting. Instructions for registering for public testimony at this meeting will also be located on this page in the agenda for the meeting once it is posted. If you would like to submit public comment on the proposed regulations in advance of the meeting, please email the Commission at odfw.commission@odfw.oregon.gov or contact the crab management team at the phone numbers or emails at the end of this notice.

Please note that ODFW is not proposing a line marking requirement to the Commission in August as originally planned; however, draft regulatory language is included in this notice for public review (see Figure 2 on page 3). ODFW has been working closely with Washington and California Fish and Wildlife agencies, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and stakeholders on developing line

marking requirements for the West Coast crab fisheries. This extensive coordination and input from stakeholders has highlighted that additional work is still needed on the Tri-State line-marking proposal to maintain close coordination with the other West Coast states, vet specific proposed rule language and conduct proof of concept testing prior to proposing regulations. ODFW plans to recommend a line marking proposal to the Commission in the future, however that date is not set at this time. Please send any comments on this proposed language to the crab management team at the phone numbers or emails at the end of this notice.

Please let us know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns at any time.

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Figure 1. Schematic of the proposed Oregon crab fishery maximum surface gear limit that will be proposed to the Commission in August 2023.

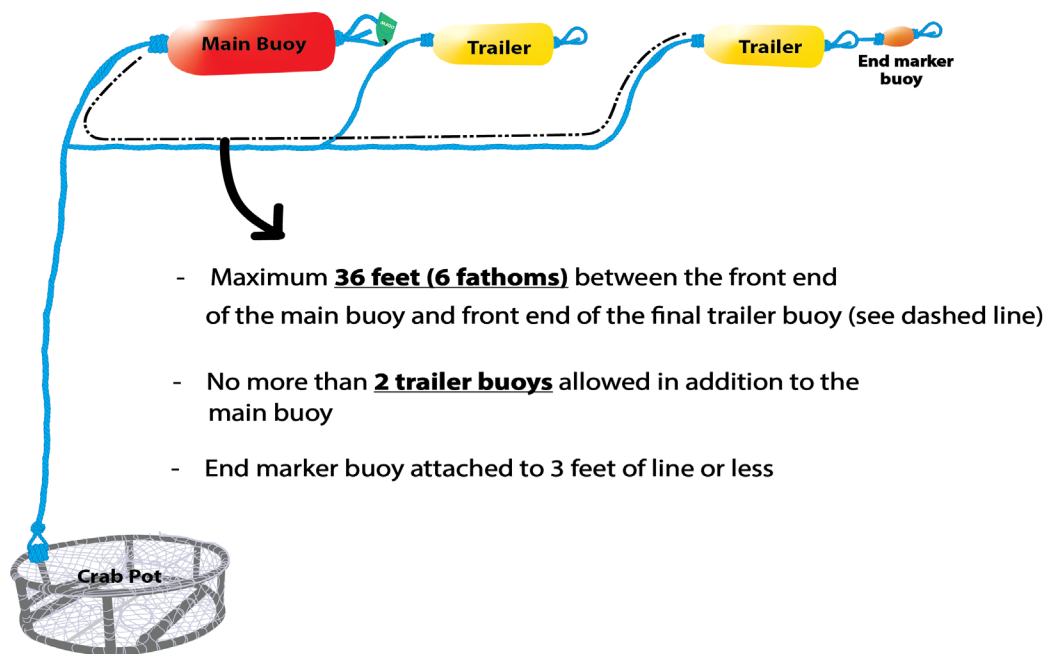
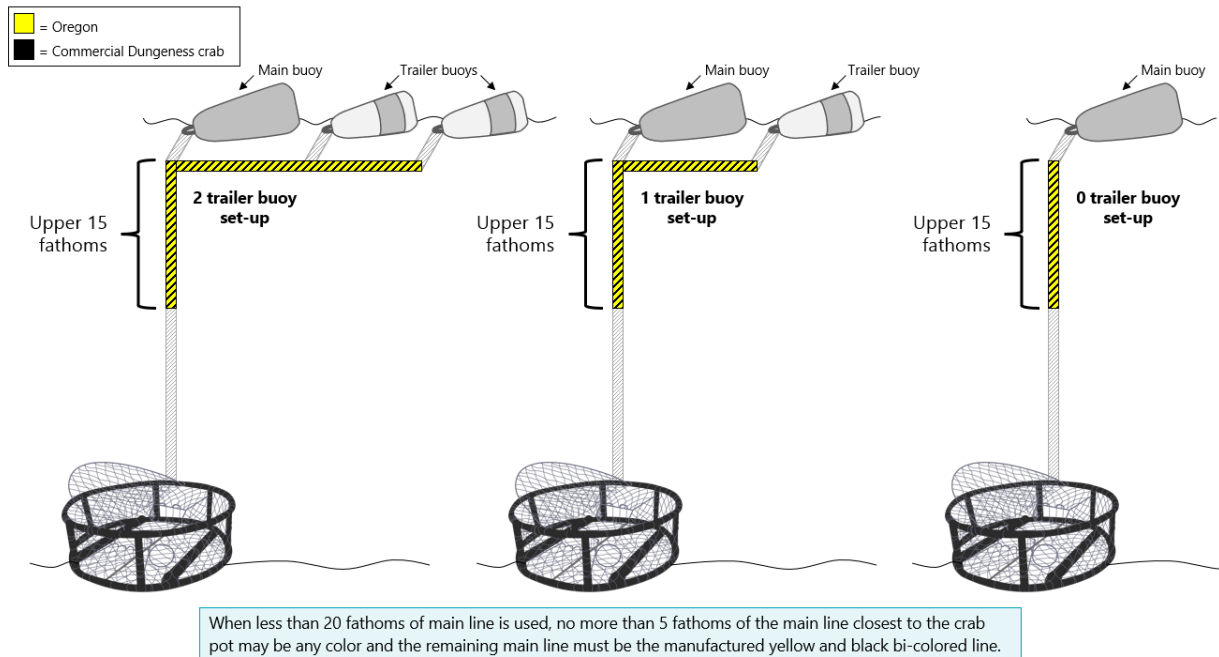


Figure 2. Schematic and draft regulatory language of the working Oregon crab fishery line marking proposal. ODFW plans to recommend a line marking proposal to the Commission in the future, however that date is not set at this time. Please send any input on this proposal to the crab management team listed on page 2 of this notice.

Draft Oregon Commercial Dungeness Crab Line Marking Proposal



DRAFT OREGON ADMINISTRATIVE RULE LANGUAGE:

It is unlawful for commercial purposes to use rope or line for Dungeness crab gear that is any color other than yellow and black, with the majority of strands colored yellow and at least 1/3 of strands colored black:

(a) Beginning December 1, 2025, for all rope or line used in surface gear, above the attachment point of the main buoy, except that buoy gangions (also known as buoy straps) that are less than 60 inches total length may be any color. A buoy gangion is defined as rope or line that passes through, and is affixed to, the buoy forming loops on each end of the buoy. The length of a buoy gangion is measured in a straight line between the opposing loop ends.

(b) Beginning December 1, 2027, for no less than 90 feet of the main rope or line closest to the surface, measured from the attachment point of the buoy closest to the crab pot or ring extending toward the crab pot or ring, except:

(A) When less than 120 feet of main rope or line is used, no more than 30 feet of the main rope or line closest to the crab pot or ring may be any color;

(B) The remaining main rope or line must meet the color specification; and

(C) Less than 90 feet of main rope or line may be used if the rope or line used meets the specifications of 6(b)(A)-(B) of this rule.