



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Marine Resources Program

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

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) is sending this industry notice as a reminder of the marine life entanglement minimization measures that begin annually May 1.

Marine Life Entanglement Minimization Measures Effective May 1:

- 1. Reduced pot limits by 20%** - The amount of Dungeness crab gear allocated to each Dungeness crab permit is reduced by 20%. This means a 500 pot permitted vessel can have up to 400 pots, a 300 pot permitted vessel can have up to 240 pots and a 200 pot permitted vessel can have up to 160 pots in the water beginning May 1.
- 2. Required late-season buoy tag in addition to primary season tag** - All Dungeness crab gear in the water must have a secondary tag attached to it in addition to the primary tag beginning May 1. Late-season tags are available for purchase from the Department at cost (\$1.15 per tag) but cannot be attached to gear in the water before April 10. An application for late-season tags can be found here
https://dfw.state.or.us/fish/commercial/docs/2023-24_Late_Season_Buoy_Tag_App.pdf.

All commercial landings of crab beginning May 1 are prohibited unless late-season tags are purchased and attached. Permit holders can now request a waiver to have another vessel help attach late-season tags if needed. Please contact ODFW License Services at 503-947-6101 if you are interested in applying for a waiver.

****Please note:** Permit holders are not required to purchase their full allotment of late-season tags and may just purchase the number of tags they intend to fish. The late-season buoy tag order form is included as a separate attachment in this notice. Late-season tags are available for in-person pickup at the Salem headquarters office but will not be shipped to another ODFW office for in-person pick-up. If ordering late-season tags, you will need to allow plenty of time for shipping to a physical address. Buoy tags must be signed for and cannot be sent to PO boxes or unattended addresses.

- 3. 40-fathom depth restriction** - No Dungeness crab gear is allowed outside of the 40-fathom regulatory line beginning May 1. Coordinates for the 40-fathom line can be found at Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations Part 660 Section 71 or can be downloaded from <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/data/depth-based-boundary-lines-west-coast>. Also, a map of the plotted 40-fathom regulatory line coordinates can be found at https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/commercial/crab/docs/2021/40fm_HarvestAreas_ALL.pdf.

- 4. Derelict gear retrieval allowances** - Any gear in the ocean beginning May 1 without a late-season buoy tag or outside 40 fathoms can be retrieved under in-season derelict gear provisions.

****Please note:** Retention of crab is now allowed from any derelict gear, including derelict gear outside of 40 fathoms or that does not have a valid late-season tag attached beginning May 1.

Also, please remember the following:

- 1. Crab surface gear cannot exceed a maximum of 36 feet (6 fathoms) of line between the front end of the main buoy and the front end of the final trailer buoy.** The regulation allows up to two trailer buoys in addition to the main buoy, for a total of three buoys. An additional end marker buoy that is less than five inches diameter (egg buoy) and attached with less than three feet of line is also allowed.
- 2. All Dungeness crab gear is required to be out of the water by 11:59 PM on August 14.** Permit holders can request a one-time retrieval waiver to have another vessel help get their gear out of the water during the last two weeks of the season (August 1-14th). Please contact ODFW License Services at 503-947-6101 if you are interested in applying for a waiver.

Additional details on all ODFW efforts to minimize the risk of marine life entanglement in collaboration with commercial crab industry, including a revised Best Fishing Practices Directive, are located https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/commercial/crab/whale_entanglement.asp.

Thank you for reviewing all of this information and please contact us if you have any questions.

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