



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Marine Resources Program

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
2040 SE Marine Science Drive
Newport, OR 97365
(541) 867-4741
FAX (541) 867-0311
www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP



August 22, 2023

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

This mailer is notification of crab fishery regulatory changes that the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) adopted at their August 4th meeting. Materials for the meeting, including a summary of the Department's evaluation of the late-season entanglement risk reduction measures, are posted on the Commission website here <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/>. The regulation changes include:

Marine Life Entanglement Risk Reduction Regulations Adopted

1. Late-season reduction of pot limits by 20% effective May 1 each season, including:

- Requirement for additional late-season tag
- 40 fathom depth restriction
- Removal of a sunset date

This means risk reduction regulations in place since the 2019-20 season will continue unless the Commission adopts changes in the future. Beginning May 1 each season, the amount of Dungeness crab gear allocated to each Dungeness crab permit is reduced by 20% (i.e., 200 pot limit to 160 pots, 300 pot limit to 240 pots, and 500 pot limit to 400 pots) and no gear will be allowed outside 40-fathom regulatory line. Also, beginning May 1 each season all Dungeness crab gear in the water must have a secondary tag attached to it in addition to the primary tag. Late-season tags are available for purchase from the Department at cost (\$1.15 per tag) beginning in mid-March each season, however cannot be attached to gear in the water before April 10. The Commission did NOT adopt another sunset date for these measures but directed staff to conduct another evaluation in two years.

2. Restriction on the amount of surface gear allowed (see Figure 1 page 2) – This means a maximum of 36 feet of line may be used between the front end of the main buoy and the front end of the final trailer buoy. It also prohibits more than two trailer buoys in addition to the main buoy (3 total buoys maximum). An additional end marker buoy that is less than five inches diameter (egg buoy) and attached with less than three feet of line is allowed.

3. Allowance for retention of crab from all derelict crab pots – This means crabs can be harvested from ALL derelict crab pots under in-season derelict gear provisions. For crab pots without a late-season buoy tag and/or outside 40 fathoms, crab can be retained starting May 21 each season.

Operational Efficiency Regulations Adopted

- 1. Allowance for buoy tag switching and attaching at-sea under an ODFW-issued waiver –**
This means crab permit holders can apply for waivers to allow for switching buoy tags on gear already deployed, switch out already deployed gear with different gear and attach the buoy tags at-sea, or have another vessel attach late-season tags. Additional terms and conditions can be specified by the department on the waiver such as the valid period and notification requirements. Contact ODFW Licensing Services at 503-947-6101 to apply for these waivers.
- 2. Exception from purchase of late-season tags to land crab into the ports of Astoria and Brookings after April 30 by multi-state permittees when only fishing with gear in another state but landing crab into Oregon –** This means multi-state permittees that only have crab gear in waters off another state can land crab after April 30 into the ports of Astoria or Brookings, Oregon without purchasing Oregon late-season tags. This only applies to vessels that have no crab gear in Oregon waters after April 30.

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

Kelly Corbett
Commercial Crab Project Leader
Kelly.C.Corbett@odfw.oregon.gov
541-270-5083

Troy Buell
State Fishery Manager
Troy.V.Buell@odfw.oregon.gov
541-961-8135

Figure 1. Schematic of the Oregon commercial crab fishery maximum surface gear limit that was adopted by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission in August 2023.

