



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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Updated: April 14, 2021

COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB GEAR RECOVERY PROGRAM

Beginning at 8:01 am on May 1, 2021, permitted gear recovery will be allowed in all coastal waters between the Washington/Oregon border (46°15.00) and the US / Canada Border, including the Columbia River, Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor.

WDFW is now issuing permits to coastal Dungeness crab license owners who are interested in recovering crab gear left in the ocean without summer buoy tags attached following the May 1, 2021 summer buoy tag requirements. Gear recovery is permitted only through October 31, 2021. **Any state licensed crab gear left in the ocean after April 30, 2021 without summer buoy tags attached will be subject to gear recovery.**

In-season gear recovery: May 1-September 15, 2021

- Participants with a WDFW issued gear recovery permit will be able to recover crab gear owned by state licensed fishers that remains in the ocean without summer buoy tags attached.

Post-season gear recovery: September 16-October 31, 2021

- Participants with a WDFW issued gear recovery permit will be able to recover all crab gear owned by state licensed fishers that remains in the ocean.

A PERMIT IS REQUIRED to participate in this program.

- TO REQUEST A PERMIT contact: Robert Morgan at 360-480-8596**
robert.morgan@dfw.wa.gov

Permit holders will be exempt from lost and found property laws allowing them to keep any crab gear they recover or to make arrangements to return the gear to the original owner. ***This permit does not allow the recovery of crab gear owned by tribal fishers.***

In regard to final disposition of recovered gear, remember that it is always an option for those participating in the permitted gear recovery program to give the owner of any gear they recover the right of first refusal.

To allow for data collection and monitoring of the program, gear recovery permits will require:

- That the permit is on board the participating vessel anytime it is engaged in recovery operations or has recovered gear onboard.
- Notification to Department staff (**by calling Sergeant Brian Alexander (Westport) at 360-580-6200 or Sergeant Todd Dielman (Ilwaco/Chinook) at 360-581-3423**) 2-hours prior to returning to the dock if any gear was recovered.
- Recording all recovered gear in a special logbook specific to derelict gear recovery (this logbook will be provided with your permit.)
- Registration, inspection and marking of all recovered gear prior to removing it from the participating vessel.

In order to locate and recover as much abandoned crab gear as possible the Department has set up an abandoned gear reporting hotline for coastal areas. Any information on the specific location of crab pots that are not actively fishing will aid to the success of the permitted gear recovery project.

To report lost or abandoned crab gear call 360-480-8596 and leave as much information as possible including, your name, phone number, general location, latitude and longitude and approximate amount of lost gear. Information on derelict crab gear can also be provided electronically by using the WDFW online reporting form at the following link: http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/derelict/derelict_gear.html