

WDFW – European green crab

European Green Crab Emergency Measures Report to the Governor



Report Purpose: Meet requirements of RCW [77.135.090](#)(4) that requires the Director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to continually evaluate the effects of the emergency measures and report these to the Governor at intervals of not less than ten days. The Director must immediately advise the Governor if the Director finds that the emergency no longer exists or if certain emergency measures should be discontinued. Gov. Jay Inslee [issued Emergency Proclamation 22-02](#): Green Crab Infestation on Jan. 19, 2022 to address the exponential increase in European green crab (EGC) populations within the Lummi Nation’s Sea Pond and outer coast areas.

March 4, 2022 Summary: The Washington State Senate and House released their 2022 Supplemental Operating Budgets and both included the full amount requested (\$8.568 million) for European green crab (EGC) emergency management. WDFW continued development of emergency management policy and the timeline for emergency measures implementation. WDFW briefed staff representing Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler, presented to other congressional staff, and met with federal partners regarding funding and coordination. An interagency meeting with state partners was held to discuss support for aquaculture businesses who are seeing a significant increase in EGC on Willapa Bay shellfish beds. WDFW continued implementation of \$600k in authorized emergency measures spending, including the contracting process for \$300k passthrough to Lummi Nation and hiring for six technicians to be stationed in Bellingham. WDFW Aquatic Invasive Species and Legislative Affairs staff briefed members of the public, invasive species practitioners, local, state, and federal partners, salmon stakeholders, and others during Invasive Species Awareness Week presentations and several legislative updates.



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Accomplishments February 22 to March 4, 2022

- Weekly WDFW internal policy coordination meetings.
- **Initial spending:** In February, WDFW began spending \$600k of internally authorized European green crab (EGC) emergency measures funds including the purchasing of \$300k worth of traps, boats and other equipment with priority to support the Lummi Nation's Sea Pond actions, the contracting process for a \$300k passthrough to Lummi Nation, and hiring for six technicians to be stationed in Bellingham. We are now beginning the initial hiring process of 17 new staff to begin supporting statewide EGC management in mid- to late-April, as well as one staff to conduct outreach and community engagement specific to European green crabs.
- **Legislative funding:** The Washington State Senate and House released their 2022 Supplemental Operating Budgets and both included the full amount requested (\$8.568 million) for European green crab emergency management. The main difference between the two is that the Senate version requires quarterly reports (every 6 months). Final day of the 2022 session is March 10th and then we wait until the Governor signs the funding bill, usually the first week of April, before we have authorization to spend.
- **Federal Funding:** WDFW is coordinating with the Governor's Office and the Recreation and Conservation Office to support a joint U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS), U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) funding proposal of \$7.5 million over 5 years from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. These funds would be used to collaborate on a region-wide effort to improve detection, eradication, and control efforts before EGC create a major impact to tribal rights and resources, and a critical setback to Puget Sound recovery. Proposed efforts include:
 - The USGS Western Fisheries Research Center would contribute scientific expertise to support critical research, bioenergetic modeling, hydrologic assessments, assess EGC control and eradication strategies, and data management.
 - The BIA Northwest Regional Office proposes to enhance their technical, coordination and financial support to the collaborating Puget Sound and Coastal Tribes.
 - The USFWS Pacific Region would expand their technical and financial support to the Tribes and other collaborators through existing mechanisms including the National Fish Habitat Partnership Program.
- **Contracts:** In anticipation of receiving state legislative funding, WDFW has initiated contract development to convert the legislative passthrough funding proposals into scopes of work with the intent to be ready for signatures once the Governor signs the funding bill. These include the Lummi Nation, Makah Tribe, Washington Sea Grant, and the Recreation and Conservation Office. The proposed legislation includes three grant programs to support rapid response and local management as follows:



- The Coastal EGC Management Grant Program (\$500,000/yr) is specific to EGC and will be administered through WDFW in coordination with a local funding advisory panel. Next actions include soliciting coastal members to participate on the advisory panel and developing a standard grant proposal submission process and submission portal.
- The Rapid Response Interagency Agreement Fund (\$500,000/yr) will initially be prioritized for EGC and will be administered through the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). WDFW will work with RCO on setting up a funding advisory panel and developing a standard grant proposal submission process and submission portal.
- The Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Local Management Grant Program (\$500,000/yr) will be available for any AIS and will be administered through the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). WDFW will work with RCO on setting up a funding advisory panel and developing a standard grant proposal submission process and submission portal.

Other Updates

- February 23: WDFW met with Region 6 (coastal and south Puget Sound), Shellfish Unit staff, and other state agency staff (DNR, AGR, ECY, State Parks, WA Sea Grant, RCO) to discuss reports by a couple shellfish growers that they are catching significantly more EGC on the clam beds in Willapa Bay. Urgency was expressed in setting up the Coastal EGC Management Grant process to be ready for funding proposals and making the funds available as soon as possible after the Governor signs the funding bill.
- February 23: WDFW met with Colin Swanson of Congresswoman Jaime Herrea Butler's office on EGC emergency response. Provided brief status of EGC actions with a focus on acknowledging reports of shellfish grower concerns and explanation of proposed legislative funding strategy to support coastal efforts. It was well-received.
- March 3: In conjunction with National Invasive Species Awareness Week, WDFW gave a presentation on the status of Washington State EGC management efforts as part of a multi-state Pacific Northwest European Green Crab panel (WA, OR, CA, AK). The presentation had nearly 400 registered viewers and was hosted by the North American Invasive Species Management Association. People attending the presentation represented local, state, federal, and tribal governments, academia, shellfish growers, NGOs, private invasive species management businesses, and private citizens from across the United States and Canada.
- March 4: WDFW, in collaboration with the Governor's Office, the Lummi Nation, the Recreation and Conservation Office, USGS, BIA and USFWS, gave a briefing to the Washington State congressional delegation on EGC invasion and response options. The meeting was well attended by congressional staff from the offices of Senator Murray, Representative Herrera-Butler, Representative Kilmer, the Senate Commerce Committee, and representatives from other federal agencies including DOI, NOAA, and EPA. In total, there were 37 people attending. The three main asks included:
 - Short-term funding - support joint USGS/BIA/USFWS request to Department of Interior for Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding of \$7.5 million over 5 years.
 - Identification of Federal EGC management lead(s).
 - Long-term funding - TBD for States and Tribes; streamlined contracting distribution for emergency response.



Public Affairs, Communications and Outreach

- WDFW Public Affairs staff supported media requests including coverage on the UW's eDNA [research](#) published in [Crosscut](#), [KNKX](#) and [other](#) outlets, a feature from [KUOW radio](#) on green crabs, and a constructive editorial in the [Chinook Observer](#) and [Yahoo! News](#).
 - WDFW Public Affairs and AIS staff continued planning for spring/summer EGC community outreach, public engagement and education, including to support green crab identification and response through presentations, community meetings and tabling at fairs and festivals.
 - Detailed information on EGC, webinar recordings, reports and partner updates are being archived on this webpage for green crab practitioners:
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive/carcinus-maenas>
- General information on EGC such as identification and public reporting is posted at:
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive/greatest-concern/egc>
- The USFWS, USGS and BIA [published a blog](#) on EGC threats to Washington's commercial aquaculture and shellfish growers.

Pending Tasks

- March 10: Washington Invasive Species Council – emergency measures status and consultation – [agenda](#) – [zoom registration](#)
- April 26-28: Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference – EGC session presentations.

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For more information, see <https://wdfw.wa.gov/accessibility/requests-accommodation>.

