

# WDFW – European green crab

## European Green Crab Emergency Measures Report to the Governor



*Two European green crab removed from the Seabeck area of Hood Canal by WDFW the week of June 3.*

**Report Purpose:** Meet requirements of RCW [77.135.090](#)(4) that requires the Director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) 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.

### May 25 to June 5, 2022 Report:

#### General Updates

Under mission #22-1085 as assigned by the state Emergency Management Division, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) continued establishment of an Incident Command System (ICS) to facilitate a statewide EGC management strategy, including drafting the first Incident Action Plan (IAP) identifying a Coastal Branch, Salish Sea Branch, and various coordination areas within each. Further detail on the EGC ICS is expected to be shared this week. WDFW leadership met with tribal leaders, other state and federal agencies, and non-governmental partners regarding participation in the ICS and Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group.

WDFW’s Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) unit continues hiring and onboarding of personnel to support EGC emergency management, including four Scientific Technician (ST) 2s who started last week (2 in Bellingham, 2 assisting in Hood Canal then on to Grays Harbor). Two additional ST2s start this week (1 coastal and 1 to support at Lummi Sea Pond). A Biologist 2 position has been filled, and candidates for a Research Scientist 1 and two Biologist 1 positions (Bellingham and coastal) are under review. Candidates for the EGC Outreach Specialist are also in review.

WDFW continues to support local tribes and organizations with EGC trapping equipment and bait. Outfitting of shrimp traps continues, and the following are in the process of deployment this week:

- 10 shrimp pots to Quileute Tribe (North Central Coast)
- 25 stakes to support Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe (Strait of Juan de Fuca)
- 10 shrimp pots to Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (North Puget Sound)
- 15 shrimp pots to Pacific Seafoods / WGHOGA (Willapa Bay)
- Bait supplied to Northwest Straits Commission (North Puget Sound)

## Salish Sea Branch Updates

Following the detection of EGC in Hood Canal near Seabeck on May 17 by Crab Team volunteers with Washington Sea Grant (WSG), six WDFW staff assisted by WSG staff deployed rapid response measures to determine the scope of EGC infestation and remove green crabs from the area. Rapid coordination with Kitsap County, Great Peninsula Conservancy, Hood Canal Coordinating Council, local shellfish growers, and other partners and landowners resulted in permission to access multiple sites in the area. 12 EGC were trapped during the initial period of May 25-27 through 376 trap sets, and 16 environmental DNA (eDNA) samples were taken for testing by WDFW's lab in Olympia. An additional EGC was captured in 22 trap sets the second week, and WDFW staff from the Puget Sound Shellfish and AIS units worked with oyster growers in the Seabeck area to gather information on the status of EGC, potential interaction with shellfish gear, and to collect eDNA samples. WDFW and partners will discuss information gathered to continue to advance understanding of the issue of European green crab in Hood Canal. **A total of 14 EGC have been removed from the Seabeck area of Hood Canal** (13 from rapid response trapping and 1 from the initial WSG detection).

As increased capacity to support the Lummi Nation with EGC management at the Lummi Sea Pond (LSP) is now in place, WDFW's Bellingham-based EGC "strike team" will start to branch out from the LSP to assist other local organizations and assess nearby suitable habitat for EGC presence. **At the LSP, the Lummi Nation reports 4,969 EGC removed (62 gravid females) in 1,782 trap sets during the week of May 23**, for a total of 22,354 EGC removed in 7,556 trap sets since April 1. Lummi Nation staff also conducted trapping in the Nooksack River delta (38 traps deployed, no EGC removed) and lower Lummi River (43 traps deployed, 10 EGC removed, 1 gravid female).

In northern Whatcom County, the Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC) with support from Washington Conservation Corps removed 6 EGC from three sites in Drayton Harbor in 219 trap sets. In Skagit County, NWSC removed 10 EGC from three sites in Samish Bay in 230 trap sets.

## Coastal Branch Updates

Representatives of the Willapa-Grays Harbor Oyster Growers Association (WGHOGA) report capturing between 200 and 400 EGC per day in recent updates, for a total of 12,586 EGC removed as of June 4 in the 113 days since they began removal efforts near the town of Nahcotta. Collaboration on assessment for EGC presence in coastal areas continues, including with the Makah Nation on the North Coast, with the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and WSG at the Elk River in southern Grays Harbor, and with Willapa National Wildlife Refuge and WSG in areas of Willapa Bay.

WDFW staff continue to coordinate with Pacific and Grays Harbor County Conservation Districts regarding implementation of EGC Coastal Management Grant Funds, as well as disbursement of additional WDFW pass-through funding. WDFW technical staff continue to offer support for shellfish growers and other private tidelands owners interested in EGC removal or assessment. Those requesting assistance or equipment support should contact [ais@wdfw.wa.gov](mailto:ais@wdfw.wa.gov).

**Additional information and further details will be provided in the next European green crab management quarterly report or are available upon request. Reports are posted at:**

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive/carcinus-maenas>

June 6, 2022

