

# WDFW – European Green Crab Update

Public Update on European Green Crab Management – Mar/April 2023



*An invasive European green crab removed from waters on the Washington Coast in early 2023.*

**Report Purpose:** These regular updates are intended to inform the public, local stakeholders, media, and others regarding the status of European green crab (EGC) management and emergency measures deployment in Washington state, supporting the public information responsibilities of the Incident Command System (ICS) and Public Information Officer (PIO).

For additional information, please see: [wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive/carcinus-maenas](https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive/carcinus-maenas)  
European green crab news, communications and outreach materials are available under the Resources tab.

To report European green crab sightings or obtain identification resources, visit: [wdfw.wa.gov/greencrab](https://wdfw.wa.gov/greencrab)

## March/April 2023 Updates

European Green Crab ICS objectives continue to include reduction of EGC populations to below levels harmful to environmental, economic, or cultural resources.

This report summarizes EGC captures, monitoring, and other emergency measures from March and April 2023 as well as field and partner highlights. Read on for additional updates.

## 2023 European Green Crab Capture/Removal Totals *\*as of April 26*

<b>Total:</b>	<b>40,216</b>
<b>Coastal Management Branch EGC removal totals:</b>	<b>38,441</b>
<b>Salish Sea Management Branch EGC removal totals:</b>	<b>1,775</b>

## 2023 field season underway; increased emphasis on Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor

2023 field efforts for EGC trapping, monitoring, and scientific research are now underway, with increased emphasis on the Coastal Management Branch. Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor are top priorities given high capture rates throughout 2022 and into early 2023. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)'s Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) unit anticipates deploying more than 25 staff and 1,000 traps during this field season, along with other equipment and resources.

Coastal shellfish growers and associations, county conservation districts, tribes, non-governmental organizations, and other partners are meeting with WDFW and representatives of other state and federal agencies in April and early May to plan and coordinate the deployment of ramped up EGC control and removal measures in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor in 2023. A total of \$1,295,000 was provided to Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor EGC management efforts in fiscal years 2022-23. This funding includes \$675,000 from the EGC Coastal Management Grant Program that provides dedicated funding for local removal efforts on the Washington Coast as was detailed in the [Nov/Dec EGC Public Update](#) (see *General Updates*, below). It also includes \$620,000 from the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) EGC Interagency Fund for a variety of coastal equipment, staffing and research needs to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, as well as the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Willapa National wildlife Refuge, the Pacific Coast Vegetation Management, and Grays Harbor and Pacific County conservation districts.

Coordinated EGC trapping continues in Lummi Bay and other areas of the Salish Sea Management Branch to control known EGC hotspots and prevent additional infested areas from taking hold, including supporting the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe in areas such as Sequim and Discovery bays as detailed in the [Jan/Feb EGC Public Update](#). Widespread monitoring continues led by Washington Sea Grant (WSG), Northwest Straits Commission (NWSC), and other partners. Rapid response trapping will be deployed by WDFW, tribes and co-managers should EGC be detected in new areas of Washington's Salish Sea.

### Federal funding requested to support West Coast EGC management

To expand EGC management and improve interstate coordination, in March WDFW sent letters to [Members of Congress](#) and the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA) requesting enhanced funding and support, including a coordinated West Coast strategy for European green crab control. These letters were co-signed by state legislative leaders, four state agencies, and seven tribes in addition to WDFW Director Kelly Susewind. In early April, local [reporters](#) and [Members of Congress](#) joined field tours to learn more about this harmful invasive species and efforts to control them.

### Fiscal Years 2023-2025 Biennial Budget (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025)

WDFW EGC funding received from the legislature in this biennium is expected to be ongoing for the 2023-2025 biennium. WDFW continues to assess options for adjusting dispersal based on availability of alternative funding sources and any changes to EGC emergency management priority and resource needs. WDFW is soliciting budget/funding feedback from tribal co-managers and through entity representatives of the EGC Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MAC Group). Fiscal Year 2024 budget updates and more information on the 2023-2025 biennium will be provided in the May/June EGC Public Update once state budgets are signed by the Governor.



## WA State European Green Crab Emergency Response Strategic Action Plan

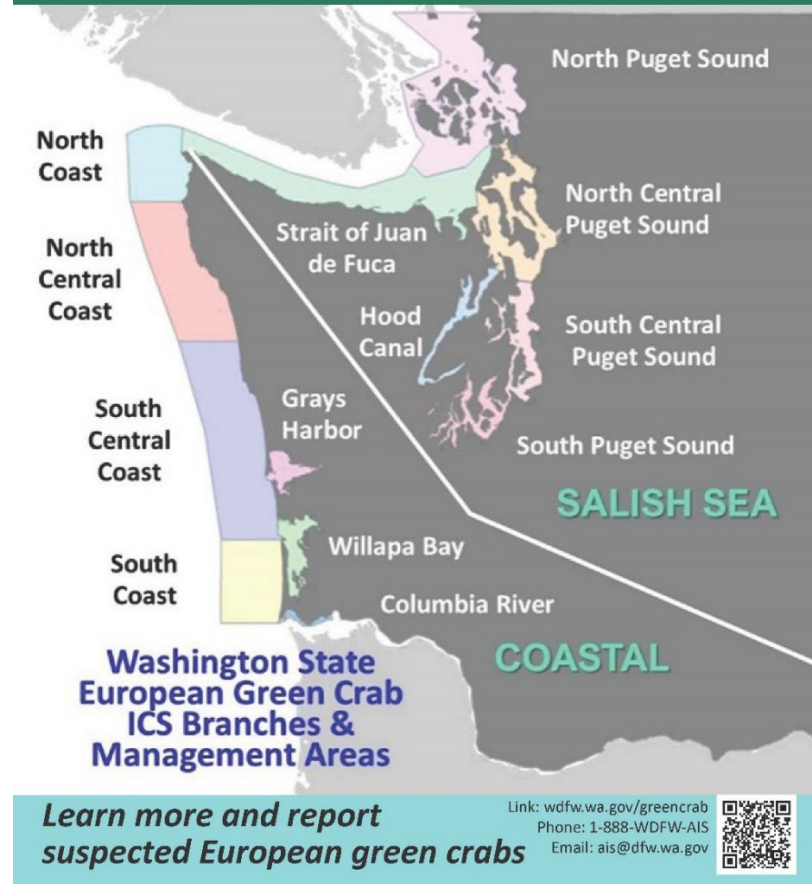
WDFW's Washington State European Green Crab Emergency Response Strategic Action Plan: Fiscal Year 2023 is [available online](#). This Strategic Action Plan (SAP) integrates relevant actions and tasks from the [2019 Salish Sea Transboundary Action Plan](#) (SSTAP) and is intended to be a living document where new actions/tasks can be added as new information emerges and emergency measures evolve. Each task includes its Purpose, Deliverable(s), and ICS Organizational Lead which is a link to the companion fiscal year (FY) 2023 ICS Organizational Assignment List by its Section/Unit/Team hierarchy.

### Q2 Report to the Washington State Legislature

The second [EGC Quarterly Report \(Q2\)](#) to the State Legislature was submitted on March 1. In response to the legislative budget proviso directive in ESSB 5693 (2022), this report has been authored as the second in a series of ongoing quarterly progress reports (Q2). This report will serve to outline the successes and challenges of ongoing European green crab (EGC) emergency response efforts in Washington state from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 2022. In addition, this report will put the work during Q2 in the context of the work [completed in Q1](#) (March 1 to Sept. 30, 2022).



# Invasive European Green Crab Management Areas



Larger map [available online](#).

## **Governor's 10-Day Emergency Measures Status Update (April 24, 2023):**

Per RCW 77.135.090, the WDFW Director continues to evaluate the effects of the European Green Crab emergency measures as provided under Proclamation 22-02, finds that the emergency continues to persist, and advises that all emergency measures should be continued. Details of the evaluation will be provided directly to you in Situation Reports (SitReps) reflecting each ICS operational period.

## **March/April News and Media Coverage Highlights**

Coverage from state, local, and national outlets included:

- Chinook Observer published an article on the work by NOAA and WDFW scientists to track the movement of EGC in Willapa Bay to inform management efforts: **Green menace: Scientists hopeful tracking study will reveal green crab secrets**  
[https://www.chinookobserver.com/news/green-menace-scientists-hopeful-tracking-study-will-reveal-green-crab-secrets/article\\_ff658eb6-bc63-11ed-862e-835b5d78920b.html](https://www.chinookobserver.com/news/green-menace-scientists-hopeful-tracking-study-will-reveal-green-crab-secrets/article_ff658eb6-bc63-11ed-862e-835b5d78920b.html)



- The United State Committee on Appropriations released a news release featuring U.S. Senator Murray's testimony to a Senate Appropriations Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies subcommittee hearing, including questions she asked of the subcommittee regarding federal support for EGC management: **At hearing with Secretary of the Interior, Senator Murray highlights how conservation keeps Our economy strong, families safe, and nation globally competitive**  
<https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/news/majority/at-hearing-with-secretary-of-the-interior-senator-murray-highlights-how-conservation-keeps-our-economy-strong-families-safe-and-nation-globally-competitive>
- NW News Network ran an article about the alarm of Shellfish growers in Willapa Bay at the invasion of European green crabs and perspectives from WDFW's Incident Commander Allen Pleus: **Shellfish growers in Northwest's oyster capital want 'blitz' against invasive green crabs**  
<https://www.nwnewsnetwork.org/environment-and-planning/2023-04-04/shellfish-growers-in-northwests-oyster-capital-want-blitz-against-invasive-green-crabs>
- The Office of U.S. Senator Patty Murray shared a news release on the Senator's visit to Sequim Bay with Congressman Derek Kilmer to learn more about EGC and express their support for federal resources for EGC management: **Senator Murray, Rep. Kilmer trap European green crab, Murray discusses efforts to marshal federal resources**  
<https://www.murray.senate.gov/senator-murray-rep-kilmer-trap-european-green-crab-murray-discusses-efforts-to-marshal-federal-resources/>
- Northwest Sportsman Magazine covered the visit of Senator Murray and Representative Kilmer to Sequim Bay: **WA invasive crab problem gets attention from Murray, Kilmer**  
<https://nwsportsmanmag.com/wa-invasive-crab-problem-gets-attention-from-murray-kilmer/>
- KING 5 also ran a news segment and released an article covering the visit of Senator Murray and Representative Kilmer to Sequim Bay and the environmental and economic concerns EGC pose: **Washington state leaders push for federal funding to trap invasive European green crabs**  
<https://www.king5.com/article/tech/science/environment/washington-federal-funding-trap-invasive-crab-species/281-4d9a0edb-914c-4e6c-ae9-3479504641b8>
- KIRO 7 covered the visit of Senator Murray and Representative Kilmer to Sequim Bay, focusing on the legislators' support of additional federal funds to address the EGC problem: **Federal funding sought to eradicate destructive green crab in Washington**  
<https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/federal-funding-sought-eradicate-destructive-green-crab-washington/POVSHKIPOVAL5MHDZ2LPSSXEVA/>





- National NPR's All Things Considered picked up the article ran by the NW News Network about the concerns voiced by shellfish growers about the increase in EGC in Willapa Bay: **Northwest shellfish growers call for aggressive action against invasive crabs**  
<https://www.npr.org/2023/04/09/1168858087/northwest-shellfish-growers-call-for-aggressive-action-against-invasive-crabs>

## Field Highlight: EGC Emergency Response participants prepare for a busy field season

Along Washington's approximately 28,000 miles of shoreline, all those participating in the EGC Emergency Response are busy preparing for the spring through fall field season.

To kick off the 2023 season, U.S. Senator Patty Murray and Congressman Derek Kilmer [visited Sequim Bay on April 5](#) to learn more about the threat EGC pose to Washington's coastal ecosystems, economies, and tribal and cultural resources. The Members of Congress toured the southern end of Sequim Bay with leaders from the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe along with WDFW leaders, local environmental advocates, and other experts to trap invasive European green crab and hear directly about on-the-ground efforts to address the threat posed by the invasive species.

While no live crabs were found during the event, Senator Murray made clear [she will be working](#) to secure dedicated federal resources and better coordination in future spending bills to support state and local efforts to protect Washington state's local ecosystems from the European green crab. Representative Kilmer also expressed support for additional federal resources to beat back EGC.

While legislators seek additional resources, co-managers, partners, and tribes participating in the EGC Emergency Response will continue trapping and preparing for the 2023 field season.

"As landings decreased over the winter farmers scaled back efforts and continued to target long standing hotspots within Grays Harbor and Willapa Bay," says David Beugli, Executive Director of Willapa-Grays Harbor Oyster Growers Association. "In Grays Harbor farmers were able to dedicate more time to EGC removal efforts than during the busy summer months and the results were the highest landings to date in Grays Harbor."

"As the days have been getting longer and the EGC have begun to get more active," continues Beugli, "farmer led trapping efforts are expected to expand into locations that are not as easily accessible during winter storms. Large orders of bait have been delivered, farmers and WDFW staff have been repairing and updating traps and soon efforts will be ramping up with the goal of removing as many EGC as possible while paying attention to high value crop lands."

In addition to bait and traps, organizations are in the process of preparing and acquiring boats to aid their trapping operations. Using funds from the Statewide EGC Emergency Measures Interagency Funds Program, both Pacific County Vegetation Management and the Washington Department of Natural Resources are in the process of acquiring watercraft to assist with trapping. WDFW has three boats ready to be deployed for EGC trapping.

Many, including Lummi Nation, have been training existing staff and/or hiring new staff to expand their workforce and increase the scale of trapping. For example, several Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (PNERR) staff recently completed a motorboat operation training course to facilitate boat-based trapping year-round. WSG held refresher training workshops for 88



returning monitors at six locations, and new monitor training workshops for 90 participants at six locations.

WDFW is currently hiring eight new seasonal technicians for the season. With five returning seasonal staff, we expect to have more than 17 technicians and five biologists ready for an intensive season of EGC trapping. All WDFW staff trapping for EGC will receive the training needed to safely do fieldwork.

With the necessary equipment and staff in the works, trappers are also working on scouting sites where EGC are most likely to find refuge (sheltered, shallow waters). For example, the USFWS Willapa National Wildlife Refuge conducted assessment site trapping at the Cutthroat Creek Boat Launch and additional areas as potential walk-in sites. The Grays Harbor Conservation District (GHCD) scouted potential sites to trap at the Port of Grays Harbor in Aberdeen.

WDFW is also making sure to connect with other agencies, co-managers, partners, and tribes to see where WDFW can assist with their trapping efforts (with personnel or equipment, or both), make field plans, prepare, and procure equipment, and create materials.

With at least 1,000 traps ready to be deployed across the state, WDFW, co-managers, partners, and tribes are ready for a busy field season.

## **Partner Highlight: Amid emergency measures, WSU Extension and Washington Sea Grant train volunteers to find invasive European green crab**

*News release published by Washington State University (WSU) News, April 18, 2023:*

<https://news.wsu.edu/news/2023/04/21/wsue-extension-helps-train-volunteers-to-find-invasive-european-green-crab/>

***Funding for WSU and Washington Sea Grant Molt Search program provided by the emergency measures funding coordinated through Washington RCO and the EGC MAC Group.***

A new program will enable anyone who walks the shorelines of Puget Sound to identify one of Washington state's most concerning invasive species: European green crab.

In response to this shore crab's booming population, Washington State University Extension and Washington Sea Grant outreach specialists are rolling out the [Molt Search](#) program in May.

WSU Extension and Sea Grant are recruiting volunteers for training to support early detection efforts along Washington's inland shorelines by searching for European green crab shells and reporting evidence of their presence to managers.

The state of Washington deployed emergency measures in 2022 to slow the crab's spread and protect shorelines from harmful impacts. Green crab eat or compete with a wide range of native species, including juvenile Dungeness crab and littleneck clams. They also destroy seagrass habitats important to salmon.

Molt Search will train participants to systematically search beaches for molts, the exoskeletons the crabs shed, which can wash up on shorelines before European green crabs can be detected with traps.

"Green crabs tuck under logs, rocks and vegetation, making them difficult to spot," said Bob Simmons, Olympic region water resources specialist with WSU Extension. "They can hide in the



shallows of mudflats or in protected estuaries and pocket marshes, areas very difficult to safely access. Finding molts is easier since they wash to the upper beach with high tides.”

European green crabs grow up to four inches wide, much smaller than the well-known Dungeness crab. The name can be misleading: coloring ranges from a tinged or mottled green to orange and dark red. Their trapezoidal body is distinguished from native species by having five “marginal teeth,” a zigzag of five distinct spines that frame the eyes on either side of their shell.

Further identification graphics and other resources are [available through the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife species webpage](#).

Once European green crabs are found in an area, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Native American tribes, shellfish growers, and other partners deploy hundreds of traps.

For Emily Grason, a marine ecologist at Washington Sea Grant, more volunteers scouting the shoreline means a quicker trapping response when green crabs are detected.

“If we don’t find new populations until they are already abundant and widespread, we miss the best — and maybe the only — chance we might get to protect local habitats, species and economies,” she said. “Green crab control is about early detection, finding populations within the first generations of their arrival at a new site, and aggressively trapping down populations even if they are still small and hard to find.”

### ***Thousands of miles of shoreline to cover***

The Washington portion of the Salish Sea has more than 2,000 miles of shoreline, stretching from Neah Bay to Nisqually Reach, back up to Semiahmoo Bay, and including the iconic San Juan Islands.

European green crabs were first detected along Washington’s inland shorelines of Puget Sound in 2016. With a few exceptions, they are still extremely rare or undetectable across most of the region.

Current monitoring efforts rely primarily on baited traps, but trapping has limitations. Grason leads Washington Sea Grant’s Crab Team, which coordinates a network of 56 sites spanning Puget Sound shorelines and has conducted early detection trapping since 2015.

“Trapping is time-consuming, labor-intensive, and logistically challenging,” she said. “Even with so many sites and volunteers, we can’t cover all of the shorelines where green crab could be found.”

Molt Search will enable volunteers to search much more of Puget Sound’s shorelines. Participants will submit survey reports via the [MyCoast](#) mobile app, enabling Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff and partners to identify and target gaps in trapping efforts.

WSU Extension and Sea Grant are partnering with local organizations to spearhead trainings in each of the 12 Puget Sound counties, empowering volunteers to begin scouting scenic and important locales.

“The goal is to train more and more volunteers going forward,” said Simmons.

Cheryl Lovato Niles, water resources educator with WSU Whatcom County Extension, sees the spread of European green crab as a call to action.

“The green crab threatens a number of iconic Pacific Northwest species,” she said. “By training volunteers to identify and report sightings, we’re utilizing WSU’s strengths in community partnerships and action, volunteer recruitment, and training experience to help make this a success.”





The first training will be held May 10 in Kitsap County. [Additional trainings are scheduled throughout May and early June.](#)

Jonathan Robinson, lead coordinator of the WSU Extension Beach Watchers program in Snohomish County, will also train volunteers beginning in May.

“What is so great about this project is anyone can do it and make an impact,” Robinson said.

*Written in collaboration with Washington Sea Grant and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.*

## Photos and Multimedia Highlight:



*Above: WDFW staff tabling at Penn Cove Musselfest (March 4-5, 2023) with European green crab outreach materials.*





*Above: Natalie Otto (GHCD) and Jessica Ostfeld (WDFW) tabling about EGC at Ocean Shores Razor Clam Festival March 17-19, 2023. Photo courtesy of GHCD.*



*Above: one of two WDFW equipment trailers used for European green crab trapping and management efforts newly wrapped with informational displays to support EGC awareness and public reporting. These trailers will be deployed to the Willapa Bay area and to North Puget Sound.*







Above: EGC reporting sign spotted at Twanoh State Park on Hood Canal. EGC signs have been distributed to dozens of parks, wildlife and water access areas, public and private marinas, shellfish growers, and other areas, and staff appreciate seeing them posted at these sites.





*Above: Preparing EGC shrimp traps for deployment. WDFW Scientific Technicians Rachel Flannery (blue) and Kaitlyn Estep (purple) adding rebar weights, narrowing entry ports to prevent larger Dungeness and Red Rock crabs from entering, adding identification tags, putting finished traps on pallets and wrapping them to prevent local birds and animals from being accidentally trapped during storage.*



*Above: The WDFW “Crab Box” where deployment gear is stored. WDFW Scientific Technician Megan Bungum prepping Mackerel bait for a new trapping action. One of WDFW’s trucks ready to support a trapping event.*







*Above: WDFW IT staff getting into the mud to better understand data management needs. Brandon Cooper (left) inspects a gravid female EGC with only its claws remaining. Maddie Gray (above) learning what “boots in the mud” really means! Photos by Chelsey Buffington, WDFW*



*Above: U.S. Senator Patty Murray and Congressman Derek Kilmer touring southern end of Sequim Bay on April 5 with leaders from the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe along with local environmental advocates and experts. Photos courtesy of the Office of Senator Murray.*







Above: WDFW EGC Outreach Specialist Jessica Ostfeld presenting at the Coastal Invasive Species and Exotic Pets Workshop in Astoria, Oregon on April 6, 2023. Photo by Courtney Gattuso.

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### Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Permit is required for all boats registered outside of Washington State

**Washington State Law** RCW 77.15.160

- All boats registered outside of Washington State **must** have an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Permit before launching in Washington waters.
- Permits cost \$24 and are valid for one year.
- Failure to have the permit may result in a \$150 fine.

**How to buy:**

- Online: [fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov](http://fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov)
- At a fishing and hunting license dealer near you: [wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/dealers](http://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/dealers)

For more information visit [wdfw.wa.gov](http://wdfw.wa.gov) or call the Aquatic Invasive Species Hotline at 888-WDFW-AIS

### Report Invasive European Green Crabs

**Step 1: Identify**

5 points on each side

Up to 4 inches wide

**Step 2: Report**

If you find a suspected European green crab or their shell, photograph it, note the location, and report it.

**Scan to report!**

[wdfw.wa.gov/greencrabs](http://wdfw.wa.gov/greencrabs)

The European green crab is a damaging invasive species that poses a threat to native shellfish and habitat for salmon and many other species. They are not always green and may be orange, red or yellow. These shore crabs are found in less than 25 feet of water often in estuaries, mudflats, and intertidal zones. They are not likely to be caught in deeper water, but may be encountered by beach anglers, waders, clam and oyster harvesters, or those crabbing off docks or piers in shallow areas. As a prohibited species, it is illegal to possess or transport live European green crabs in Washington. Swedish green crabs and private landowners in areas with European green crabs should contact WDFW for management support or permits. Please email at [ais@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:ais@dfw.wa.gov).

Individuals who need to receive this information in an alternative format, language, or who need reasonable accommodations to participate in WDFW sponsored public meetings or other activities may contact the Data Support Coordinator, Coordinator of Accessibility at 360-895-2988, TTY 771-7131 or [access@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:access@dfw.wa.gov) for more information.

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Above: EGC identification, and reporting advertisement placed in several Washington state fishing, boating and outdoors magazines and other publications to support public awareness and reporting.



# General Updates

## Opportunities to get involved

WSG and WSU Extension have launched Molt Search, a community science EGC early detection monitoring program. A workshop was held for individuals and organizations planning to hold trainings for Molt Search volunteers. Learn more and sign up for upcoming trainings at:

<https://wsg.washington.edu/crabteam/moltsearch/>

The NOAA WDVA Veterans Conservation Corps Fisheries Internship Program with the NWSC was recently announced. Learn more about this opportunity at:

<https://www.nwstraits.org/media/3370/noaa-nwsc-internshipd2023.pdf>

## Coastal EGC Local Management Grant Program

WDFW has completed soliciting applications for \$500,000 in funding available through the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Coastal Management Grant Program-European Green Crab. The \$500,000 has been fully allotted as of Feb. 13, 2023. More information is available at:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-07/Green%20Crab%20RFP-Statement%20of%20Work%20FY23%207-1-22.pdf>

WDFW is working with grantees on needs for future funding and starting to help craft budgets and review projects for the next round of funding expected July 1, 2023.

## Statewide EGC Emergency Measures Interagency Funds Program

The \$1,100,000 has been fully allotted as of Feb. 2, 2023. More information is available at:

<https://rcow.wa.gov/about-us/employment-and-contracts/> or [https://rcow.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Solicitation\\_EuropeanGreenCrabFunding.pdf](https://rcow.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Solicitation_EuropeanGreenCrabFunding.pdf). RCO and WDFW are working with grantees on needs for future finding and starting to help craft budgets and review projects for the next round of funding expected July 1, 2023.

## European Green Crab Multi-Agency Coordination Group

The European Green Crab (EGC) Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MAC Group) met twice in March and once in April. The MAC Group members discussed MAC Group composition. There is currently one seat available for a tribal nation, two seats available for support entities, one seat for Salish Sea aquaculture, and one seat open for coastal aquaculture. Upcoming workshops for the Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor Coordination Areas and development of the Fiscal Year 2024 EGC Strategic Action Plan were discussed. Theresa Thom (USFWS) provided an overview of the planning process for the updates to the national European green crab management plan. Meagan West (WDFW) provided an update on agency efforts to seek federal funding for EGC response including the letter sent to the Washington Congressional Delegation and the letter sent to NOAA. Roger Fuller (PBNERR), Leah Robinson and Allie Simpson (NWSC) provided an update on work being done in North Puget Sound Management Area. Chase Gunnell, WDFW Public Information Officer, provided an updated on EGC [communications](#), new [materials](#), and outreach to communities around western Washington.





## Science Research Task Force

The EGC Research Task Force (RTF) is now up and running. The RTF is an organization of researchers, managers, and experts on EGC from across the Pacific coast of North America. The RTF provides a forum to discuss the current state of EGC research and promote synergy in research efforts. Additionally, the RTF aims to develop a ranked list of needed EGC research with a primary focus on improving the prevention, detection, and management of EGC.

The RTF is informing management efforts in WA by developing technical thresholds for EGC impact, including a threshold at which EGC populations no longer harm environmental, economic, or cultural resources. This process includes the identification of data requirements for assessing EGC populations and for assisting in evaluating EGC population trends and impacts.

Membership in the RTF is by invitation. Participants must have active/previous involvement in EGC or similar research and be associated with EGC management efforts along the Pacific coast of North America.

## Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) National EGC Management Plan Update

ANSTF is in the process of updating their national EGC Management Plan (2002). A diverse group of state, federal, tribal, non-governmental organizations and academic experts are being led by Ted Grosholz from University of California Davis and Therese Thom from the USFWS. The group is nearing completion of this task and will be sending out a draft for public review soon.

## Management definitions

To establish common terminology and avoid confusion, the EGC ICS implemented standard EGC management definitions in March 2023. These definitions are available under the [Resources](#) section of WDFW's EGC webpage and at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/wa-european-green-crab-management-definitions-033123.pdf>

## EGC Hub Microsite

WDFW is developing a data reporting application and EGC Hub "microsite" with contractor Esri. The data reporting application seeks to streamline EGC data acquisition and management actions. The EGC Hub will have both internal and external interfaces and functions for partners and the public, including data submission, operations support, and maps and public awareness resources.

Co-managers, partners, and tribes interested in using the apps and accessing the collaborative management side of the Hub are encouraged to reach out to the EGC Team at [ais@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:ais@dfw.wa.gov).

## Communications, outreach, and community events

To raise awareness about EGC, WDFW Puget Sound Shellfish and Communications staff tabled at the Penn Cove Mussel Festival in Coupeville from March 4-5. The GHCD, with support from WDFW, had a table with EGC information at the Ocean Shores Razor Clam Festival from March 17-19. EGC Outreach Specialist Jessica Ostfeld (WDFW) presented on EGC in Washington state at the Coastal Invasive Species and Exotic Pets Workshop on April 6 in Astoria, Oregon. WSU Extension and WDFW Communications and Public Engagement staff tabled at the Long Beach Razor Clam



Festival on April 8. **At these events, more than 1,400 people were reached and outreach materials, including [EGC stickers](#), [reporting signs](#), and [identification signs](#), were distributed to attendees and local partners, shellfish growers, marinas, and other businesses.**

In addition to tabling at the Long Beach Razor Clam Festival, WDFW EGC Outreach Specialist Jessica Ostfeld visited a variety of places in and around Long Beach with Laura Kraft, Ph.D. with WSU Extension. Together, they visited locations where EGC have been found and scouted areas to post EGC reporting signs, including Leadbetter Point. Along the way, Jessica connected with community members, including shellfish farmers, store owners, and State Parks staff, providing EGC outreach materials to these individuals and organizations.

WDFW deployed new outreach materials and resources, including a [PowerPoint presentation on EGC in Washington](#), a map of [2022 EGC detections in Washington](#), [EGC Management Areas](#). A new [EGC rack card](#) and [wallet identification card](#) have been developed and are currently being printed.

Half-page print advertisements supporting EGC awareness, identification and public reporting were also published in Northwest Sportsman and Northwest Reel Life magazines, targeting anglers, crabbers, and boaters.

Please contact WDFW's EGC Outreach Specialist [jessica.ostfeld@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:jessica.ostfeld@dfw.wa.gov) to request signs, rack cards, stickers, or other materials, or to request attendance at events or outreach opportunities. Digital copies of all materials listed above are posted to the WDFW website at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/invasive/carcinus-maenas#resources>

## Public Reporting and Crab Identification

WDFW continues to receive reports from the public of native crab species misidentified for invasive European green crabs. While we appreciate the public interest in helping to identify invasive species, **these incidents are examples of why WDFW calls on the public to photograph and report suspected green crabs at: [wdfw.wa.gov/greencrab](http://wdfw.wa.gov/greencrab), returning the crab in question unharmed to the water where it was found. Most of these native crabs, including Graceful, Kelp, and Hairy shore crabs, are regulated as Unclassified Marine Invertebrates and are illegal to kill, harvest, retain, or possess.** If verified as European green crabs, WDFW will follow up with trapping and monitoring if found in a new area.

Crab identification guides and resources are also available on that [webpage](#), as well as a flier at: [https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/European\\_green\\_crab\\_reporting\\_sign\\_2022.jpg](https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/European_green_crab_reporting_sign_2022.jpg)

European green crabs are shore crabs and are found in shallow areas—typically less than 25 feet of water—including estuaries, mudflats, intertidal zones, and beaches. They are not likely to be caught by recreational shrimpers or crabbers operating in deeper water, but may be encountered by beachgoers, waders, clam and oyster harvesters, or those crabbing off docks or piers in shallow areas.

## Summary Statement for Background

On January 19, 2022, Washington State Governor Inslee issued Emergency Proclamation 22-02 which ordered the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) “to begin



implementation of emergency measures as necessary to effect the eradication of or to prevent the permanent establishment and expansion of European green crab.” This is a statewide proclamation for all marine and estuarine waters of the state that to be effective, will require coordination across state, tribal, and federal jurisdictions. To address this large and complex task, WDFW has implemented an Incident Command System (ICS) structure to facilitate a statewide European green crab (EGC) management strategy. The state Emergency Management Division has assigned this as Mission #22-1085. Since this is a relatively slower-moving emergency (as compared to earthquake or wildfire response), the ICS structure will be used as the overall framework for WDFW communications and coordination.

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**Public updates on European Green Crab Management are posted at:**

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

For more information or for media inquiries, please contact the European Green Crab Public Information Officer at [chase.gunnell@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:chase.gunnell@dfw.wa.gov) or contact [ais@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:ais@dfw.wa.gov).

Published April 26, 2023 – *Updated May 3, 2023*

