



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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Greetings coastal commercial crab and shrimp harvesters and dealers,

In July 2021 and September 2021, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) distributed a notification regarding plans to transition to mandatory use of an electronic fish ticket platform for deliveries of Dungeness crab, pink shrimp, spot shrimp, coonstripe shrimp, and sidestripe shrimp to any port in Puget Sound or on the coast. This is in addition to any fisheries which already require the use of electronic fish tickets.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission considered these proposed rule changes and took public comment at their meeting in September and after considering public input, approved the proposed changes as recommended by staff at their meeting in October. Public rulemaking actions that are currently pending can be found at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regulations/development#>.

While this rule package implements the requirement to use electronic fish tickets in all the above listed fisheries the other components of the rule package are specific to the coastal crab fishery. These are, briefly:

- elimination of the replacement buoy tag program,
- more frequent summer gear tending requirement (14 days),
- establishment of a permitting pathway for experimental gear testing,
- codification of customary 73-hour gear pre-set period,
- clarification of gear recovery rule language, and
- inclusion of potential bio-toxin delays relative to fair-start provisions.

More detailed information on these proposed rules can be found in the CR-102, available at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regulations/development/commercial-dungeness-crab-fishing-regulations>.

Moving to mandatory use of electronic fish tickets will reduce the time between when a landing is made and when catch information is available to managers, increasing efficiency for WDFW and facilitating improved management of fisheries resources.

The effective date for mandatory use of electronic fish tickets and the accompanying coastal commercial Dungeness crab rule changes listed above is January 1, 2022. Until then, coastal managers will continue allowing voluntary use of electronic fish tickets for buyers, and we will work with Puget Sound managers to provide outreach and training opportunities to buyers who have not yet been exposed to electronic fish ticket submission platforms.

WDFW is currently working on developing an electronic fish receiving ticket application (WA-Tix) for mobile devices (Android, iOS) and desktop computers that will be available to commercial buyers purchasing coastal crab or shrimp beginning January 1, 2022. Dealers already using the PSMFC application, e-tix, can continue to use it. To support a smooth transition from traditional paper fish tickets to 100% electronic fish tickets, WDFW staff will provide licensed buyers and harvesters the opportunity to participate in training and outreach events prior to January 1, 2022.

Buyers of coastal crab can provide contact details to the Department or request to be added to the shellfish industry distribution list by emailing Dan Ayres at Daniel.Ayres@dfw.wa.gov. This distribution list will be used to communicate developments on rule changes, workshops and training events related to using the Department's *Wa-Tix* application.

Additional questions regarding the mandatory use of electronic fish tickets and coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery regulation changes can be directed to:

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Sincerely,

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