



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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September 11, 2017

WASHINGTON COASTAL DUNGENESS CRAB INDUSTRY NOTICE

The 2016-17 Washington Coastal Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery ends at 11:59 pm on September 15, 2017. Fishers are reminded that all crab must be landed and all crab gear must be removed from coastal waters prior to 11:59 pm on September 15, 2017.

Beginning at 8:01 am on September 21, 2017, 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. Please note the change in time when gear recovery can begin.

WDFW is now issuing permits to coastal Dungeness crab license owners who are interested in recovering crab gear left in the ocean following the close of the 2016-17 commercial crab season. Gear recovery is permitted only through October 31, 2017.

A PERMIT IS REQUIRED to participate in this program.

- **TO REQUEST A PERMIT contact Carol Henry at 360-249-4628 ext. 254 or Carol.Henry@dfw.wa.gov**

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. Permit holders will be exempt from lost and found property laws allowing them to keep any such 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 regards to final deposition 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 Officer Paul Jacobson at 360-581-8593) prior to the vessel leaving the dock and 2-hours prior to returning to the dock during recovery operations (regardless if any gear was recovered).
- Recording all recovered gear in a special log book specific to derelict gear recovery (this log book 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 360-249-4628 extension 263 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 on line reporting form at the following link:
http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/derelict/derelict_gear.html