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## SUQUAMISH CRAB REGULATION

AFFECTED ORGANIZATIONS: WDFW, and AFFECTED TRIBES

DATE: May 12, 2026

REGULATION NUMBER 26-081S

REGULATIONS MODIFIED: 26-076S

SPECIES: Dungeness crab *Metacarcinus magister* and Red rock crab *Cancer productus*

FISHERY TYPE: Commercial and C&S

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 11, 2026

JUSTIFICATION: This regulation is made pursuant to Section 4.6 of the Shellfish Implementation Plan (April 8, 2002) to proceed with harvest in the possible absence of a state / tribes agreement for the 2026-2027 Region 4 Crab Harvest Management Plan.

### HARVEST LOCATIONS, POT LIMITS AND -SEASONS BY REGION:

This regulation lists harvest areas, harvest openings and harvest restrictions for Suquamish tribal fishers. This regulation may be amended by subsequent emergency regulations.

#### **Region 4**

#### **Catch Areas 26B and 26C**

##### ***Commercial***

Open: 10:00AM Monday, May 11

Close: 12:00PM Wednesday, May 13

Gear limit: 50 pots per boat

Harvest target: 72,000 pounds all Tribes combined

EXPECTED EFFORT: Up to 35 boats in all areas combined

##### ***Subsistence***

Open: 10:00AM Monday, May 11, 2026

Close: February 28, 2027 or when the tribal share is harvested

SUBSISTENCE LIMIT: Four pots and 6 crabs per ID holder per day unless otherwise noted. Harvesters must obtain a permit from the fisheries office.



HARVEST AREA DESCRIPTION:

**Region 4**

**Catch Area 26B:** Those waters of Puget Sound south of a line from Apple Cove Point to Edwards Point, and east of a line from Point Monroe, Bainbridge Island, to the mouth of Miller Bay, and east of a line from Beans Point on Bainbridge Island to Orchard Point, and northerly of a line from the ferry dock at Point Southworth to Brace Point.

**Catch Area 26C:** Those waters of Puget Sound westerly and adjacent to Catch Area 26B.

GEAR AND RESTRICTIONS:

- In Region 4, each unattended pot must be attached to a surface buoy which is neither red and white or yellow in color. In other regions, strings of pots may be attached to one buoy according to the specification for each regional management plan. The buoy must be clearly marked with the license holder's Tribal fishing identification number (58XXX). Lines attaching buoys to pots must be weighted sufficiently to prevent the line from floating on the surface.
- In other regions (as permitted in regional plans), each pot or string of pots (longline) must be attached to a surface buoy that is capable of floating a 5-pound weight. Buoys attached to gear used for commercial fishing can be any color or color combination except half red and half white. If red and white buoy colors are used, a minimum of 30% of the surface buoy(s) will be prominently marked with an additional color other than red and white. Buoys shall be conspicuously marked with a registered identification number.
- All crab pots must have two escape rings not less than 4 1/4 inches inside diameter. Escape rings must be located on the top half of the pot.
- Each pot must have a 3-inch by 5-inch biodegradable cord panel (natural fiber, maximum thread size 120 or approx. 1/8 inch) or a biodegradable loop attached to the pot lid hook
- Pots, ring nets, and hand-operated instruments that do not penetrate the shell are the only lawful gear for crab harvest.
- No crab gear shall be tended more than one half-hour before sunrise or more than one half-hour after sunset.
- Barging is prohibited
- All boats must use only 1 set of registered gear throughout the fishery. Each boat must set their own gear during the initial drop and must pick up their own gear at the end of the fishery. In the instance of mechanical failure, fishers must immediately notify Enforcement. Enforcement will document any breakdown including any gear lifted from or remaining in the water. Another boat or Enforcement may lift the pots but the gear may not be redeployed. If another boat in the fishery assists the boat with a mechanical failure during the fishery, the boat with the mechanical failure may keep their crab. However, if Enforcement must lift the pots, the crab may not be retained.
- All gear shall be removed from the water prior to the time of fishery closure, subject to two narrow exceptions. First, if gear cannot be lifted from the water prior to closure because of a mechanical



failure, fishers must immediately notify Enforcement. Enforcement will document any breakdown including any gear lifted from or remaining in the water. Another boat or Enforcement may lift the pots but the gear may not be redeployed. Second, if weather, wind speeds, or waves over 3 feet would make it unsafe for a boat to transport the pots, that fisher must immediately notify Enforcement. Their gear can remain in the water in non-fishing condition until it is safe to transport within a 24-hour period after the closure of the fishery.

- Fishers shall not have crab on board a vessel while recovering pots after closure of the fishery.
- It is unlawful to have on board a vessel, purchase or attempt to sell soft crab.
- There shall be no crab in transit to a buyer more than 4 hours after the close of a fishery unless otherwise notified by the fisher to Enforcement for delays due to late closures, weather, or mechanical failure requiring transit of crab to occur 4 hours after the close of the fishery.
- It is unlawful to use geoduck for bait

#### SIZE AND SEX LIMIT:

- Minimum size for male Dungeness crab is 6 1/4 inches. Minimum size is measured using a caliper across the back at the widest part of the shell immediately in front of, but not including the outside of, the tips.
- Retention of female and soft-shelled Dungeness crab is prohibited and must be released immediately.
- Male red rock crab with a carapace width or 5 inches (127 mm) or greater may be retained.

#### OTHER RESTRICTIONS:

- Fishers must have in their possession at all times a valid Suquamish fishing ID with current year shellfish sticker on the back.
- Subsistence and ceremonial harvest requires the issuance of a permit by the Suquamish Fisheries Department.
- All crab retained for personal consumption or gifts must be recorded on fish tickets as take home.
- All crab rejected from the buyer must be recorded on fish tickets as weigh back.
- All non-legal crab must be returned to the water at the location where they were harvested. It is unlawful to discard crab anywhere else.
- Dumping crab, dead or alive, after attempting to sell it is illegal.
- All boats involved in the fishery must be in good working order and have a current Coast Guard sticker.
- It is illegal for any fisherman to operate more than one vessel during this fishery.
- All boats operated by someone different than the owner shall have a current signed lease document (available at the Fisheries Department) – special consideration for direct family members only
- Any non-tribal members aboard a Suquamish registered boat must have a specific fishery observer permit and may not, under any circumstance, participate in the fishery or drive the vessel.
- It is legal to harvest and sell Red rock crab during opened fisheries, all Red rock crab must be reported on a fish ticket.



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**ENFORCEMENT CONTACT :**

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