

# **Puget Sound State Commercial Crab Packet**



**2023-2024 Season**

# 2023-2024 Puget Sound Commercial Crab Packet

## Summary of Contents

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
2023 Letter to Commercial Crab Harvesters and Dealers	<u>3</u>
Harvester Information	<u>3</u>
Dealer Information	<u>10</u>
Permanent Regulations	<u>12</u>
 Emergency Regulations to start season	 <u>15</u>
 Areas Open with Pot Limit Restrictions	 <u>19</u>
Areas Closed to Commercial Crabbing	<u>22</u>



State of Washington

**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**

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Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building 1111 Washington Street SE Olympia, WA

*October 13, 2023*

Dear Puget Sound Commercial Crab Fishers and Dealers:

This letter is to inform you of regulation changes for the 2023-2024 commercial Dungeness crab season, which begins October 20, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. for an initial 5-day opener closing on October 24, 2023, one hour after official sunset.

The current permanent fishing rules and provisions and the emergency (temporary) rules are included in this packet. The emergency rules replace specific sections of the permanent rules. Both permanent and emergency rules must be read together for a complete understanding of the regulations. Please review the regulatory provisions and the following information carefully before fishing and feel free to contact an agency employee at the contacts listed below if you have questions.

## Harvester Requirements

### **Pot limits**

Effective 8:00 a.m. October 20, 2023, until one hour after official sunset on October 24, 2023 it is unlawful for any person to fish for crabs for commercial purposes with more than the number of pots listed below per license:

<b>Region</b>	<b>Pot Limit</b>
Region 1	30 pots
Region 2-E	30 pots
Region 2-W	35 pots
Sub-region 3-1	35 pots
Sub-region 3-2	35 pots
Sub-region 3-3	35 pots
Sub-region 3-4	35 pots

Portions of Regions 2W and 3-2 will be opening to commercial harvest this season with the following additional pot limit restrictions in effect:

Region 2 West

Commercial harvest is limited to **20 pots per license in Port Townsend Bay** which consists of those waters of Marine Fish-Shellfish (MFSF) Catch Reporting Area 25D within a line projected from the Point Hudson Marina entrance to the northern tip of Indian Island, thence to Kala Point, and thence following the shoreline to the point of origin. Pot limit restrictions will be lifted after December 31, 2023, and will default to the current pot limits for the region. ([WAC 220-320-120\(5\)](#))

Sub-Region 3-2

Commercial harvest is limited to **20 pots per license within the Sequim Bay Special Management Area** which consists of all waters of Sequim Bay south of a line true west from Travis Spit to the Miller Peninsula ([WAC 220-320-120\(6\)](#)).

Commercial harvest is limited to **20 pots per license within the Discovery Bay Special Management Area** which consists of all waters of Discovery Bay south of a line from Diamond Point to Cape George ([WAC 220-320-120\(1\)\(a\)](#)).

All remaining buoy tags per license per region must be onboard the designated vessel and available for immediate inspection unless they have been requested to be used as replacement tags for lost or unrecoverable gear. *\*License owners will need to follow the requirements described in the buoy tag section of this letter to use undeployed buoy tags as replacement tags for lost or unrecoverable gear.*

Region	Included Catch Areas
Region 1	20A, 20B, 21A, 21B, 22A and 22B.
Region 2-W	25B, 25D and 26A-West.
Region 2-E	24A, 24B, 24C, 24D, and 26A-East.
Sub-region 3-1	23A and 23B.
Sub-region 3-2	23D, 25A and 25E.
Sub-region 3-3	23C-East.
Sub-region 3-4	23C-West and 29.

Please see the enclosed maps of region and catch area boundaries. Any in-season changes to regional pot limits and information about reopening regions for commercial crabbing will be announced on the website at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/pugetsound/>.

**Crab Pot Barging**

Setting crab pot gear from a vessel not designated on a crab license (“barging”) will be allowed in Regions 1, 2-East, 2-West, 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, and 3-4 ([WAC 220-340-420\(9b\)](#)).

Barging will be allowed from 8:00 a.m. on October 20, 2023 until 7:59 a.m. on October 22, 2023

provided that the operator or alternate operator designated on the license is on board the non-designated vessel and prior notice is given to WDFW.

The license owner must report crab pot barging through the license registration form available at [WDFW Puget Sound Crab Fishing Area Declaration](#) and include:

- License Owner(s)
- License Number(s)
- Primary Operator
- Alt Operator
- Buoy Brand
- Name of Barging Vessel
- Barging Vessel Coast Guard ID # or WN #
- Region or Set Location

### ***Areas Spatial Closures***

Maps showing approximate non-commercial and limited-commercial zone boundaries and descriptions of these areas are enclosed for your convenience. Note that the State commercial fishery is closed in areas designated on the maps as “Special Management Areas”. Non-commercial and limited-commercial zone boundaries and descriptions can also be found on the WDFW website at <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/pugetsound/maps-charts/>.

### ***Areas Limited Commercial Areas***

State commercial crabbing will have reduced per license pot limit in the following areas which have been designated as recreational priority areas by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission. Please reference the opening commercial rule, maps below and [WAC 220-320-120](#) for more information.

#### ***Port Townsend Bay:***

The Port Townsend CSMA is defined as those waters of Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area 25D within a line projected from the Point Hudson Marina entrance to the northern tip of Indian Island, thence to Kala Point, and thence following the shoreline to the point of origin. ([WAC 220-320-120\(5\)](#))

#### ***Discovery Bay:***

The Discovery Bay CSMA is defined as all waters of Discovery Bay south of a line from Diamond Point to Cape George. ([WAC 220-320-120\(1a\)](#))

#### ***Sequim Bay:***

The Sequim Bay CSMA is defined as all waters of Sequim Bay south of a line true west from Travis Spit to the Miller Peninsula. ([WAC 220-320-120\(6\)](#))

### ***Areas Closed to State Commercial Harvest to Promote Recreational Harvest Priority:***

State commercial crab fishing will remain closed in the following areas until further notice (See

[WAC 220-340-455\(2\)](#)) and enclosed maps, for a complete description of area boundaries):

***Port Angeles Harbor Crustacean Special Management Area:***

That portion of Marine Fish/Shellfish Catch Area 23D west of a line from the eastern tip of Ediz Hook to the ITT Rayonier Dock (Port Angeles Harbor) will be closed to commercial crab harvest this season based on recommendations from the Clallam County Department of Health and Human Services ([WAC 220-320-120\(4\)](#)).

***Dungeness Bay Crustacean Special Management Area:***

All waters of Dungeness Bay west of the  $-123.1103^{\circ}$  ( $123^{\circ}06.6'$ ) longitude line originating from the New Dungeness Light ( $48.1818^{\circ}$ ,  $-123.1103^{\circ}$ ) ([WAC 220-320-120\(2\)](#)).

***Areas Closed to State Commercial Harvest to Accommodate Tribal Exclusive Commercial Harvest:***

Tribal exclusive areas that are detailed in [WAC 220-340-455\(2\)\(a-f\)](#) remain closed to State Commercial crab harvest by permanent rule. See enclosed maps, or the [Puget Sound Commercial Crab website](#), for a complete description of area boundaries.

***Lummi Bay:***

Those waters of Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area 20A in Lummi Bay east of a line projected from Sandy Point Light No. 2 ( $48.7868^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.7124^{\circ}$ ) to Gooseberry Point ( $48.7324^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.6728^{\circ}$ ).

***Bellingham Bay:***

Those waters of Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area 21A in Bellingham Bay west of a line projected from the exposed boulder off the southeast portion of Point Francis ( $48.6973^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.6073^{\circ}$ ) to the old pilings at Stevie's Point ( $48.7765^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.5523^{\circ}$ ).

***Port Susan:***

Those waters of Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area 24B inside a line projected from Priest Point ( $48.0322^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.2274^{\circ}$ ) to the five-meter tower ( $48.0156^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.2707^{\circ}$ ) between Gedney (Hat) Island and Priest Point, thence northwesterly on a line between the five-meter tower and Barnum Point ( $48.1935^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.4625^{\circ}$ ) to the intersection ( $48.1353^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.3999^{\circ}$ ) with a line projected true west from Kayak Point ( $48.1351^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.3678^{\circ}$ ), thence east to shore.

***Swinomish Special Management Area:***

Those waters of Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area 24A east of a line projected true north from the most westerly tip of Skagit Island ( $48.4131^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.5814^{\circ}$ ) and extending south to the most westerly tip of Hope Island ( $48.3959^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.5788^{\circ}$ ), thence southeast to Seal Rocks ( $48.3737^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.5634^{\circ}$ ), thence southeast to the green can buoy (Buoy No. 5;  $48.3630^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.5510^{\circ}$ ) at the mouth of Swinomish Channel, thence easterly to the western tip of Goat Island ( $48.3630^{\circ}$ ,  $-122.5386^{\circ}$ ).

## Marine Preserves and Conservation Areas

The following marine preserves and conservation areas are closed to commercial crab harvest per [WAC 220-305-080](#). Description of marine preserves (MP) are detailed in [WAC 220-302](#) and a detailed map of marine preserve boundaries can be found at the following URL: [Marine preserves | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#). Descriptions of fish conservation areas (CA) are detailed in [WAC 220-303](#) and a detailed map of fish conservation area boundaries can be found at the following URL: [Conservation Areas | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#).

### ***False Bay MP:***

The tidelands and bedlands of False Bay on San Juan Island, including all University of Washington-owned tidelands beginning at a marker 400 feet east of the east entrance of False Bay and extending to the entrance of False Bay, all University of Washington-owned tidelands and bedlands within a line beginning at the University of Washington marker on the shore at the east entrance of False Bay, projected 500 yards offshore, thence northwesterly to a point 500 yards offshore along a line projected from a University of Washington marker on the shore at the west side of a small peninsula at the west entrance of False Bay, thence to shore along said line to the marker, and all University of Washington-owned tidelands west of the marker to a University of Washington marker 600 feet west of the small peninsula. ([WAC 220-302-100\(1\)](#)) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/false-bay>)

### ***Friday Harbor MP:***

Those tidelands and bedlands adjacent to San Juan Island within a line beginning on the shore 500 yards west of Point Caution, thence 500 yards offshore, thence south and east following the shoreline to the intersection with a line projected from a University of Washington marker located 100 feet north of the north entrance of the floating breakwater of the Port of Friday Harbor and projected towards Reid Rock Buoy, thence along said line to shore on San Juan Island. ([WAC 220-302-100\(2\)](#)) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/friday-harbor>)

### ***Argyle Lagoon MP:***

Those University of Washington-owned tidelands and all bedlands enclosed by the inner spit of Argyle Lagoon on San Juan Island. ([WAC 220-302-100\(3\)](#)) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/argyle-lagoon>)

### ***Yellow and Low Islands MP:***

All tidelands and bedlands within 300 yards of Yellow Island and 300 yards of Low Island. ([WAC 220-302-100\(4\)](#)) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/yellow-and-low-islands>)

### ***Shaw Island MP:***

Those tidelands and bedlands within a line beginning at a University of Washington marker on the shore at Hicks Bay, 122 degrees, 58 minutes, 15 seconds west longitude, thence due south 500 yards, thence north and west at a distance of 500 yards from shore to the intersection with a line projected 261 degrees true from a University of Washington marker on the shore of Parks

Bay, which line passes just south of the unnamed island at the north end of Parks Bay, thence along said line to the shore of Shaw Island, including all tidelands and bedlands of Parks Bay south of said line. ([WAC 220-302-100\(5\)](#))(  
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/shaw-island>)

***Admiralty Head MP:***

The waters and bedlands inside a line beginning at the extreme low water line on the west shore of Whidbey Island at 48°09.46'N, 122°40.88'W then northerly along the extreme low water line for 0.6 nautical miles, then due west 400 yards, then southerly parallel to the shore to a point due west of the point of origin, then due east to the point of origin. ([WAC 220-302-010](#))  
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/admiralty-head>)

***Keystone CA:***

All bedlands and tidelands and the waters over these starting at the extreme high water line on the east side of the Keystone jetty in Fort Casey State Park then easterly along the extreme high water line to a line projected from shore through the easternmost row of pilings of the old military wharf, then offshore along that line southeasterly for 600 feet, then southwest parallel to the shoreline to a point due south of the southern tip of the jetty, then north to the extreme high water line on the southern tip of the jetty, then along the extreme high water line on the east side of the jetty to the point of origin. ([WAC 220-303-030](#))  
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/conservation-areas/keystone>)

***Brackett's Landing Shoreline Sanctuary CA:***

Those bed lands and tidelands owned by the City of Edmonds at Brackett's Landing Shoreline Sanctuary, and the water column above these bed lands and tidelands including all of the area known as Edmonds Underwater Park. ([WAC 220-303-010](#))  
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/conservation-areas/bracketts-landing-shoreline-sanctuary>)

**Buoy Tags**

Buoy tags are issued as a single-year tag. The permanent regulations addressing the use of buoy tags are included with this letter ([WAC 220-340-430](#), [WAC 220-340-440](#)) .

***Replacement Buoy Tags***

Starting in the 2023-2024 season, unique replacement buoy tags will no longer be issued by licensing. To replace tags for lost or unrecoverable gear, license owners or designated alternate operators must submit a report to fishery managers detailing the gear that was lost asking for permission to use undeployed buoy tags in lieu of replacement tags. You will receive a confirmation once we receive your lost gear report. You may then use undeployed buoy tags (“dash tags”) as replacement tags. Your remaining “dash tags” and confirmation reports must equal the difference between 100 and the pot limit in the Region you are fishing per license, including the number of buoy tags requested to replace lost gear (i.e. replacement tags). Replacement tags in excess of the 100 buoy tags issued per license will only be issued on a case-by-case basis due to undue hardship.



*Example scenario:* A harvester with one license (has 100 tags) is fishing an area with a 30-pot limit. They have 30 pots deployed. After a couple of weeks, the harvester loses 5 pots and submits a report for those pots. The harvester receives a confirmation email with a summary of that gear loss of 5 pots. They then use 5 dash tags to deploy another 5 pots so that they have 30 total pots fishing again. Now, they have 65 dash tags and a report of 5 lost pots to account to 100 for their license.

To report lost gear: [Buoy Tag Replacement Report](#)



### **Area Declaration Requirements**

Puget Sound commercial crab license holders, or their designated alternate operators, are required to register which Crab Management Area that gear will be deployed in for each license they hold ([WAC 220-352-340\(1\)](#)). Declarations are required during the following conditions:

- prior to the season start,
- before gear is moved between management regions, and/or
- if a license or vessel ceases to fish longer than 72 hours / stacks out.

This declaration process allows managers to determine expected effort in an area prior to a fishery opening and allows effort to be tracked over the season for improved quota management.

Registrations can be made by registering on the WDFW Puget Sound commercial crabbing webpage or on your mobile device with the link/QR code below. Include the following information **per license fished**:

- (a) vessel operator name
- (b) vessel name and vessel registration number
- (c) permit number(s) to be fished
- (d) Crab Management Area to be fished
- (e) gear deployment date

[WDFW Puget Sound Crab Fishing Area Declaration](#)



## **Harvester Stored Crab Reporting Requirements**

WDFW crab managers will be tracking the amount of crab that is harvested and stored off a vessel for sale at a future date. Harvesters are required to follow stored harvest reporting and catch labelling requirements ([WAC 220-340-420](#), [WAC 220-352-340](#)). An electronic form is available on the Puget Sound commercial crabbing website to complete the required stored crab reports. A scannable code to the electronic reporting form has also been provided below.

### **Labelling**

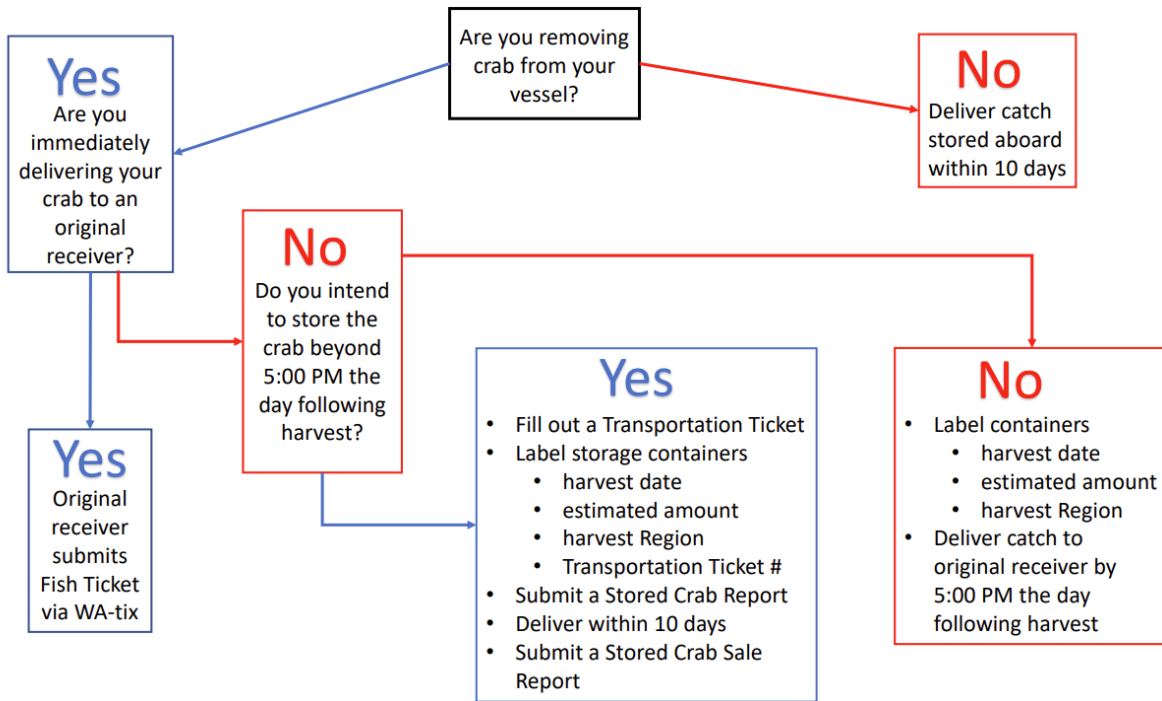
All crab removed from a vessel must be stored in containers and **immediately labelled** with the following information.

- (a) date of harvest,
- (b) an estimate of pounds of crab contained,
- (c) either the Marine Fish-Shellfish (MFSF) Catch Reporting Area or the Crab Management Region the catch originated from.

If a fisher does not intend to make a sale of stored crab by 5:00 PM the day following harvest, the container must also be labelled with the associated commercial fish and shellfish transportation ticket number and reported with the electronic Stored Crab Report Form (accessible with QR code and link).

### **Stored Crab Reporting**

Stored crab labeling and reporting are required by the department to ensure accurate catch estimation and accountability of catch retained by license holders. These reporting requirements allow the department to track catch more accurately and maximize all available commercial opportunities. Below is a detailed decision tree describing when labeling, reporting, and sale of stored crab is required.



### ***Stored Crab Harvest Report***

Commercial harvesters of Puget Sound crab must deliver all crab removed from their vessel to a licensed original receiver by 5:00 PM following the day of harvest or submit a report of crab retained for delivery at a future date to the Department. Reports must be received by 10:00 AM the day following removing the crab from the vessel for storage. Reports can be submitted online using the link below and will contain the following information:

- (a) harvester name,
- (b) WDFW issued vessel ID,
- (c) Puget Sound commercial license number(s),
- (d) date of harvest,
- (e) an estimate of pounds of harvest retained by Crab Management Region or Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area, and
- (f) a commercial fish and shellfish transportation ticket number.

### ***Stored Crab Sale Report***

Commercial harvesters are also required to report the delivery of crab to an original receiver that were previously stored. These reports are due by 10:00 AM the day following the delivery. The sale of stored crab can be reported using the online form and will contain the following information.

- (a) vessel name,
- (b) harvester name,

- (c) Puget Sound commercial license number,
- (d) date of delivery,
- (e) dealer name
- (f) commercial shellfish transportation ticket number(s) delivered, and
- (g) fish receiving ticket number(s) corresponding to landing.

*An example scenario:* A fisher harvests 400 pounds of crab from Region 1 on a single day and decides to retain the catch for 3 to 4 days prior to making a sale. The harvester removes the crab from the vessel and labels each storage container with the date of harvest, number of pounds in the container and the harvest region. Additionally, a transportation ticket is filled out and each container labelled with the transportation ticket number associated with that day's catch. By 10:00 AM the following day, the fisher reports the stored crab associated with that transportation ticket to the Department via the online Puget Sound commercial crab reporting form. When the stored crab is finally delivered, the fisher reports the sale of those crab by submitting another online report, providing the transportation ticket number and Fish Receiving Ticket number along with the harvester and dealer information.

A single delivery to an original receiver may include catch held from multiple days of storage and require reporting multiple transportation tickets. All transportation tickets associated with a delivery need to be reported.

The electronic reporting form for retention and sale of stored crab can be accessed by scanning the QR code below with your mobile device or by clicking on the link on your mobile device or computer.

### [Stored Crab Electronic Reporting Form](#)



If you plan to store crab during the 2023-2024 season and need a book of transportation tickets, contact Karen Nordstrom at (360) 535-4621 or Brad Speidel at (253) 263-5560. Please sure to provide your name and complete mailing address.

### **Buoy Color and Pattern Registration**

Buoy colors are not required to be reported in Puget Sound for the 2023-2024 commercial crab

season. For the current season, this will be **voluntary for Puget Sound harvesters**. Buoy color registration will become a mandatory reporting requirement for the 2024-2025 season. In anticipation of the future requirement for participants of the Puget Sound commercial crab fishery to register buoy colors and patterns, we have put together a draft form that will help harvesters report their buoy descriptions to Department crab managers.

Please look at the form and provide any feedback to Department staff. The form is designed to be used on your mobile device so that images of buoys can be captured. To access the form, scan the QR code below with your mobile device or click on the link on your mobile device.

### **[Buoy Color-Pattern Registration](#)**



### **Commercial Dockside Sampling**

The Department will continue to conduct biological sampling of non-treaty commercial catch of Dungeness crab at the top of the dock and at individual dealer's holding facilities. Commercial license holders and dealers are reminded that the department has the authority to sample commercial catch per [RCW 77.12.071](#).

### **Voluntary Commercial Ride-Alongs**

The department is seeking volunteers that are willing to have department staff on-board their vessel to collect biological and catch information. Commercial ride-along data is used to inform spatial and temporal patterns of catch throughout Puget Sound, characterize the shell condition of the resource, inform abundance increases, and learn more about the fishery as it is practiced. If you interested or willing in having department staff on-board while you are fishing, please contact the crustacean team.

### **Crab Dealer Requirements**

#### **Electronic Fish Tickets – WA-Tix**

All dealers purchasing **non-treaty** landings of crab or shrimp in Puget Sound or on the Washington coast are required to use an electronic fish ticket system ([WAC 220-352-035](#)). Dealers buying PS commercial crab must complete and submit fish tickets using either the WDFW-supported [WaTix Electronic Fish Ticket Reporting System](#) or [E-Tix electronic system](#)

supported by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSFMC). Because the majority of landings are made at the dock and not a centralized facility, we are recommending that Puget Sound Crab buyers complete and submit electronic fish tickets using the WaTix application which is designed for use on mobile devices. The application is available for iOS and Android operating systems. A desktop, web-based application is also available to WaTix users.

Please visit the [WaTix Electronic Fish Ticket Reporting System](#) website for information on how to download the application, how to activate your account with the Department, view upcoming training dates and review 'how-to' user guides. The Department has created a WaTix user hotline and support email to direct questions about the mobile applications or the desktop software. The hotline and email can also be used to activate your WaTix user account.

For WaTix questions or technical issues contact user support at [watixsupport@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:watixsupport@dfw.wa.gov) or call (360) 480-1675.

**Fish ticket receiving forms for landings conducted using a mobile device are required to be filled out immediately after the catch has been transferred from the harvester to the original receiver and submitted before the buyer leaves the delivery location.** In the event that a cellular or broadband outage occurs at the delivery site, the original receiver must submit a ticket immediately upon regaining access to a cellular or broadband connection.

If you are unable to complete and submit an electronic fish ticket within 24 hours, contact WDFW crab fishery management staff to help you troubleshoot the issue and/or advise you on how to submit the landing information to the Department.

Puget Sound Crab Fishery Management Contacts:

WaTix Support – (360) 480-1675  
Daniel Sund - (360) 302-6372  
Brad Speidel - (253) 263-5560  
Katelyn Bosley - (360) 302-6053

**Landings submitted to and received by the Department using an electronic fish ticket application do not need to be quick reported ([WAC 220-352-340 \(2\)\(c\)](#)).**

**DO NOT QUICK REPORT LANDINGS SUBMITTED TO AN ELECTRONIC FISH TICKET APPLICATION.**

According to [WAC 220-352-340](#), it is unlawful for any original receiver of crab to fail to record **ALL** crab aboard the vessel making the delivery to the original receiver. The poundage of any crab deemed to be unmarketable, discards, weigh backs and/or reserved as for take home by the harvester must be shown on the fish receiving ticket, but a zero-dollar value should be entered for such crab. Crab that are recorded as take home should also have the number of crab recorded on the fish ticket in the “COUNT” field.

**Commercial Dockside Sampling**

The Department will continue to conduct biological sampling of non-treaty commercial catch of Dungeness crab at the top of the dock and at individual dealer’s holding facilities. Commercial license holders and dealers are reminded that the department has the authority to sample commercial catch per [RCW 77.12.071](#).

**Information and In-season Updates**

In the interest of conducting more efficient business practices, this information is also posted in the WDFW website’s commercial section. The Puget Sound Commercial crabbing website will be regularly updated with season information, harvest numbers, detailed maps of special harvest zones, and current emergency regulations.

**WDFW Website for the Commercial Crab Fishery:**

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/crab/pugetsound/>

If you need a printed copy of this information packet, please call (360) 302-3030 x321 with your request and be sure to leave your name and mailing address.

Have a safe and productive season.

Sincerely,

**Daniel Sund**

Puget Sound Commercial Crustacean Biologist, (360) 302-3672  
Port Townsend

**Katelyn Bosley**

Puget Sound Crustacean Lead, (360) 302-3030 x319  
Port Townsend

**Brad Speidel**

Puget Sound Shellfish Biologist, (253) 263-5560  
Port Townsend

cc: Aaron Dufault, Puget Sound Shellfish Manager  
WDFW Enforcement

**See also:**

- Map of Shellfish Management [Regions](#)
- Maps of [Areas Closed to Commercial Crabbing](#)
- Emergency [Regulations](#)
- Permanent Regulations:

- [WAC 220-301-040](#)
- [Chapter 220-302 WAC](#)
- [Chapter 220-303 WAC](#)
- [WAC 220-305-080](#)
- [WAC 220-320-060](#)
- [WAC 220-320-100](#)
- [WAC 220-320-110](#)
- [WAC 220-340-020](#)
- [WAC 220-340-060](#)
- [WAC 220-340-400](#)
- [WAC 220-340-410](#)
- [WAC 220-340-420](#)
- [WAC 220-340-430](#)
- [WAC 220-340-435](#)

- [WAC 220-340-440](#)
- [WAC 220-340-455](#)
- [WAC 220-340-470](#)
- [WAC 220-352-010](#)
- [WAC 220-352-020](#)
- [WAC 220-352-060](#)
- [WAC 220-352-130](#)
- [WAC 220-352-140](#)
- [WAC 220-352-160](#)
- [WAC 220-352-210](#)
- [WAC 220-352-220](#)
- [WAC 220-352-230](#)
- [WAC 220-352-250](#)
- [WAC 220-352-340](#)



## Opening Emergency Regulation

ORDER NO. 23-231

### NEW SECTION

#### **WAC 220-320-12000B Commercial crab fishery--Puget Sound Crustacean (crab and shrimp) Special Management Areas.**

Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-320-120, effective immediately, until further notice:

Dungeness Bay CSMA is defined as: all waters of Dungeness Bay west of the -123.1103° (123°06.6') longitude line originating from the New Dungeness Light (48.1818°, -123.1103°).

### NEW SECTION

#### **WAC 220-330-02000E Crab, shrimp, crawfish—Gear and gear-related unlawful acts. General gear requirements:**

Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-330-020, effective immediately, until further notice:

- (1) Buoys must remain visible on the surface at all times, except during extreme tidal conditions, or unless otherwise authorized under a permit issued by the director.
- (2) Fishers shall use only the amount of line reasonably necessary to compensate for tides, currents, and weather.
- (3) It is unlawful to use gear that has one or more line marks or to use multicolor line consistent with requirements for any other state or federally managed commercial fishery operating in the U.S. West Coast Exclusive Economic Zone, or in the state waters of Washington, Oregon, or California.

### NEW SECTION

#### **WAC 220-340-43000B Commercial crab fishery—Gear requirements.**

Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-340-430, effective immediately, until further notice:

- (1) In Puget Sound, except if authorized by permit issued by the director, all crab buoys must have the department-issued buoy tag attached to the outermost end of the buoy line.
- (2) All remaining, undeployed buoy tags per license per region must be onboard the designated vessel and available for immediate inspection by the department, except under the following conditions: The holder or alternate operator of a Puget Sound crab license has declared, as permitted under subsection (3), that deployed tags have been lost and are unrecoverable, under penalty of perjury, and has been granted permission by the department to use undeployed buoy tags as a replacement.

- (3) Puget Sound replacement crab buoy tag requirements are as follows: Puget Sound commercial crab license holders are required to request permission to use undeployed buoy tags in the event deployed buoy tags are lost and are unrecoverable. Requests to use undeployed buoy tags must state the number of buoy tags lost, the location and date where the licensee last observed lost gear or tags, and the presumed cause of the loss. Requests must be made using a department provided electronic form.

**NEW SECTION**

**WAC 220-340-45500X Commercial crab fishery--Seasons and areas--Puget Sound.**

Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-340-455, effective October 20 through October 24, 2023:

- (1) Harvest of Dungeness crab in Puget Sound is permitted during the “Open period” indicated in the following table. On the opening date harvest will be permitted starting at 8:00 a.m. Harvest for these areas after the opening date is permitted starting one hour before official sunrise until further notice. Any closures will take effect one hour after official sunset unless otherwise indicated.

<b>Geographical Management Unit (WAC 220-320-110)</b>	<b>Open Period</b>
Region 1, MFSF Catch Areas 21A, 21B, and 22B	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Region 1, Marine Fish-Shellfish Catch Areas 22A, 20A, and 20B	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Region 2E, excluding Everett Flats CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (3))	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Region 2E, Everett Flats CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (3))	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Region 2W, not including Port Townsend Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (5))	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Region 2W, Port Townsend Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (5))	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Subregion 3-1	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Subregion 3-2, not including Discovery Bay CSMA (WAC 220-230-120 (1)(a)), Sequim Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (6)), or the Port Angeles Harbor CSMA (WAC 220-320-120(4)).	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Subregion 3-2, Discovery Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (1)(a))	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Subregion 3-2, Sequim Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (6))	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Subregion 3-2, the Port Angeles Harbor CSMA (WAC 220-320-120(4)).	Closed, due to on-going public health concerns.
Subregion 3-3	October 20 through October 24, 2023
Subregion 3-4	October 20 through October 24, 2023

- (2) The area closed to commercial harvest in WAC 220-340-455 (2)(c) is amended to be: Those waters of Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area 21A in Bellingham Bay west of a line

projected from the exposed boulder off the southeast portion of Point Francis (48.6973°, -122.6073°) to the old pilings at Stevie's Point (48.7765°, -122.5523°).

**NEW SECTION**

**WAC 220-340-47000U Commercial crab fishery – Gear limits – Puget Sound and Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Areas.**

Notwithstanding the provisions of 220-340-470, effective October 20 through October 24, 2023:

Effective during the “Open period” listed in WAC 220-340-45500X , it is unlawful for any person to harvest crabs with more than the “Pot limit” per license per buoy tag number indicated within each “geographical management unit”.

<b>Geographical Management Unit (WAC 220-320-110)</b>	<b>Pot limit</b>
Region 1, MFSF Catch Areas 21A, 21B, and 22B	30
Region 1, Marine Fish-Shellfish Catch Areas 22A, 20A, and 20B	30
Region 2E, excluding Everett Flats CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (3))	30
Region 2E, Everett Flats CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (3))	30
Region 2W, not including Port Townsend Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (5))	35
Region 2W, Port Townsend Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (5))	20
Subregion 3-1	35
Subregion 3-2, not including Discovery Bay CSMA (WAC 220-230-120 (1)(a)), Sequim Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (6)), or the Port Angeles Harbor CSMA (WAC 220-320-120(4)).	35
Subregion 3-2, Discovery Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (1)(a))	20
Subregion 3-2, Sequim Bay CSMA (WAC 220-320-120 (6))	20
Subregion 3-2, the Port Angeles Harbor CSMA (WAC 220-320-120(4)).	0
Subregion 3-3	35
Subregion 3-4	35

**NEW SECTION**

**WAC 220-352-06000A Completion, submission, distribution, and retention of copies of nontreaty fish receiving tickets.**

Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-352-060, effective immediately, until further notice:

- (1) Original receivers must complete state of Washington nontreaty fish receiving tickets by recording the delivery amount using the appropriate weight or quantity measure for all fish or shellfish at the conclusion of the offload and prior to the fish or shellfish being processed or transported away from the delivery site.
- (2) Original receivers who are required to submit fish receiving tickets using an electronic form under WAC 220-352-035 (2) must:
  - (a) For deliveries completed on a mobile device, original receivers are required to fill out an electronic fish ticket form at the delivery location and submit it immediately following the completion of the delivery of fish or shellfish before leaving the delivery location. In the event of a cellular or broadband outage or lack of service at the delivery site, the original

receiver must submit the ticket immediately upon regaining access to a cellular or broadband connection following the completion of the delivery.

- (b) For deliveries of fish and shellfish made to original receivers using a non-mobile device or desktop electronic fish ticket form, the original receiver must submit the ticket within 24 hours after the delivery is completed except:

For deliveries of coastal Dungeness crab, the original receiver must submit the ticket by the close of the next business day after the delivery is complete.

- (c) Submit the ticket in compliance with the timely reporting conditions set forth in the electronic fish receiving ticket reporting agreement if reporting voluntarily under WAC 220-352-035(3).

**Reasons for this finding:** The provisions of this emergency rule:

**WAC 220-320-12000B**

Amends the boundary of the Dungeness Bay CSMA to match what will be implemented by permanent rule.

**WAC 220-330-02000E**

- (1) Implements a permitting exemption to the requirement that buoys remain on the surface that will be implemented by permanent rule.
- (2) Implements a requirement requiring that gear used match the depth and conditions that will be implemented by permanent rule.
- (3) Implements a restriction preventing the use of gear that has been marked in accordance with the requirements of another fixed gear fishery on the West Coast.

**WAC 220-340-43000B**

- (1) Clarifies where buoy tags must be attached on commercial crab gear fished in Puget Sound.
- (2) Implements an exception to the undeployed buoy tag requirement to permit their use as replacement tags that will be implemented in permanent rule.
- (3) Implements a replacement tag request process in order to use undeployed buoy tags to replace lost and unrecoverable gear that will be implemented in permanent rule.

**WAC 220-340-45500X**

- 1) Opens Puget Sound commercial crab harvest in Crab Management Regions 1, 2-East, 2-West, 3-1, 3-2, 3-3 and 3-4 at 8:00 a.m. on October 20, 2023 through October 24, 2023.
- 2) Closes Port Angeles Harbor to commercial crab harvest due to public health decrees.
- 3) Amends the Bellingham Bay tribal exclusive area to match what will be implemented in permanent rule.

**WAC 220-340-47000U**

Sets reduced pot limits by area for Puget Sound commercial crab harvest effective the dates listed in the amended section of WAC 220-340-455.

**WAC 220-352-06000A**

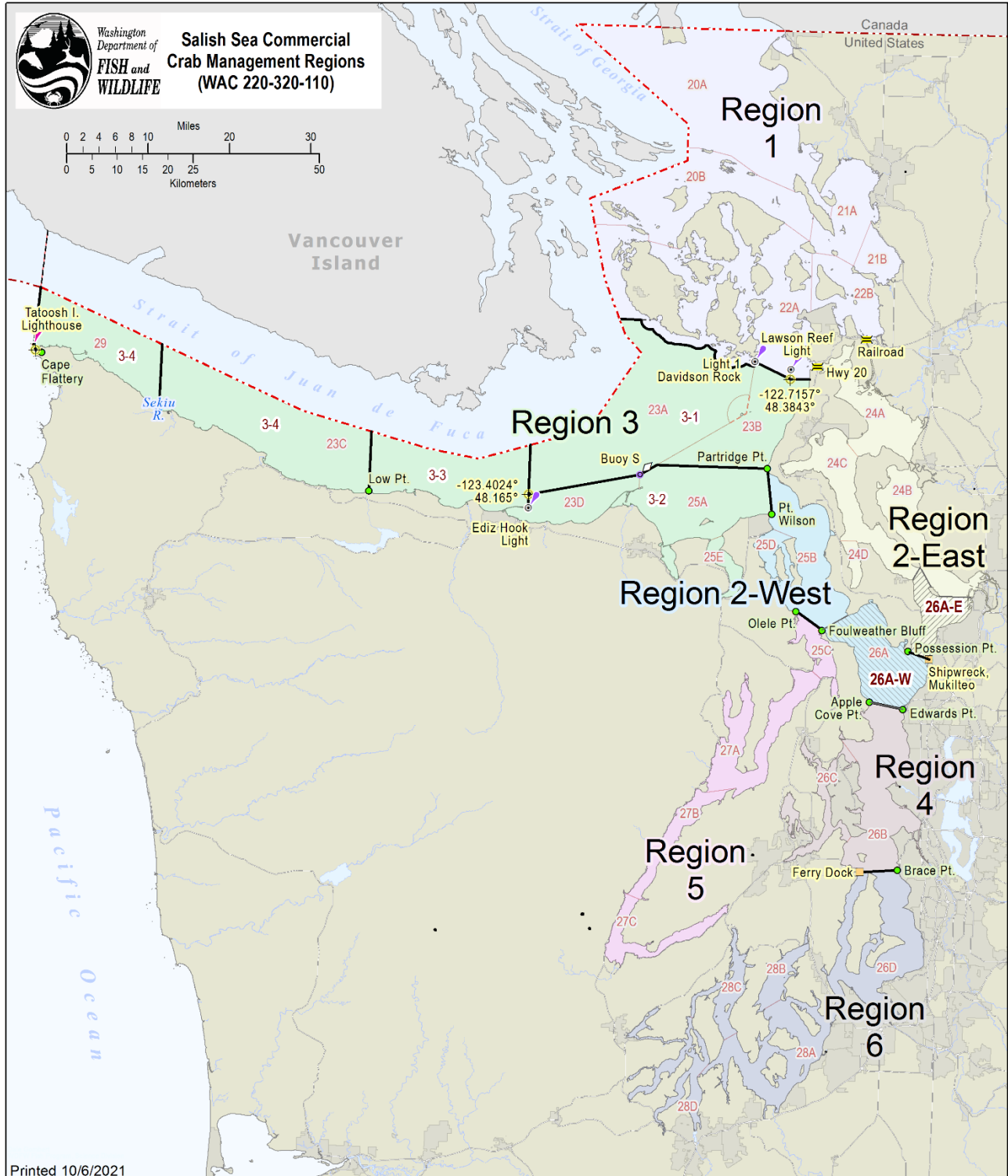
- (1) Expands definition of landings to include shellfish that will be implemented via permanent rule.
- (2) Clarifies fish ticket completion and submission requirements for original receivers making landings on mobile devices and non-mobile electronic platforms.

There is sufficient allocation remaining to open the Puget Sound commercial crab fishery in Regions 1, 2-East, 2-West, 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, and 3-4, at 8:00 am on October 20, 2023 until October 24, 2023 one-hour after official

sunset. These provisions are in conformity with agreed co-management plans. Co-management plans are entered into as required by court order. The Puget Sound commercial season is structured to meet harvest allocation objectives negotiated with applicable Treaty tribes and outlined in the management plans. There is insufficient time to adopt permanent rules. Further adjustment of season structure may be made pending updated harvest data. **(23-231, 10/13/2023)**

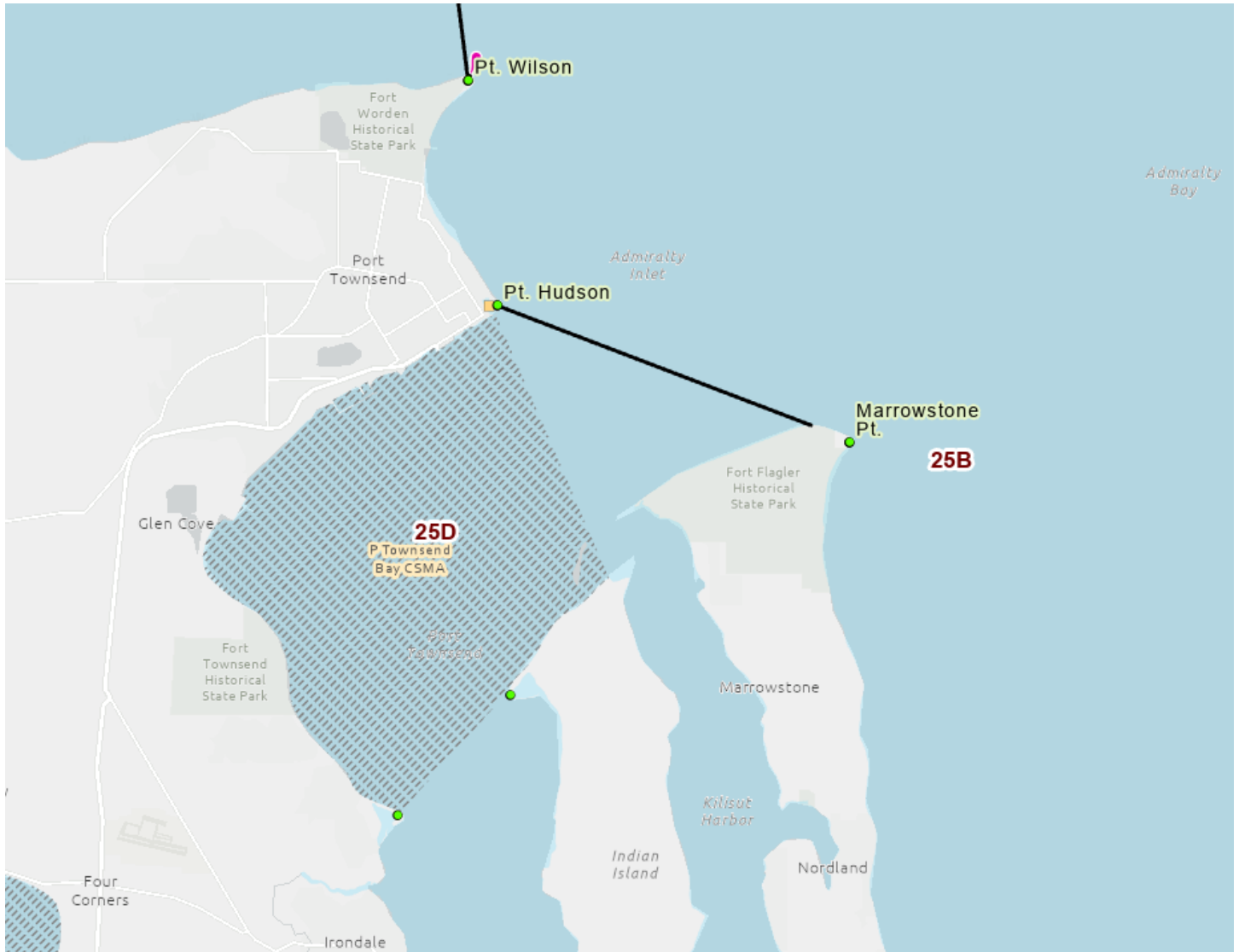
# Maps

## Puget Sound Crab Regions and MFSF Catch Areas



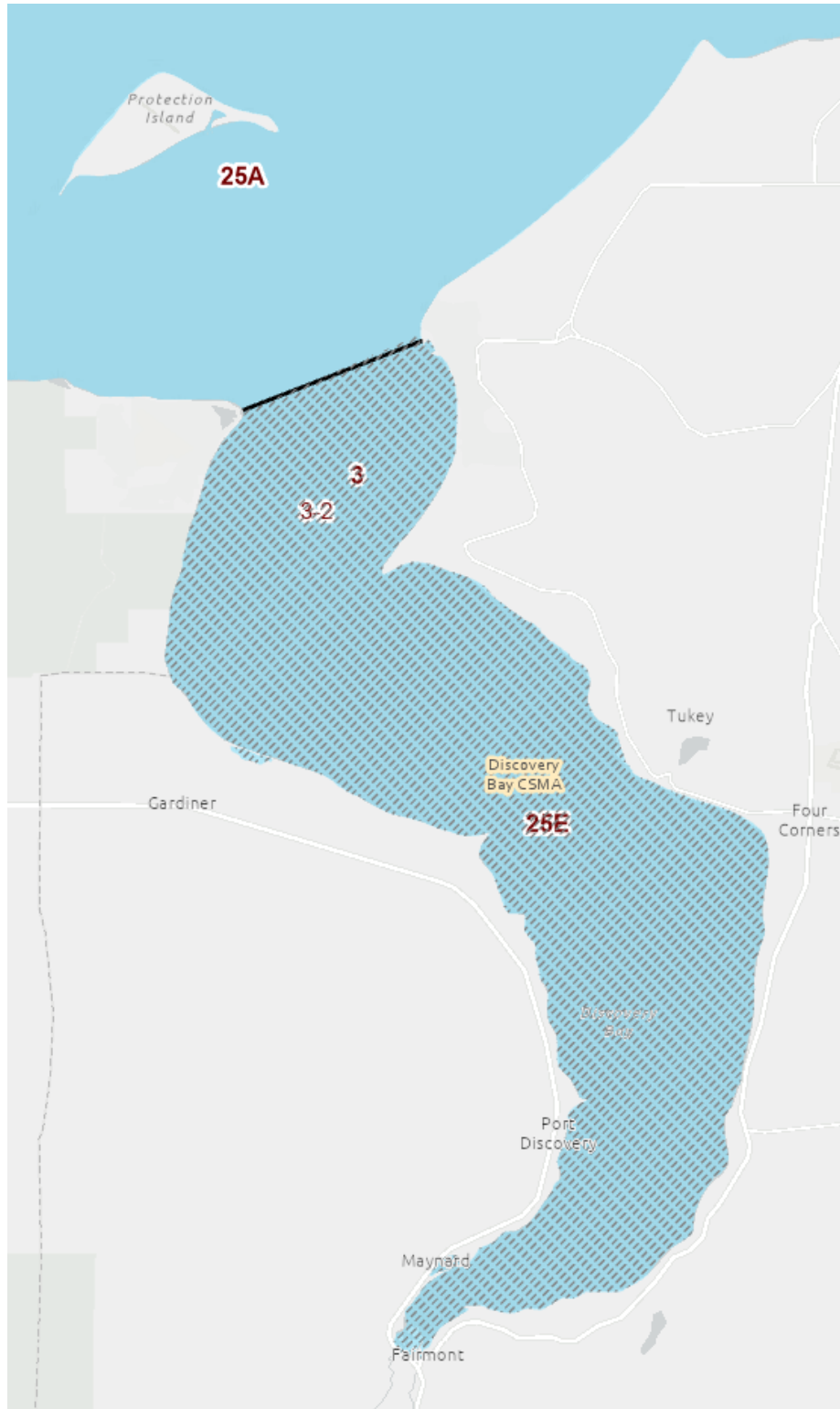
## Areas Open with Pot Limit Restrictions

### Port Townsend Bay CSMA



The Port Townsend CSMA is defined as those waters of Marine Fish-Shellfish Management and Catch Reporting Area 25D within a line projected from the Point Hudson Marina entrance to the northern tip of Indian Island, thence to Kala Point, and thence following the shoreline to the point of origin. [WAC 220-320-120\(5\)](#)

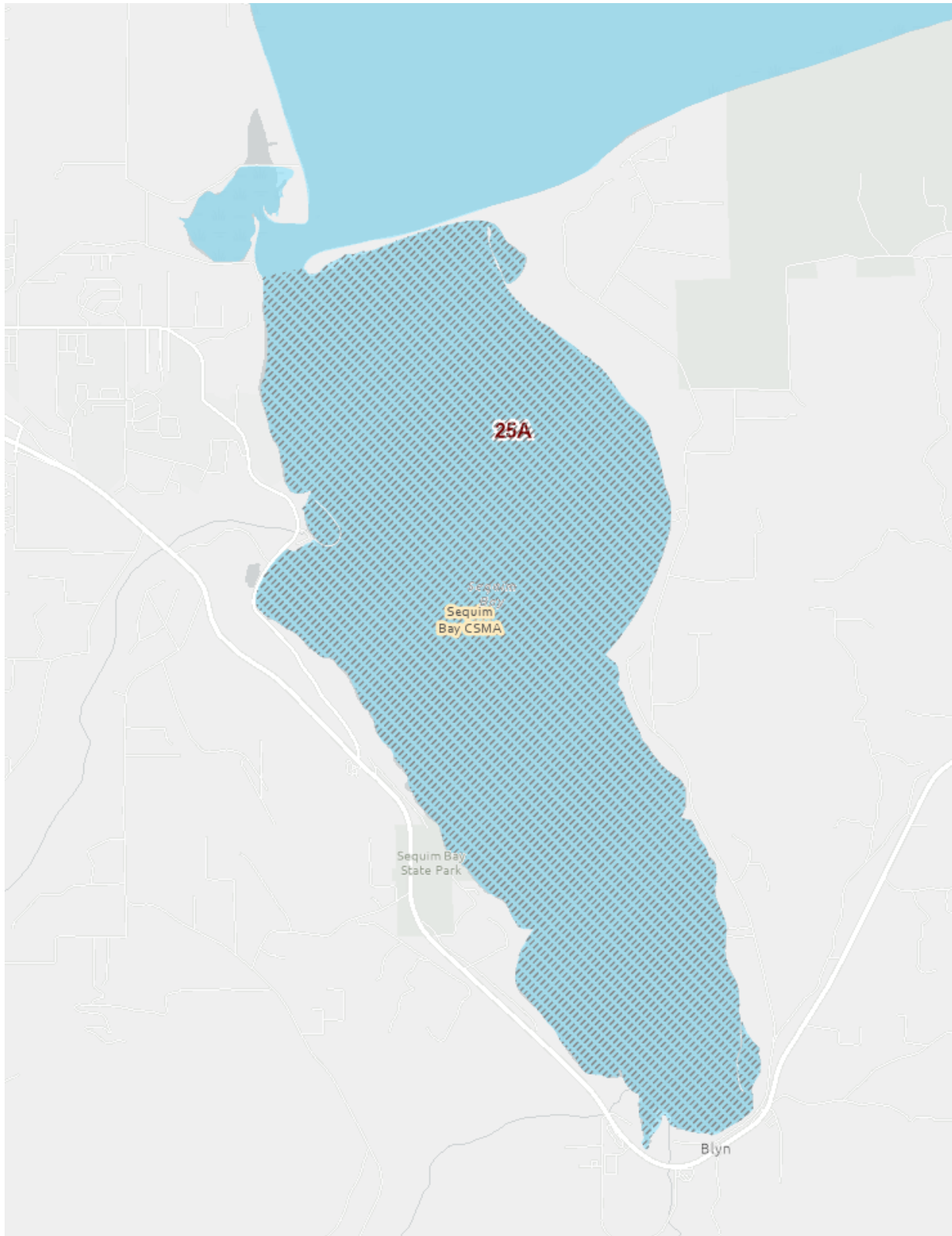
## Discovery Bay CSMA



The Discovery Bay CSMA is defined as all waters of Discovery Bay south of a line from Diamond Point to Cape George. [WAC 220-320-120\(1a\)](#)



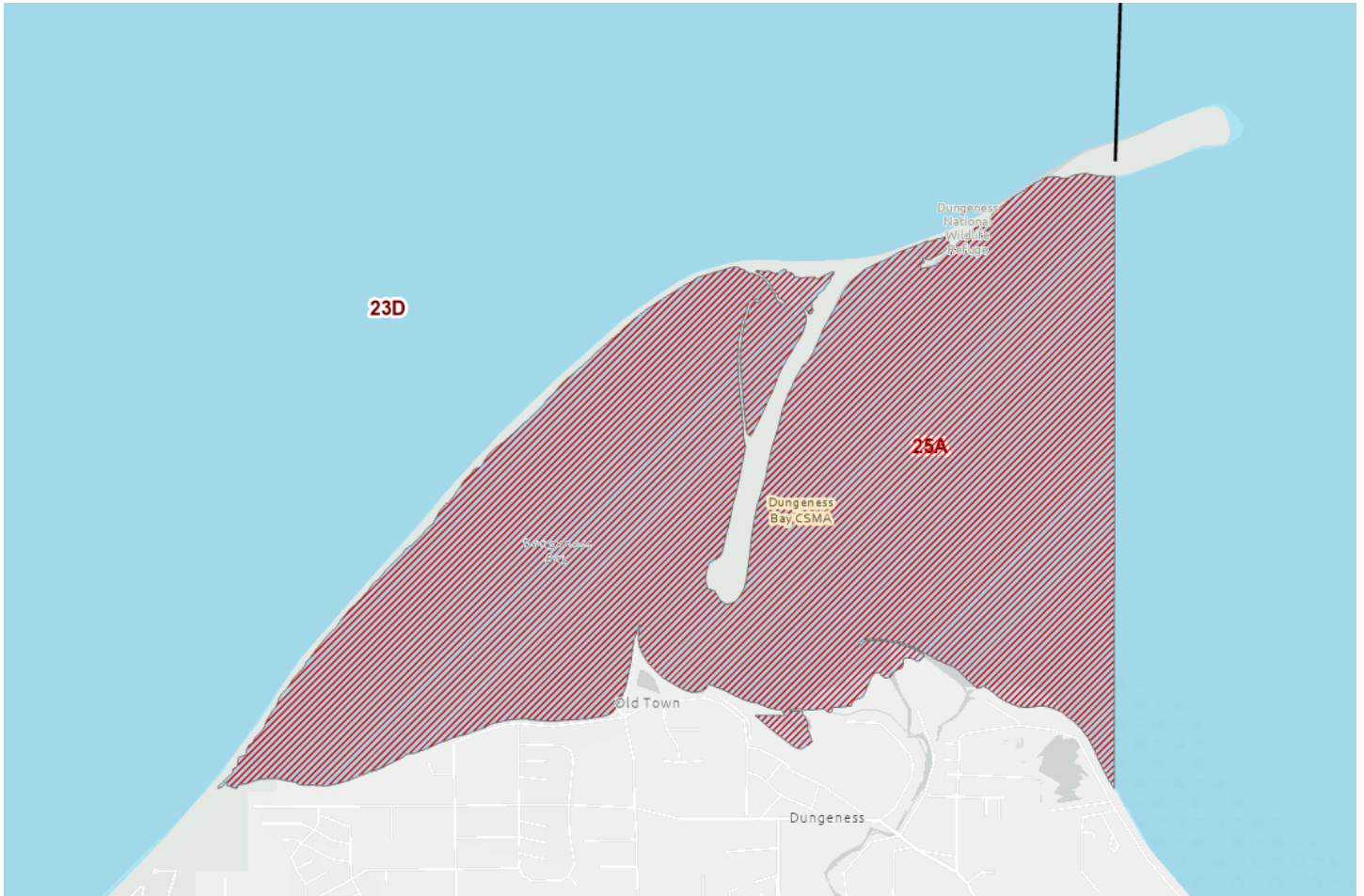
## Sequim Bay CSMA



The Sequim Bay CSMA is defined as all waters of Sequim Bay south of a line true west from Travis Spit to the Miller Peninsula. [WAC 220-320-120\(6\)](#)

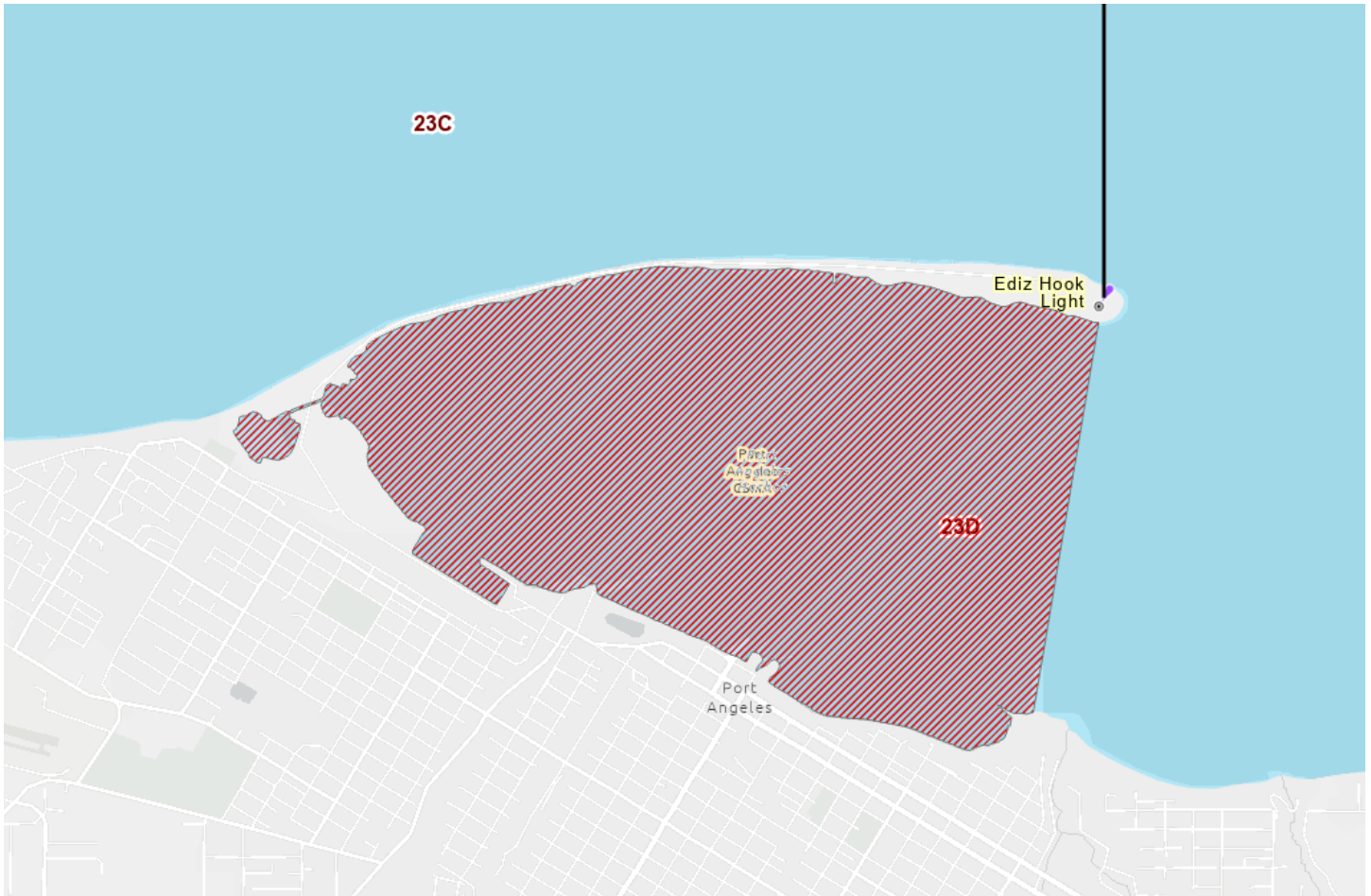
## Special Management Areas Closed to Commercial Crabbing

### Dungeness Bay CSMA



The Dungeness Bay CSMA includes all waters of Dungeness Bay west of the 123° 6.60' Longitude line originating from the New Dungeness Light (48° 10.90'N, 123° 6.6'W). [WAC 220-320-120\(2\)](#)

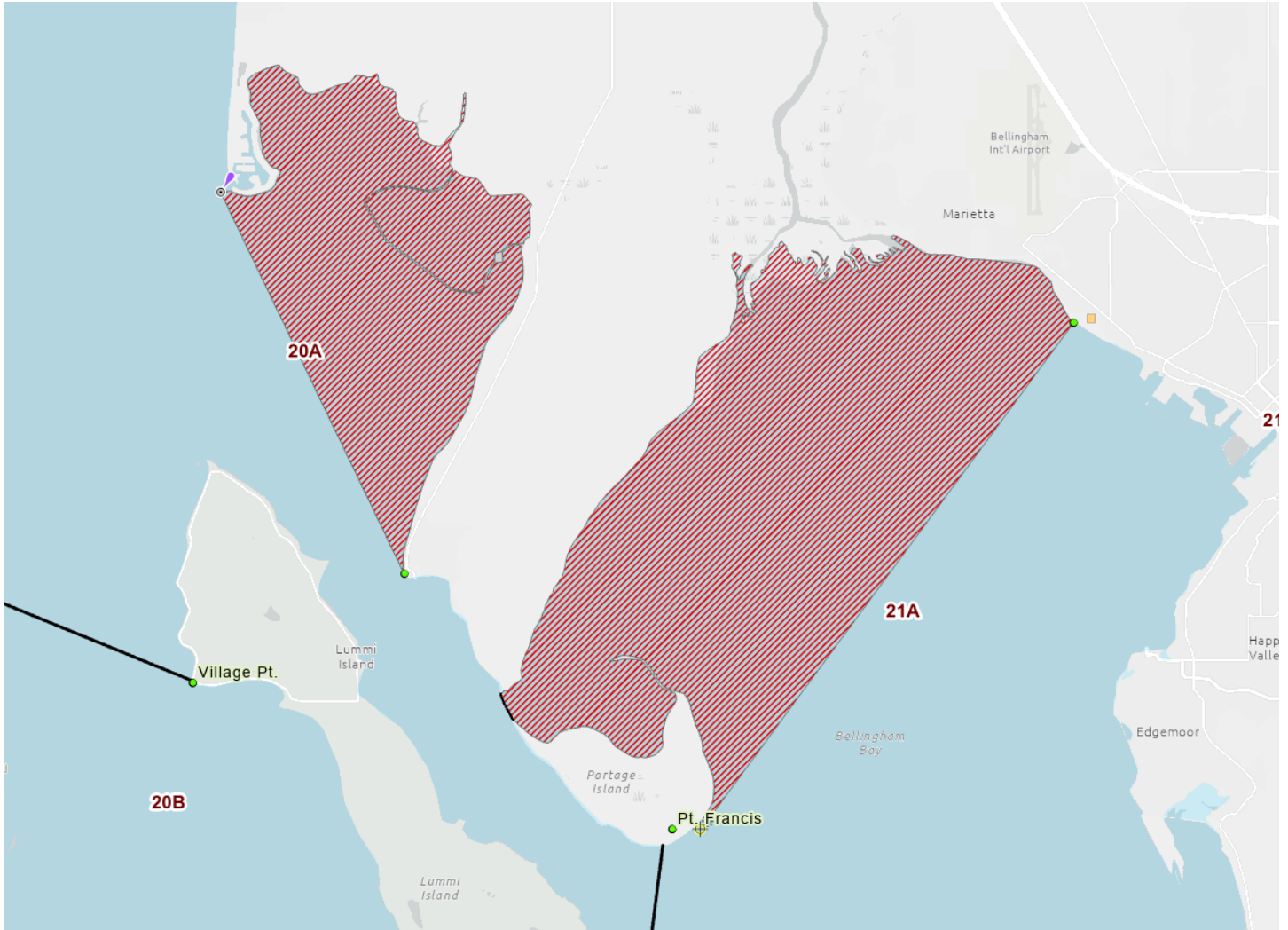
## Port Angeles Harbor CSMA



The Port Angeles Harbor CSMA is defined as that portion of Marine Fish-Shellfish Catch Area 23D west of a line from the Ediz Hook Light (48.1400°, -123.4025°) to the site of the ITT Rayonier Dock (48.1169°, -123.4083°). [WAC 220-320-120](#) (4)

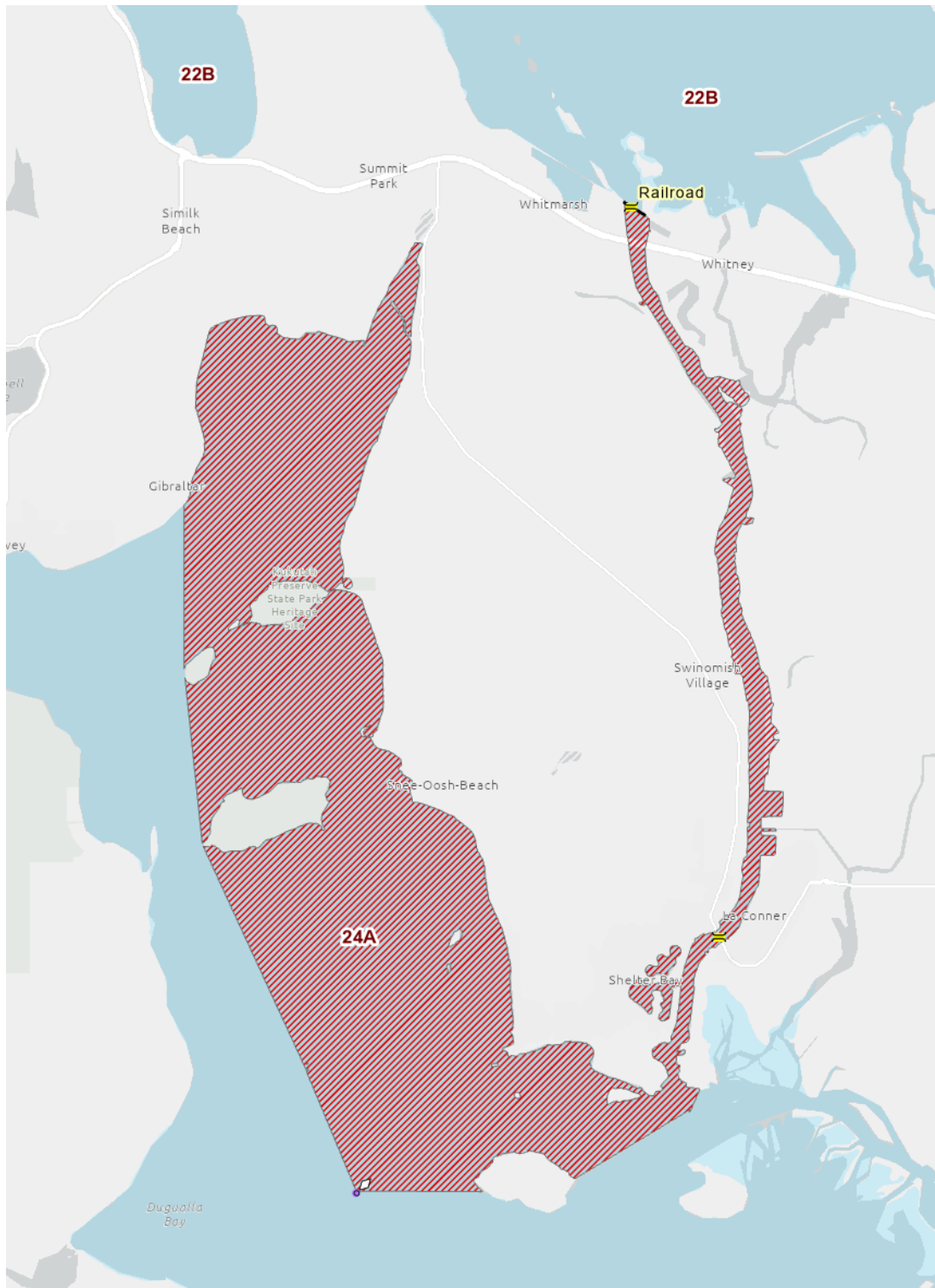
## Tribal Exclusive Areas

### Lummi Nation



The Lummi Tribal Exclusive area is defined as those waters of MFSF Area 20A in Lummi Bay east of a line projected from the entrance buoy at Sandy Point to Gooseberry Point and those waters of MFSF Area 21A in Bellingham Bay west of a line projected from the exposed boulder off the southeast portion of Point Francis (48.6973°, -122.6073°) to the old pilings at Stevie's Point (48.7765°, -122.5523°).

## Swinomish Nation



The Swinomish Tribal Exclusive Area is defined as those waters of MFSF Catch Reporting Area 24A east of a line projected true north from the most westerly tip of Skagit Island and extending south to the most westerly tip of Hope Island, thence southeast to Seal Rocks, thence southeast to the green can buoy at the mouth of Swinomish Channel, thence easterly to the west side of Goat Island.

## Tulip Nation



The Tulip Tribal Exclusive Area is defined as that portion of MFSF Catch Area 24B east of a line projected from the five meter tower (located between Gedney Island and Priest Point) to Barnum Point and south of a line projected west from Kayak Point, and north of a line projected from the five meter tower to Priest Point.

## Marine Preserves / Conservation Areas

### Admiralty Head MP / Keystone CA



The waters and bedlands inside a line beginning at the extreme low water line on the west shore of Whidbey Island at 48°09.46'N, 122°40.88'W then northerly along the extreme low water line for 0.6 nautical miles, then due west 400 yards, then southerly parallel to the shore to a point due west of the point of origin, then due east to the point of origin. (WAC 220-302-010) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/admiralty-head>)

## Argyle Lagoon MP



Those University of Washington-owned tidelands and all bedlands enclosed by the inner spit of Argyle Lagoon on San Juan Island. ([WAC 220-302-100\(3\)](https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/argyle-lagoon))  
(<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/argyle-lagoon>)

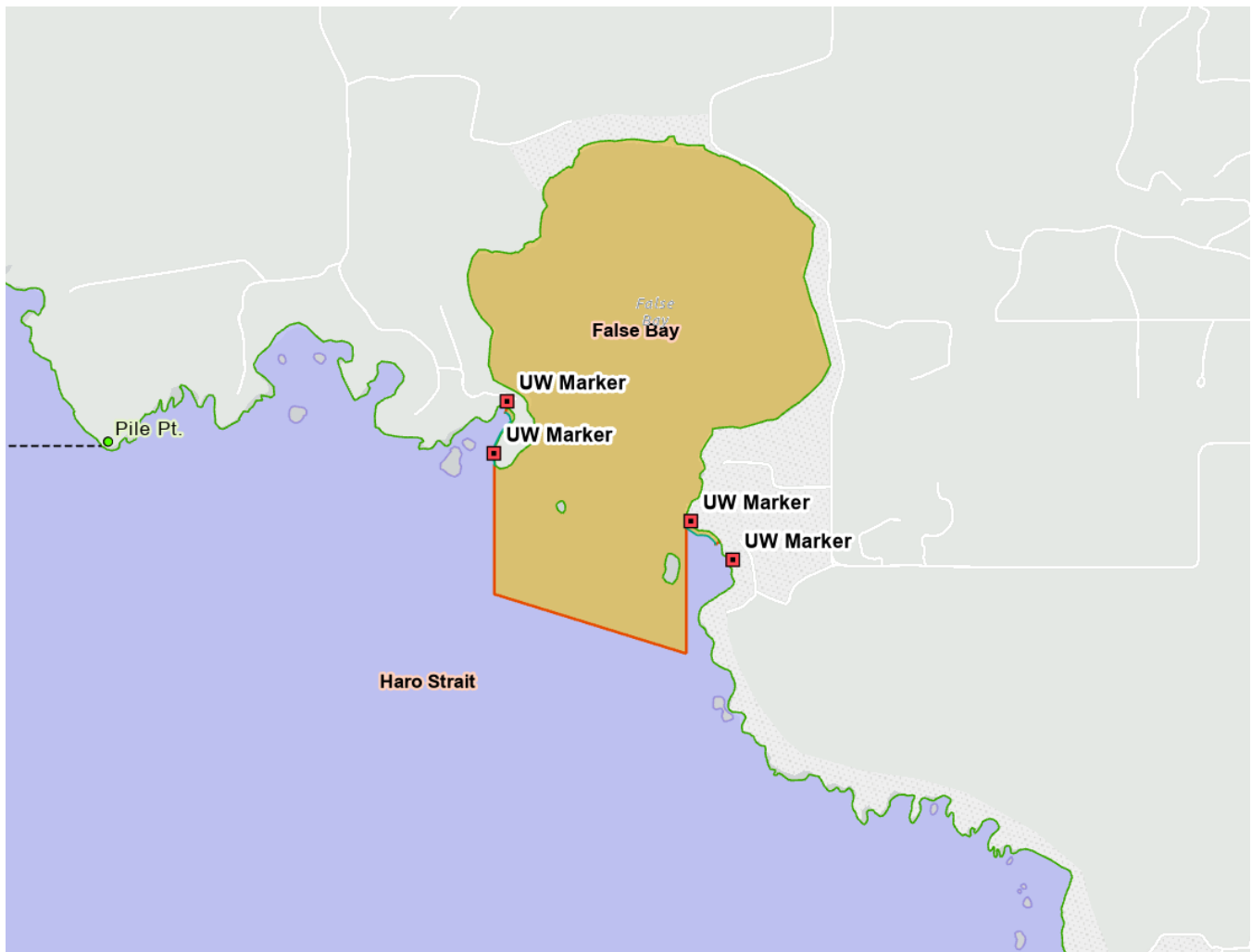


## Brackett's Landing CA



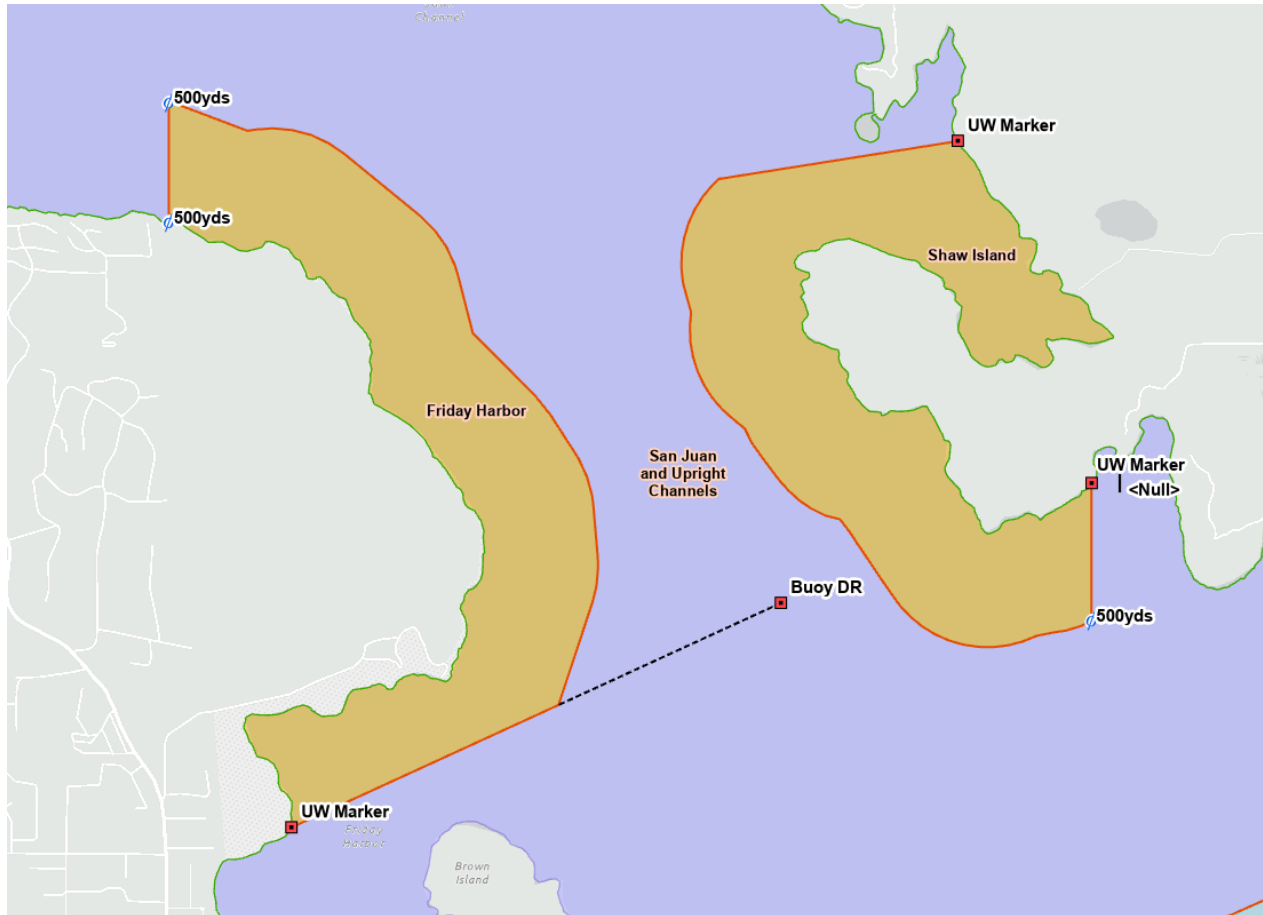
Those bed lands and tidelands owned by the City of Edmonds at Brackett's Landing Shoreline Sanctuary, and the water column above these bed lands and tidelands including all of the area known as Edmonds Underwater Park. ([WAC 220-303-010](https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/conservation-areas/bracketts-landing-shoreline-sanctuary)) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/conservation-areas/bracketts-landing-shoreline-sanctuary>)

## False Bay MP



Those University of Washington-owned tidelands and all bedlands enclosed by the inner spit of Argyle Lagoon on San Juan Island. ([WAC 220-302-100\(3\)](https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/argyle-lagoon))  
(<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/argyle-lagoon>)

## Friday Harbor MP / Shaw Island MP



### ***Friday Harbor MP:***

Those tidelands and bedlands adjacent to San Juan Island within a line beginning on the shore 500 yards west of Point Caution, thence 500 yards offshore, thence south and east following the shoreline to the intersection with a line projected from a University of Washington marker located 100 feet north of the north entrance of the floating breakwater of the Port of Friday Harbor and projected towards Reid Rock Buoy, thence along said line to shore on San Juan Island. ([WAC 220-302-100\(2\)](#)) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/friday-harbor>)

### ***Shaw Island MP:***

Those tidelands and bedlands within a line beginning at a University of Washington marker on the shore at Hicks Bay, 122 degrees, 58 minutes, 15 seconds west longitude, thence due south 500 yards, thence north and west at a distance of 500 yards from shore to the intersection with a line projected 261 degrees true from a University of Washington marker on the shore of Parks Bay, which line passes just south of the unnamed island at the north end of Parks Bay, thence along said line to the shore of Shaw Island, including all tidelands and bedlands of Parks Bay south of said line. ([WAC 220-302-100\(5\)](#)) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/shaw-island>)

## Yellow and Low Islands MP



All tidelands and bedlands within 300 yards of Yellow Island and 300 yards of Low Island. ([WAC 220-302-100\(4\)](https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/yellow-and-low-islands)) (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/mpa/marine-preserves/yellow-and-low-islands>)