



March 28, 2019

NOTICE: Preliminary Determination of Significant Entanglement Risk

Pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 8276.1(c), the Director has made a preliminary determination that the California Dungeness Crab fishery is being conducted in a manner that poses a significant risk of marine life entanglement. The anticipated management response is a statewide closure of the commercial Dungeness crab fishery starting on April 15, 2019.

As required in Fish and Game Code section 8276.1(c)(4), the Director is providing 48 hours' notice to the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group and other stakeholders.

The Director has evaluated the factors outlined in Fish and Game Code section 8276.1(c)(3). The following information supports the preliminary determination of significant risk:

1. Existence and prevalence of factors that may result in significant risk of marine life entanglement

Historical whale migration data indicates that humpback whales typically migrate through California waters during the spring. Numbers historically increase beginning in April¹.

2. Known location of marine life of concern.

Aerial surveys conducted by NOAA on March 15 and 16th, 2019, showed humpback whales presence off the California coast, consistent with the beginning of the spring migration.

The Director will consider any recommendations or new information provided by the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group or any member of the public within the notice period in advance of enacting the proposed management measure.

Please submit any recommendations and information to WhaleSafeFisheries@wildlife.ca.gov by noon April 1, 2019.

¹ Calambokidis, et al. 2015. Biologically Important Areas for Selected Cetaceans Within U.S. Waters – West Coast Region. *Aquatic Mammals* 41(1), 39-53