

Memorandum

Date: December 10, 2019

To: Charlton H. Bonham
Director
Department of Fish and Wildlife

From: Craig Shuman, D. Env.
Marine Regional Manager



Subject: Commercial Dungeness Crab Entanglement Pre-season Risk Assessment

On December 4, 2019 the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group (Working Group) met to review available data and provide a recommendation to the Director based on the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Program (RAMP) framework. Based on this review and with additional support from RAMP factor experts, the four RAMP factors were evaluated by the Working Group as follows:

- Entanglement: not applicable
- Marine life concentrations: risk is low-moderate and trending low
- Ocean conditions and forage: risk is low
- Fishing dynamics: risk is low

Based on the above risk assessment, the Working Group finalized a recommendation on December 9, 2019 to inform the Department's risk determination. The Working Group recommends that the Director open the fishery as soon as possible while providing the fishery sufficient notice, and not later than December 15. Advance notification should include a 72-hour period in addition to an 18-hour pre-soak period south of the Sonoma/Mendocino county line. In addition, given the continued presence of Humpback and Blue Whales within Dungeness crab fishing areas, the Working Group encourages implementation of best fishing practices during the opener and throughout the season. The Working Group arrived at the above recommendations by consensus. No minority recommendations were expressed.

Marine Region staff have independently reviewed all available data and the risk assessment factors. Based on this independent analysis, Marine Region agrees with the Working Group's risk assessment and recommends opening the fishery south of the Sonoma/Mendocino county line on December 15, 2019.

Attachments:

- RAMP Working Group - Management Recommendation -12/09/2019
- RAMP Available Data - Risk Assessment – 12/04/2019

Charlton H. Bonham, Director

December 10, 2019

Page 2

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