


## Memorandum

Date: June 30, 2020

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

From: Craig Shuman, D. Env  
Marine Regional Manager 

Subject: **Commercial Dungeness Crab Entanglement Risk Assessment**

On June 26, 2020 the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group (Working Group) met to review available data and provide a recommendation to the Director based on its Risk Assessment and Mitigation Program (RAMP) framework. Based on the information available during the June 26, 2020 discussion, the Working Group's risk assessment associated with the four RAMP factors for the Northern Management Area (NMA) are as follows:

- **Ocean and Forage Conditions**
  - Risk is low
- **Entanglement**
  - Risk is low
- **Fishing Dynamics**
  - Risk is low
- **Marine Life Concentrations**
  - Risk is low (majority), risk is unknown (minority)

The Working Group unanimously determined overall risk (across all four RAMP factors) remains low for the NMA. Because the commercial fishery is closed in the Central Management Area (CMA), the Working Group did not conduct a formal assessment of risk for the CMA. However, relevant portions of their discussion are summarized in the Working Group Management Recommendation.

Based on the above risk assessment, the Working Group finalized a recommendation on June 30, 2020 to inform the Director's July 1, 2020 risk determination. Due to the overall assessment of low risk and the limited window before the statutory NMA closure on July 15, the Working Group does not recommend any mandatory management measures at this time. The Working Group continues to encourage removal of lost or abandoned fishing gear from the CMA, and focused removal efforts both prior to and after the closure of the NMA. The Working Group requests commercial and recreational ocean users report locations of lost or abandoned commercial Dungeness crab gear to CDFW to further facilitate these retrieval efforts.

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 for the NMA and does not recommend any additional management measures at this time. Marine Region also agrees that

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conducting a risk assessment for the CMA is not needed due to the closed season. There remains entanglement risk due the presence of lost or abandoned trap gear in the CMA, but this is being mitigated by the Lost or Abandoned Dungeness Crab Trap Retrieval Program. Marine Region supports the voluntary management recommendations put forward by the Working Group to use best practices and encourages reporting of lost or abandoned gear so that it can be removed.

Staff will continue to monitor all available data sources through the remainder of the fishing season in the NMA which closes on July 15<sup>th</sup>. This is the final risk assessment of the 2019-20 commercial Dungeness crab fishing season in California.

**Attachments:**

- RAMP Working Group – Management Recommendation – 06/30/2020
- RAMP Available Data – Risk Assessment – 06/26/2020

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