

# Lost or Abandoned Commercial Dungeness Crab Trap Gear Retrieval During 2020

Recovery of lost or abandoned commercial Dungeness crab gear is an important strategy to reduce marine life entanglement risk. Retrieval can occur either through the formal CDFW Trap Gear Retrieval Program or through voluntary efforts by the Dungeness crab fishery. Available information regarding both types of gear recovery operations during 2020 is provided below.

## CDFW Trap Gear Retrieval Program

### Program Details

The CDFW Trap Gear Retrieval Program was established in September 2019 (§132.7, Title 14, CCR) and implemented for the first time in 2020. Under the terms of the program, CDFW issues a permit to qualified entities (Retrieval Permittees) who oversee commercial trap fishermen (Designated Retrievers) as they remove lost or abandoned commercial Dungeness crab gear from the ocean. Retrieval Permittees contact the Dungeness crab vessel permit holder identified on the trap's buoy tag and offer to return the gear in exchange for reasonable compensation. If compensation is not provided, the Retrieval Permittee keeps the gear and may request reimbursement from CDFW. CDFW then levies a per-trap fee on the Dungeness crab vessel permit holder to cover incurred costs. All retrieval activities are documented on a logbook submitted to CDFW.

### By The Numbers

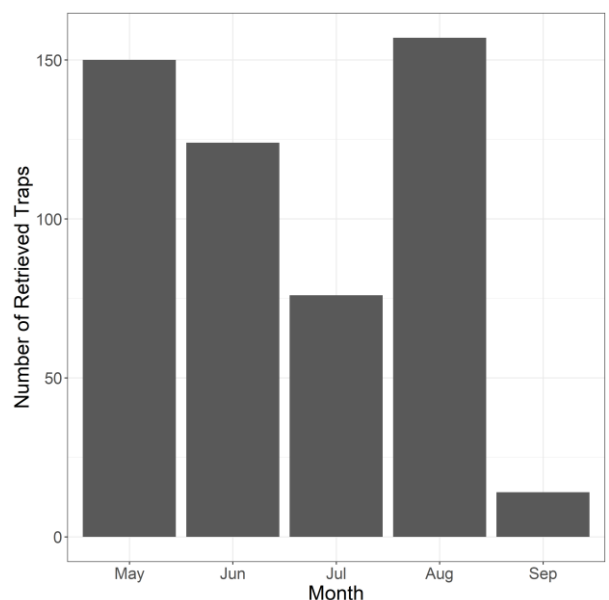
- Retrieval Permits issued: 7
- Active Designated Retrievers: 13
- Retrieval Trips: 47
- Retrieved Traps: 521
- Dungeness crab vessels with retrieved traps: 130
- Average number of traps per Dungeness crab vessel: 4
- Requests for CDFW reimbursement: 0

### How Many Permits Were Issued?

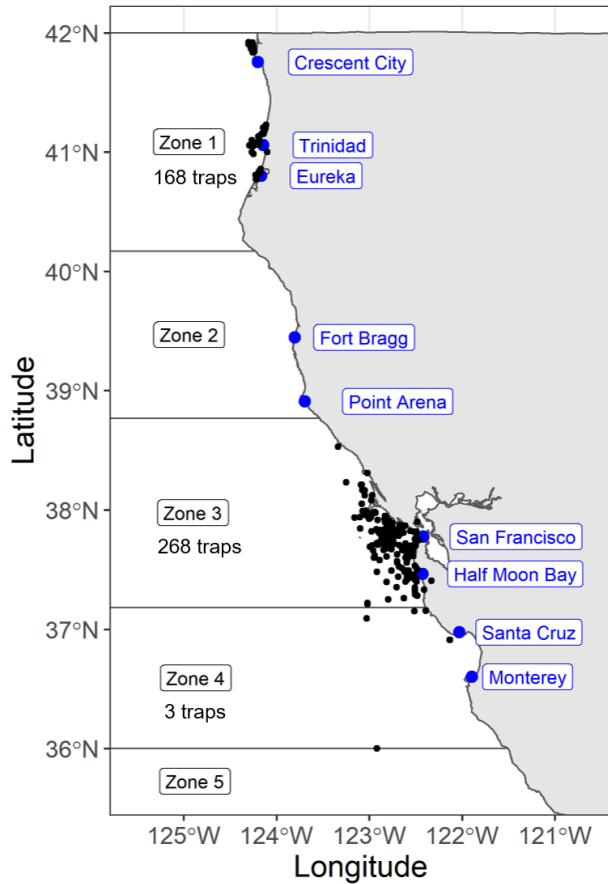
Seven permits were issued to organizations based in the following ports: Crescent City, Trinidad, Eureka, Bodega Bay, San Francisco, Half Moon Bay, and Monterey Bay.

### When Was Gear Retrieved?

In 2020, the Central Management Area (south of the Sonoma/Mendocino county line, Fishing Zones 1 and 2) closed early due to increased risk of marine life entanglements and an early start (May 22) was authorized for the gear retrieval program. The Northern Management Area (north of the Sonoma/Mendocino county line, Fishing Zones 3-5) closed as scheduled and the gear retrieval program began on July 30. Retrieval was allowed until September 30.



Number of traps retrieved by month.



Map showing locations of retrieved traps, RAMP Fishing Zone boundaries, and select ports.

### Where Was Gear Retrieved?

Gear was retrieved under 6 of the 7 issued Retrieval Permits, with the most gear recovery out of San Francisco (294 traps) and Trinidad (153 traps). Locations of retrieved gear and totals by RAMP Fishing Zone are shown in the map on the left.



Stacks of retrieved trap gear in Crescent City.

## Voluntary Retrieval Efforts

§132.2, Title 14, CCR allows for recovery of lost or abandoned commercial Dungeness crab gear by commercial Dungeness crab vessels. Up to 6 traps at a time may be recovered at any time, and an unlimited number of traps can be retrieved between July 16 and October 31. Unlike the CDFW program, compensation is not guaranteed and there is no formal logbook requirement. CDFW encourages all individuals conducting retrieval under §132.2 to share the amount and location of any recovered gear with [WhaleSafeFisheries@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:WhaleSafeFisheries@wildlife.ca.gov) so they can be incorporated into annual totals. In 2020, CDFW received reports of an additional 112 recovered traps near Trinidad.



Heavily fouled trap recovered under the CDFW Trap Gear Retrieval Program.