

California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group (Working Group) Management Recommendation Form to inform the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Program for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Working Group Discussion Date: April 29, 2021

Submitted to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Director for the Risk Assessment Mitigation Program Section 132.8 Title 14, California Code of Regulations to assess marine life entanglement risk in the Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery.

The Working Group considered Available Data provided by CDFW and scientific advisors, as well as an initial CDFW assessment and the preliminary Management Action recommendation.

Working Group Response to CDFW's Preliminary Management Action Recommendation

The Working Group provided broad support for CDFW's recommendation of a Fleet Advisory for Fishing Zones 3-6. The Working Group provided a mixed response for CDFW's recommendation of a Depth Constraint for Fishing Zones 1 and 2. Nine members of the Working Group supported the Depth Constraint based on the Management Considerations. Fleet representation did note that there was concern about the burden to the fleet. Two members opposed and the remaining Working Group members were neutral. The alternative Management Action was then put forward for consideration by the full Working Group (below). A subset of the group supporting the Depth Constraint also provided support for the Alternative recommendation.

Working Group Recommendation Option 1:

***Management Action:* Fleet Advisory (which should include information to avoid areas and depths where Humpback whales have been observed, particularly areas of depths greater than 30 fathoms), with voluntary electronic monitoring use/pilot, voluntary Depth Constraint**

***Fishing Zone(s):* 1 and 2**

***Implementation Date:* May 3, 2021**

***Key Rationale based on Management Considerations:* Forage is located primarily offshore and reports indicate significant krill available. There are no known entanglements that involve commercial Dungeness crab gear this season. There is decreasing fishing effort in these Fishing Zones, which is expected to continue to decrease over the coming weeks. A Depth Constraint would put undue burden on the affected fleet because of the electronic monitoring requirement. Most fishery participants are already fishing inside 30 fathoms.**

Any Limitations/Concerns: **None raised**

Level of Support: **Six Working Group Members supported, two were opposed, the remaining eight members in attendance were neutral.**