

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: October 26, 2021**

**Anticipated Risk Assessment Date: November 1, 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. All documents will be made available on the [Whale Safe Fisheries webpage](#) upon completion of the risk assessment process.

### **Working Group Recommendation**

*Management Action:*

**Fishing Zone 1 and 2:** Recommends delaying the recreational crab trap fishery until November 12, 2021, with a Fleet Advisory and to open the commercial trap fishery on December 1, 2021 with a Fleet Advisory. Both dates are subject to change based on the next Risk Assessment.

**Fishing Zones 3 and 4:** Recommends delaying the recreational crab trap fishery until November 12, 2021, and delay the commercial fishery until November 19, 2021, both fisheries would open under a Fleet Advisory. Both dates are subject to change based on the next Risk Assessment.

**Fishing Zones 5 and 6:** The Working Group supports CDFW's preliminary recommendation to open both the recreational fishery and commercial Dungeness crab fisheries under a Fleet Advisory on November 6, 2021, and November 15, 2021, respectively.

*Implementation Date:*

(See recommendations above)

*Key Rationale based on Management Considerations:*

RAMP must be applied consistently across both the recreational and commercial fisheries. The priority must be to survey and gather all the data possible within Fishing Zones. The Working Group does however support using adjacent Fishing Zone data as well as seasonal/historic migratory information to inform risk in the absence of data within the Fishing Zone. The Working Group emphasized the importance of setting dates for when fisheries open to support business operations and trip planning

purposes, while recognizing that opening decisions must be contingent on the next risk assessment and best available data.

*Limitations/Concerns:*

The Working Group requests that when both the recreational crab trap fishery and commercial Dungeness crab fisheries are delayed in a Fishing Zone, that CDFW provide sufficient lead time between the opening dates for the recreational and commercial fisheries based on historic opening date differentials. They also request CDFW provide anecdotal insights into recreational fishery operations based on their understanding of fishery operations. This will be valuable for future Working Group recommendations as the recreational fishery has limited data available.

*Level of Support:*

The recommendation received broad support from Working Group membership, with eleven members supporting the recommendation; the remaining non-agency members remained neutral. One member also supported CDFW's Preliminary Recommendation.