



2021-22 Recreational Dungeness Crab Season

NEW Information:

- The use of crab traps may be restricted due to elevated marine life entanglement risk by CDFW.
- Notice will be provided a minimum 5 days prior to a crab trap restriction. Please sign up for email updates at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/Whale-Safe-Fisheries>.
- Here is where you can access the latest Risk Assessment information for the [2021-22 season](#).
- **NEW** and current regulations for crab traps are listed on page 2, for more information on hoop nets, please see this [regulation summary](#).

Summary of current regulations for the recreational take of Dungeness crab.

| Fishing Area | Season Date(s) | Minimum Size Limit (must possess a measuring device) | Daily Bag/Possession Limit | Gear Type |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|--|
| Ocean waters (excludes San Francisco and San Pablo bays where no Dungeness crab can be taken) | Saturday Nov. 6, 2021 – Saturday July 30, 2022 (Mendocino County and north) Saturday Nov. 6, 2021 – Thursday June 30, 2022 (all other counties) | 5 ¾" measured as the shortest distance through the body from edges of shell directly in front and excluding lateral spines. | 10 | Taken by hand, crab trap, hoop net, or by crab loop traps with up to 6 loops Other methods of take may be used when an area is under crab trap restriction due to elevated entanglement risk. |
| Freshwater (Sonoma County and north) | Saturday Nov. 6, 2021 – Saturday July 30, 2022 (Mendocino County and north) Saturday Nov. 6, 2021 – Thursday June 30, 2022 (Sonoma County) | Same as Ocean waters. | Same as Ocean waters. | Taken by hand or by hoop net |

Crab Traps:

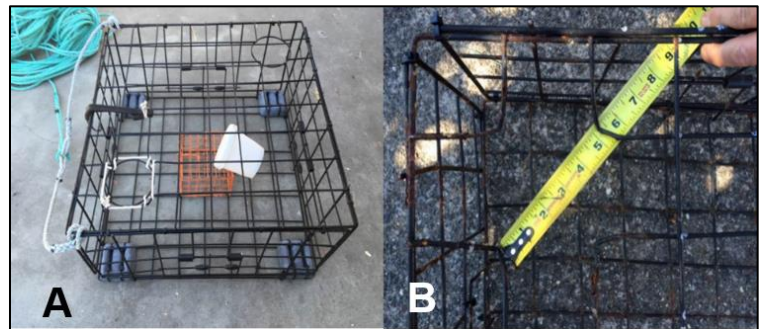
- **NEW Trap Validation:** Required for any individual, even when no license is required, when using a crab trap and can be [purchased annually online](#) (cost is currently \$2.42).
- **NEW Gear Marking:** Crab traps must be rigged with a **single main buoy that is at least 5 inches in diameter and 11 inches in length and legibly marked with the operator of the trap's GO ID number** as stated on their sport fishing license. Traps shall also be marked with a **single red marker buoy that is 3 inches in diameter and 5 inches in length and attached no more than 3 feet from the main buoy** (see example in photo, below). Crab traps used by a commercial passenger fishing vessel (CPFV) shall have the commercial boat registration number affixed to each trap and main buoy. No additional markers or trailer buoys may be used.



- **Example configuration of a main buoy and a red marker buoy attached to crab traps.** Photo by P. Ward, CDFW.

- **NEW Service Interval:** Crab traps must be raised, cleaned and emptied (serviced) at intervals not to exceed nine (9) days.
- **NEW Trap Limits:** An individual may operate up to ten (10) crab traps and service ten additional (10) crab traps with written permission from the operator of the trap.
- **Written permission** from the operator of the trap, including permission transmitted electronically (for example, email or text), must be in your possession to operate the trap of another individual.
- **Crab Trap Area:** Crab traps (including crab loop traps) may only be used North of Point Arguello, Santa Barbara County.

- Crab traps must not be deployed or fished **seven days prior to the opening** of the Dungeness crab season.
- **Escape Openings:** Crab traps must be outfitted with two rigid circular escape openings that are a minimum of 4¼ inches in diameter and located so that the lowest portion is at the most 5 inches from the top of the trap (see photo, below).
- **Destruct Device:** Crab traps must contain at least one destruct device made from a single strand of untreated cotton twine size No. 120 or less. The destruct device must create an unobstructed opening anywhere in the top or upper half of the trap that is at least 5 inches in diameter when this material corrodes or fails (see photo, below).



- **A recreational box-style crab trap (A), with two required 4¼-inch escape rings placed on the top of the trap, one with a ring tied in place using No. 120 untreated cotton twine, which serves as the destruct device. When this material corrodes or fails, it will create a large enough opening (B).** Photo by J. Langell and J. Hendricks, CDFW.



- **Round-style crab trap with plastic hook attached by the destruct device. The lid will open when the device corrodes or fails.** Photo by J. Langell and J. Hendricks, CDFW.