

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

Working Group Discussion Date: November 18, 2022

Working Group Recommendation

The Working Group recommended a continuation of the recreational trap prohibition in Fishing Zones 1 and 2 until the next risk assessment. The Working Group acknowledged that there is low documented presence of humpback whales in these two Fishing Zones. However, Working Group members expressed concern about the high number of entanglements during 2022 calendar year and current Impact Score for the commercial Dungeness crab fishery. Given the potential for entanglements in recreational crab traps to be classified as occurring in unidentified gear, therefore impacting future fishing opportunity for the commercial sector, the Working Group recommends CDFW maintain the current recreational trap restriction in these Fishing Zones.

The recommendation received broad support from Working Group members, but was opposed by recreational representatives.