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Fish and Game Commission



*Wildlife Heritage and Conservation
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CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION NOTICE OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to the provisions of Section 1022 of the Fish and Game Code (FGC) and Section 91, Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), on December 8, 2022 the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) transmitted an experimental fishing permit (EFP) to the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission). The application had been submitted to the Department from Dylan Diefendorf, Puget Buoy, to test pop-up gear in the California Dungeness crab fishery.

The EFP application requests a Tier 1 EFP to test the commercial use of Puget Buoy pop-up gear in the California Dungeness crab fishery to inform future alternative gear certification under the Department's Risk Assessment Mitigation Program (RAMP) (proposed project). A timed-release ropeless fishing system, the Puget Buoy doubles as a float and a rope coiling device to reduce the number of vertical lines and avoid potential risk of marine life entanglement. When deployed, the device remains submerged with a crab trap on the ocean floor until a resurfacing time is reached. The resurfacing time is pre-set using the Puget Buoy App. The proposed project would test up to 125 Puget Buoy units on up to four commercial Dungeness crab fishing vessels during the fishing season. Each vessel would deploy 25 or 50 Puget Buoy units and service them once a week for up to 17 weeks. Fishing would occur off the coast of California between the California/Oregon border and Pigeon Point, in water depths ranging from 100 to 300 feet.

The application also requests an exemption from FGC Section 9005, which requires every trap or string of traps to be marked with a buoy, to conduct the proposed fishing activities. During its evaluation, the Department will determine if other exemptions may be necessary pursuant to FGC subdivision 1022(a)(4).

Pursuant to subsection 91(d)(2), Title 14, CCR, the Department will provide a recommendation to the Commission, including any proposed special conditions. As soon as the Department's recommendation is available, but not less than 30 days before the hearing on this application, a notice will be published on the Commission's website at <https://fgc.ca.gov/EFP> and sent to interested individuals providing information on the opportunity for public comment and published on the Commission's website.

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Written comments and information on matters addressed in this notice and relevant to the Department's technical review of the accepted application may be submitted to Marina Som, Acting EFP Coordinator, at EFP@wildlife.ca.gov.

Please visit www.fgc.ca.gov for additional information.

December 14, 2022

California Fish and Game Commission

Melissa Miller-Henson
Executive Director