



Issued: December 23, 2022

Gear Reduction for the Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following serves to address questions regarding the 50% trap gear reduction for the commercial fishery to reduce risk of marine life entanglement. This management action was implemented on December 22, 2022, by the CDFW Director and can be referenced in the [Declaration](#).

Q: What fishery and Zones are subject to a 50% gear reduction?

A: Only the commercial Dungeness crab fishery in Fishing Zones 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Sonoma/Mendocino County to the U.S./Mexico border) is subject to a 50% gear reduction. Zones 1 and 2 (Oregon border to Sonoma/Mendocino County line) are allowed to fish with their full trap tier allotments.

Q: Is the 50% reduction based my trap tier?

A: Yes, the reduction is based on the permitted vessel's trap tier. To be in compliance with the gear reduction, each operator must have the following number of buoy tags in possession and available for inspection by law enforcement personnel **onboard the fishing vessel**. The tags must be from the current 2021-23 bi-annual buoy tag allotment.

Tier 1 = 250 pots

Tier 2 = 225 pots

Tier 3 = 200 pots

Tier 4 = 175 pots

Tier 5 = 150 pots

Tier 6 = 125 pots

Tier 7 = 88 pots

Q: What do I do with the unused buoy tags?

A: Buoy tags must be removed from buoys and cannot be attached to any gear. CDFW recommends that you bundle the buoy tags together with a zip tie

or other device to make it easier for law enforcement personnel to inspect. Bundles of 25 tags will allow Wildlife Officers to quickly check your vessel for compliance.

Q: Do I need to keep buoy tags in sequential order?

A: No, buoy tags do not need be in the sequential order.

Q: I lost buoy tags mid-season which have not been replaced. What number of buoy tags do I need to have in my possession?

A: Reduction is based on tier allotment, not how many buoy tags a vessel has in possession. A vessel is still required to have the number of unused buoy tags onboard that is equal to 50% of their trap tier buoy tag allotment.

Q: Am I allowed to transit a Zone that is operating under a trap reduction from another Zone that is open to its full trap allotment?

A: Yes, but the vessel must have 50% of the trap tier buoy tags onboard while transiting. Pursuant to the Director's Declaration, vessels are effectively limited to the 50% reduction if you wish to fish in Zone 1 or 2 and deliver crab to a processor in Zones 3-6.

Q: When will I be allowed to fish my entire trap tier?

A: The next risk assessment is expected to occur on or around January 18, 2023. CDFW will review available data and the Director may lift or modify the trap reduction at that time.