

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: January 10, 2023

Working Group Recommendation

There was broad support from the Working Group for the Department's preliminary management recommendation. However, the Working Group elected to submit a formal recommendation to the Department regarding the effective date of the proposed management action.

The Working Group recommends the Department lift the recreational trap restriction and commercial gear reductions currently in place immediately (or as quickly as possible). The storm systems currently impacting California create safety concerns for vessels and crews out on the water. Lifting the management actions currently in place prior to 8:01 am on January 16, 2023 would provide greater flexibility for vessels to deploy gear during good weather windows between storm cycles, therefore increasing crew and vessel safety.

From the Working Group's perspective, the 72-hour notification requirement in advance notice of RAMP management actions is most meaningful during the opening of the commercial fishery in a given Fishing Zone, in order to provide participating vessels and buyers time to prepare. Since the commercial fishery is already open statewide, advance notification is not necessary.