

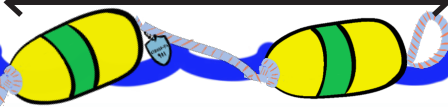
BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

FOR AVOIDING MARINE LIFE ENTANGLEMENT IN THE DUNGENESS CRAB FISHERY

Last updated October 2023



Surface Gear Length



Best Practices For All Crab Trap Fisheries

- **Minimize** knots, leads and scope
- **Reduce** slack surface line and keep vertical lines taut
- **Avoid** setting gear in the vicinity of whales and sea turtles
- **Communicate** locations of high whale activity to other fishing boats
- **Promptly remove** gear not being actively fished
- **Maintain** gear to ensure lines and buoys are in good condition so they do not break and get lost
- **Frequently check** traps and remove traps when whales are foraging in the area



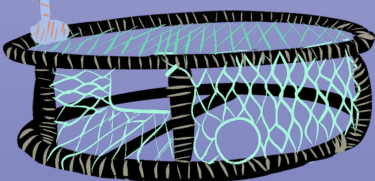
Best Practices for the Commercial Trap Fishery

Water Depth	Best Practices Surface Gear Length
< 30 fathoms	Shortest possible - 3 fa max (18 ft)
30-50 fathoms	Shortest possible - 4 fa max (24 ft)
> 50 fathoms	Shortest possible - 5 fa max (30 ft)

Commercial Trap Fishery Regulatory Requirements

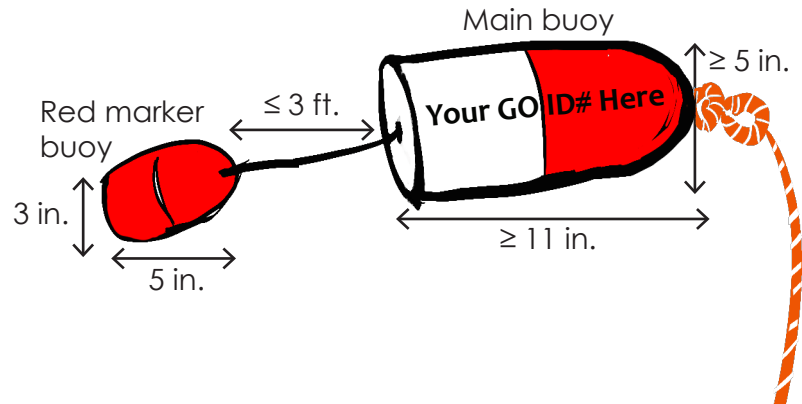
- Up to two trailer buoys and one end marker buoy
- End marker buoy attached to ≤ 3 feet of line

Water Depth	Regulation Surface Gear Length
< 35 fathoms	≤ 4 fa (24 ft)
≥ 35 fathoms	≤ 6 fa (36 ft)



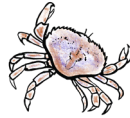
Recreational Trap Fishery Regulatory Requirements

- Purchase an annual trap validation if using crab traps
- Raise, clean, and empty (service) traps at least every nine days
- 10 trap limit

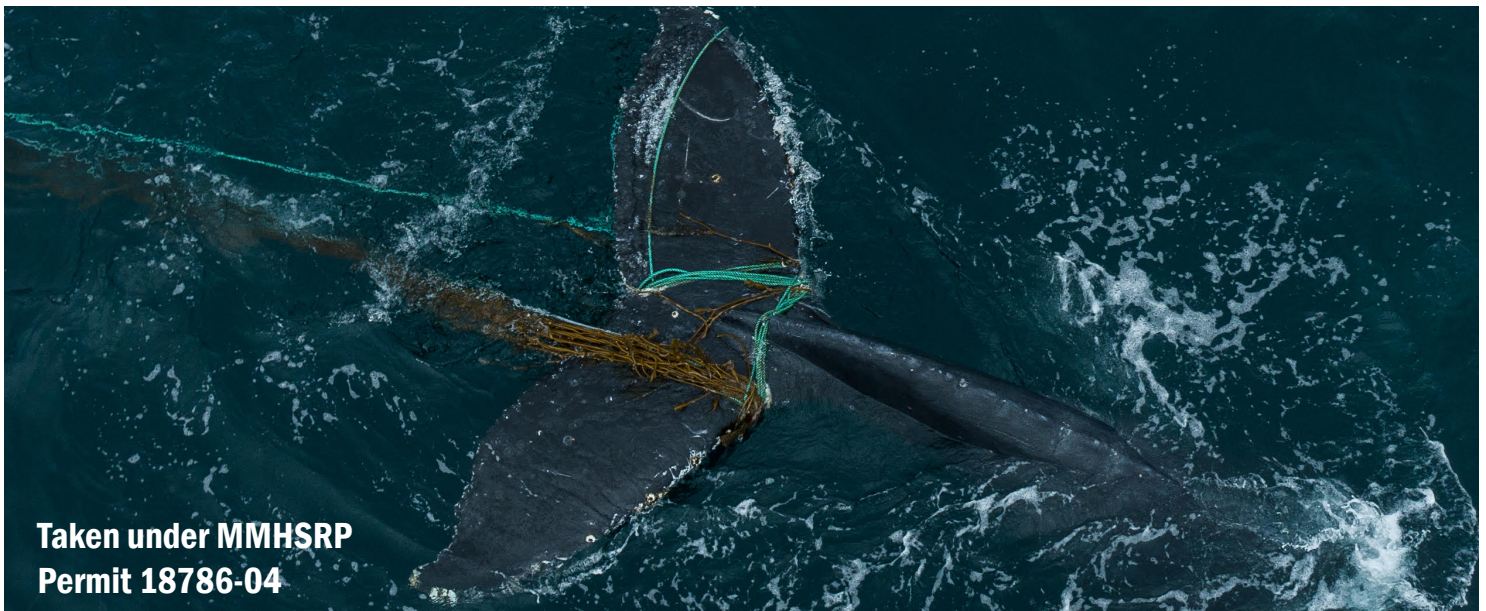


IMMEDIATELY REPORT ENTANGLEMENTS

- Notify NMFS or the US Coast Guard
- Note date, time, location; take photos
- Maintain a distance of 100 yards
- Stand by for responders and **Do not attempt to disentangle!**
- Respond promptly if contacted by NMFS or CDFW about your gear



**NMFS RESPONSE
HOTLINE:
1-877-SOS-WHALE
- OR -
US COAST GUARD:
VHF CH 16**



**Taken under MMHSRP
Permit 18786-04**

Check for regional closures, trap reductions, or other management measures and sign up for future electronic notifications at:

<https://wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/marine/whale-safe-fisheries>

For other inquiries: WhaleSafeFisheries@wildlife.ca.gov

