



California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group Participant Call for Nominations

July 2024

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is seeking nominations for a representative to serve on the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group (Working Group), beginning October 1, 2024. Nominations are sought to represent the following [Fishing Zones](#) and/or sectors:

- **Fort Bragg area (*Fishing Zone 2*) commercial Dungeness crab fishery to participate as a member and to represent the commercial fishery during working group discussions.**

Background and Role of the Working Group

The Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group (Working Group) was convened in April 2015 by CDFW, in partnership with the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), as a result of increased numbers of large whale entanglements.

The Working Group's role is to support CDFW activities and strategies to reduce the risk of whale entanglements in California Dungeness crab fishing gear. The Working Group supports protection of whale and sea turtle populations along the West Coast and a thriving and profitable Dungeness crab fishery. In cooperation with staff from the CDFW, NMFS, OPC, and the United States Coast Guard (USCG), the Working Group will:

- Provide recommendation(s) regarding CDFW management action(s) to reduce risk of marine life entanglement for the CDFW Director's consideration, as required under the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Program (RAMP) pursuant to [§132.8, Title 14, CCR](#).
- Provide input to CDFW regarding the development of a draft Habitat Conservation Plan for addressing interactions for species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act from the California commercial Dungeness crab fishery.
- Provide guidance and make recommendations to the state of California (CDFW, OPC, Fish and Game Commission, federal agencies (NMFS, USCG), and the Dungeness crab fishing industry, including the Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF), regarding how to avoid or minimize risk of entanglements.
- Provide peers, interest groups, and/or other outside organizations with information about the Working Group's process and regular evaluations as appropriate and in alignment with Working Group communication protocol.

The Working Group's responsibility is to work on the above tasks; it is not to debate the need to reduce the potential for whale and sea turtle entanglements in the recreational and commercial Dungeness crab fisheries.

Working Group Composition

The [Working Group is comprised](#) of recreational and commercial fishing industry representatives, conservation organization representatives, representatives from the whale disentanglement network, and state and federal agencies. In addition to Working Group participants, select individuals with additional expertise or perspectives beyond Working Group participants are invited to inform Working Group discussions as Working Group Advisors (e.g., legislative or agency staff, fishing gear manufacturer/distributor, data analysts, etc.).

Meeting Schedule and Commitment

The Working Group is anticipated to meet in-person (or virtually) one time per year during a 1-2 day plenary meeting and will also participate in approximately 12 Risk Assessment conference calls per year. Working Group participants may also participate in special Project Teams focused on initiatives such as gear innovations, marine life concentration surveys, and data collection. Interested individuals are asked to commit to participating in the Working Group for 2-3 years.

Working Group Selection Criteria and Expectations

The selection of the Working Group and its Advisors is at the sole discretion of the CDFW Marine Region Manager. In appointing Working Group participants, the Regional Manager may consider professional expertise or experience, diversity of perspectives, geographic location, willingness to express fundamental interests as opposed to fixed positions, ability and willingness to share Working Group updates with peers, willingness to convey the interests of one or more groups and to integrate diverse interests, capacity to work with diverse viewpoints, and ability to work constructively and collaboratively. Working Group participants must have an active email address and phone number and the ability to access meetings through virtual computer platforms. Members are expected to read and prepare for all meetings in advance when materials are provided, respond to information requests, and maintain communication with agencies and other Working Group participants as needed. Members are encouraged to share information with constituent groups and solicit information on topics currently being discussed by the Working Group consistent with Working Group communication protocols. Members are expected to represent the interests and viewpoints of their port or sector and fishing modes along the coast, not individual opinions. Members are expected to abide by closed door meeting policies to foster a collaborative environment and protect anonymity of Working Group during discussions.

Nomination Process

Selections will be made to achieve a diversity of stakeholder perspectives, expertise, and geography. Members will be chosen based on the criteria and expectations outlined above and must be capable of working collaboratively and seeking consensus. Selection of new Working Group members is expected to be made on or before the week of August 26, 2024.

Nomination Submission and Questions

For those interested in participating in the Working Group or to provide nominations, please email whalesafefisheries@wildlife.ca.gov by July 31, 2024.

Nominations should be submitted in writing and include the following information:

- Nominee name and complete contact information, phone number, including email address.
- A short statement describing how the applicant meets the selection criteria listed above, including any related experience in a collaborative process.
- Statement of interest and what the applicant can contribute to the Working Group.