

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: June 12, 2025

The Working Group discussed the Marine Region's preliminary recommendation for the commercial and recreational fisheries. The Department recommended a Season Closure for the commercial fishery in Fishing Zones 1 and 2, effective June 20th, 2025, at 6:00pm, and a continuation of the Crab Trap Prohibition for the recreational fishery in Fishing Zones 3-4 and a Fleet Advisory in Fishing Zones 1-6 through the close of the season. The Working Group provided limited support and moderate opposition for the Department's recommendation for both the recreational and commercial fisheries. Some Working Group members opposed the Department's preliminary recommendation due to the absence of a Crab Trap Prohibition recommendation for the recreational fishery in Fishing Zones 1-2. There was no discussion among the Working Group members regarding the proposed season closure date. The Working Group provided one alternate recommendation for consideration by the CDFW Director.

Working Group Recommendation #1: Continue Current Management Actions for Fishing Zone 1 for the Commercial Fishery (30-fathom Depth Constraint and 25% Gear Reduction)

The Working Group provided a recommendation to keep the season open for the commercial fishery in Fishing Zone 1, north of the Humboldt jetty, under current Management Actions (30-fathom Depth Constraint and 25% Gear Reduction). The key rationale was that past Marine Life Concentration surveys data has shown that whales typically concentrate in deeper waters offshore (outside of 40-50 fathoms) as they move northward of the Eel River Canyon. This recommendation received limited support and limited opposition.