



California Department of Fish and Wildlife Final Assessment of Marine Life Entanglement Risk and Management Recommendation for the Risk Assessment Mitigation Program

Date: May 19, 2025

An initial assessment and a preliminary recommendation were developed by California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Marine Region for consideration by the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group (Working Group) for the Risk Assessment Mitigation Program (RAMP; Section 132.8, Title 14, California Code of Regulations) regarding Management Actions to address marine life entanglement risk in the commercial Dungeness crab fishery as well as Section 29.80, Title 14, California Code of Regulations (Gear Restrictions for Recreational Take of Saltwater Crustaceans). The initial assessment was shared with the Working Group on May 14, 2025, and discussed at the Working Group meeting which was held on May 16, 2025. After reviewing all available data and input from the Working Group, Marine Region has prepared a final recommendation. For a map of the RAMP Fishing Zones, see the [Whale Safe Fisheries webpage](#).

I. Recommended Management Actions

Commercial Fishery:

- Fishing Zones 1-2: Continue 25% Gear Reduction and 30-Fathom Depth Constraint
- Fishing Zones 3-6: Season Closed

Recreational Fishery:

- Fishing Zones 3-4: Continue Crab Trap Prohibition
- All Fishing Zones: Fleet Advisory

II. Management Recommendation Summary Rationale

The Marine Region's final recommendation is for the Director to continue the 25% Gear Reduction and 30-Fathom Depth Constraint in Fishing Zones 1 and 2. Note: Fishing Zones 3-6 are closed for the remainder of the season.

The Marine Region also recommends a continuation of the Crab Trap Prohibition for Fishing Zones 3-4. A Fleet Advisory remains for all Fishing Zones.

These recommendations are based on current Marine Life Concentrations, the Entanglement Impact Score for the entire commercial fishery, and historical migration patterns of humpback whales. The current entanglement Impact Score is 4.15, which exceeds the rolling average in RAMP. No Actionable Species were observed during a CDFW aerial survey conducted on May 8,

2025. Fishing effort as reported in bi-weekly reports for Fishing Zones 1 and 2 continues to decline with 19,460 taps reported during the April 16 reporting period, and 13,710 traps reported during the May1 reporting period. Therefore, the 30-Fathom Depth Restriction and 25% Gear Reduction already in place will provide entanglement risk reduction while allowing for continued fishing opportunities in Fishing Zones 1 and 2.

Management Actions for Fishing Zones 1 and 2 for the commercial fishery and recreational fishery Management Actions for Fishing Zones 1, 2, 5 and 6 will be re-evaluated at the next risk assessment in early June.

Entanglements: Since the last Available Data document, there have been three confirmed entanglements with humpback whales: one with CA commercial Dungeness crab gear and two with unidentified gear. CDFW is awaiting additional information before making a determination regarding Impact Scoring under RAMP for the two unidentified gear entanglements. More information is available on page 7 of the [Available Data document](#).

Marine Life Concentrations: CDFW conducted an aerial survey on May 8, 2025, in Fishing Zones 1-2 and observed no Actionable Species.

For additional details, see the Entanglement and Marine Life Concentration sections of the [Available Data document](#).

III. Alternatives Considered but Rejected

- A season closure was considered for Fishing Zones 1 and 2 but was not recommended based on available Marine Life Concentration data at this time.
- Alternative Gear- can be authorized after April 1st, but no gear currently is authorized for the commercial Dungeness crab fishery.