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NEWS

CDFW lifts trap restrictions in the Dungeness crab fisheries

January 22, 2023

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will lift the Dungeness crab trap prohibition in Fishing Zones 3-6 (all areas south of the Sonoma/Mendocino county line) for the recreational fishery on Jan. 14, 2023 at 8:01 a.m.

CDFW will lift the 50 percent commercial fishery trap reduction in on Jan. 15, at 8:01 a.m. The current 50 percent trap reduction for the commercial fishery and trap prohibition in the recreational fishery will remain in place until lifted on the respective dates.

Based on available data and as indicated by historical migration patterns, humpback whale abundance is at or near a seasonal low within the Dungeness crab fishing grounds.

As a result, CDFW Director Charlton H. Bonham is lifting the trap restrictions in Fishing Zones 3-6 for both fisheries. However, a Fleet Advisory will be issued for the recreational fishery and will be continued for the commercial fishery to remain vigilant and avoid setting gear in areas where whales are transiting or foraging.

All anglers are also strongly encouraged to follow best practices, as described in the Best Practices Guide.

CDFW anticipates the next risk assessment will take place in mid-February 2023.

For more information related to the risk assessment process, please visit CDFW’s Whale Safe Fisheries page or for more information on the Dungeness crab fishery, please visit wildlife.ca.gov/crab.

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