
Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery Update: Entanglement Risk Low, Fishery to Remain Open

March 25, 2020



The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) updated the status of the commercial California Dungeness crab fishery which includes the Northern Management Area (Fish and Game Districts 6, 7, 8 and 9) and Central Management Area (Fish and Game Districts 10 and south).

On March 9, the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group was convened to review current data and conduct an updated risk assessment to evaluate the risk of marine life entanglement.

The working group provided a consensus recommendation that the risk remained low across all four risk factors. Informed by this recommendation and after careful consideration of available data, the CDFW director determined that no management action is necessary at this time; the season will remain open on April 1 for both the Northern and Central Management Areas.

The director and the working group encourage the fleet to continue to use best practices when fishing and to be ready to quickly respond to a management change when significant numbers of whales return to the fishing grounds, typically in April or May each year.

For the remainder of the commercial season, CDFW will continue to collect data to inform bi-weekly risk assessments by the working group. Based on that process, CDFW will likely take additional management actions in response to future risk assessments.

Management action may occur at any time as conditions related to entanglement risk change.

For more information related to the risk assessment process, go to CDFW's Whale Safe Fisheries page at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/Whale-Safe-Fisheries>.

For more information, see CDFW's Frequently Asked Questions regarding the 2019-2020 Dungeness crab commercial season or wildlife.ca.gov/crab.