

Frequently Asked Questions: Dungeness Crab Task Force Commercial Fishing Elections

January 2020

What is the Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF)?

The DCTF is an advisory body that reviews and evaluates Dungeness crab fishery management measures and provides recommendations to the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, CDFW, and the Fish and Game Commission (FGC) starting in January 2022 and every three years thereafter through 2028. The representative(s) elected from each home port will represent and communicate their respective port/production level's views on the fishery's management and develop recommendations for the State of California.

What is the composition of the DCTF?

The composition of the DCTF is described in Fish and Game Code Section 8276.4. The DCTF is comprised of various representatives, including commercial and recreational fishermen, a member representing commercial passenger fishing vessel (CPFV) interests, crab processors, as well as representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), California Sea Grant and CDFW. The 17 commercial fishermen will be elected by their peers to serve on the DCTF. For more information and to sign up for the DCTF listserv, visit the DCTF homepage: <http://www.opc.ca.gov/2009/04/dungeness-crab-task-force/>.

How many representatives will each port have?

Home port complexes and representation are as follows:

- Crescent City, 3 members
- Trinidad, 1 member
- Eureka, 2 members
- Fort Bragg, 2 members
- Bodega Bay, 2 members
- San Francisco, 2 members
- Half Moon Bay, 2 members
- Ports south of Half Moon Bay, 2 members
- California nonresident crab permit holders, 1 member (includes all out of state vessel port registrations designated as Unknown)

For ports with two elected members, one member shall represent the upper production level and one member shall represent the lower production level. For ports with three elected members, one member shall represent the upper production level, one member shall represent the lower production level, and one member shall represent both the upper and lower production levels.

How are production levels calculated for the purposes of DCTF elections?

Based on subsection (b)(2) of Fish and Game Code Section 8276.4, upper and lower production levels will be determined based on average landing, during the five-year period before the beginning of an election cycle of valid permit holders who landed a minimum of 25,000 pounds in that period.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) extracted landings data for those permits that are registered to each port area that requires a determination of production level for the 2020 election. CDFW totaled the statewide landings for each of these permits for the last 5 seasons between 2014-15 and 2018-19. The average for each port area was determined by all permits who landed at least 25,000 pounds in the five seasons prior to the election. Everyone who landed more than the average is placed in the upper production level and everyone who landed below the average, including those who landed less than 25,000 pounds, are placed in the lower production level for the purposes of DCTF elections. This calculation is specific to each port and therefore the division between the upper and lower production level varies from port to port.

For ports with one elected member (nonresident), the member shall represent both the upper and lower production levels. Please see enclosed Production Table document for more details.

How does my production level relate to my pot tier?

Production levels are calculated ONLY for the purposes of creating the DCTF as outlined in statute and does not consider your pot tier (see above question and answer for details).

How will DCTF commercial fishing elections be carried out?

The California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and CDFW will carry out the elections as described in Fish and Game Code Section 8276.4. Commercial fishermen will be elected to the DCTF by their peers to represent their home port complexes.

DCTF elections shall be held every three years in each port, on a staggered basis across ports. To facilitate the election process, ports were separated into two groups (see below) based on need to fill vacancies, feedback received during the 2018 Port Tour, and effort to balance elections in the Northern and Central Management Areas.

Group 1 Ports: DCTF Elections in 2019, 2022, 2025, 2028

If your vessel's registered home port is in any of the following port complexes, you are eligible to vote in the Group 1 DCTF elections in 2019, 2022, 2025, and 2028:

- Crescent City (includes all California ports north of Trinidad)
- Trinidad
- Fort Bragg (includes all ports in Mendocino County)
- San Francisco (includes ports from within San Francisco Bay)
- South of Half Moon Bay (includes all ports from Monterey Bay south)

Group 1 fishermen will be able to nominate individuals in Group 2 elections, but they will not be eligible to vote in that election.

Group 2 Ports: DCTF Elections in 2020, 2023, 2026

If your vessel's registered home port is in any of the following port complexes, you are eligible to vote in the Group 2 DCTF elections in 2020, 2023, and 2026:

- Eureka (includes Shelter Cove and all ports within Humboldt Bay)
- Bodega Bay (includes Bolinas and all ports within Tomales Bay)
- Half Moon Bay
- Non-resident California Dungeness crab permitholder (includes all out of state vessel port registrations designated as Unknown)

Group 2 fishermen will be able to nominate individuals in Group 1 elections, but they will not be eligible to vote in that election.

Who is allowed to participate in DCTF commercial fishing elections?

Valid Dungeness crab permitholders are eligible to vote in the port complex where the vessel is registered. In an election year, all elected members in a port are subject to reelection.

How is my homeport determined?

Your home port is the port at which your vessel is registered with CDFW. If you would like to request a change to your home port, you must submit the change to CDFW's License Revenue Branch based on your vessel registration documents (either via the California DMV or the US Coast Guard).

How do I participate in the elections?

During each election cycle, elections will be carried out with two separate mailings:

Mailing #1: Nomination Form: The entire fleet will receive a letter to solicit nominations, regardless of their homeport. We request that you nominate several Dungeness crab commercial fishing permitholders to serve on the DCTF – self nominations are welcome and encouraged. You may nominate multiple people from any home port complex or production level. To participate in the nomination process, commercial Dungeness crab permitholders must provide their CDFW vessel ID number, commercial fishing permit number, and updated contact information. Please also indicate if you would be willing to serve on the DCTF if elected.

Mailing #2: Ballot: Ballots will be compiled from the list of nominees. Only permitholders within the specific election Group (e.g. Group 1 or Group 2 Ports – see above) will receive a ballot in that election year and will only be able to vote for their representative(s) in the same registered home port complex/production level

combination. Each permit represents one vote and permit holders with more than one permit will be able to vote for each port complex/production level combination that their respective permits represent. Votes tallied from these ballots will determine the members who serve on the DCTF.

How will I learn about the results of the election?

Results of the DCTF elections will be posted on OPC's website and shared via the DCTF listserv.

