



~California Dungeness Crab Task Force~

<http://www.opc.ca.gov/2009/04/dungeness-crab-task-force/>

2019-21 DCTF Work Plan

Dungeness Crab Task Force

Updated October 2019

This document was developed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) with support from the California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) Administrative Team. The DCTF approved and finalized the 2019-21 DCTF Work Plan during the October 16-17, 2019 DCTF Meeting. More information about the DCTF including meeting agendas and materials is available at:

<http://www.opc.ca.gov/2009/04/dungeness-crab-task-force/>

Work Plan Period: September 1, 2019- June 30, 2021

Overview

The California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) is directed by Fish and Game Code section 8276.4 to review and evaluate Dungeness crab fishery management measures and provide its recommendations to the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the Fish and Game Commission (FGC). This work plan identifies tasks that aim to achieve a number of CDFW's objectives over the next nineteen months to improve the DCTF's efficiency, specifically:

- Discuss CDFW and DCTF priorities, determine the process for arriving at agreement, and identify areas of alignment (i.e. supporting an orderly fishery among the fleet)
- Facilitate and coordinate DCTF in-person meetings and discussions
- Review and develop recommendations on priority commercial Dungeness crab management issues, including but not limited to issues surrounding biotoxin management, Tri-State and the pre-season quality testing protocol and any proposed legislative bills and regulatory changes
- Work in collaboration with the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group to reduce the risk of whale entanglements in Dungeness crab fishing gear
- Serve as a conduit of information to/from the fleet to the Legislature, CDFW, and FGC
- Increase communications between the DCTF and broader industry (fishing participants, port associations, processors, etc.)

This work plan includes a general approach and schedule, including quarterly milestones, from September 2019 through June 2021 to ensure all CDFW priorities are addressed. This work plan will be reviewed by the DCTF prior to its implementation. Revisions and updates may be made by CDFW in direct consultation with the DCTF on an as needed basis evaluated against CDFW and DCTF priorities (see below). The work plan may also be modified based on progress made in achieving objectives to date, and needs for flexibility to address unforeseen issues that may arise.

Proposed/Draft CDFW Priorities for the CA Dungeness Crab Fishery

The following list of issues have been prioritized for the DCTF to address in 2019-2021. This list is intended to act as a starting place for DCTF agenda development to help ensure key deliverables and recommendations are arrived at in a timely, focused manner. Should urgent matters arise, this list may be adjusted accordingly after consultation with CDFW and the DCTF Executive Committee.

Top Priorities for 2019-2021

- Update Fishery Management Approach to Domoic acid events
 - Biotoxin Management Zones – develop consistent, pre-defined closure zones similar to Oregon
 - Consider the tools to enhance fishing opportunities during biotoxin delays including the viability of evisceration orders as well as identifying tools to improve manager’s ability to track landings during evisceration orders and ability to enforce fair start.
- Tri-State Process – Updates to pre-season quality testing authority to align w/current August 2019 Tri-State Quality Testing protocol (Section 8276.2 of the Fish and Game Code)
 - Lowering MQ to 24% pick rate
 - Allowing for multiple zones based on each port’s quality test results
 - Allowing for a delay in the northern management area beyond January 15 and into February 1 that would also consider entanglement risk
- Input on marine life entanglement and Working Group progress to date:
 - RAMP regulations – feasibility on available proposed management measures
 - Updates on research projects
 - Continued updates on Section 10 and Incidental Take Process including anticipated outreach events
- Updates and review of post-season Lost/Abandoned Gear Retrieval Program – in place by 2019-2020 post-season

A variety of other topics have been requested by the DCTF and public to be added to future DCTF discussions. Many of these topics have either been previously discussed with little to no change in DCTF’s recommendation or they are not as pressing at present and may detract from the other high priority issues. The topics, which are listed below, will be added to Executive Committee meeting agendas and the Executive Committee will try to move the conversations on these topics forward and add them to the next DCTF meeting agenda at the appropriate time.

Executive Committee to Discuss

- Consider how to impose mandatory assessments on the industry to cover the fleet’s legal defense
- Address issues of the Dungeness crab commercial trap limit program. The highest priority is a discussion about replacing biennial with annual buoy tags. Other topics include waivers for stacking 175-trap permits and eliminating in-season replacement tags; Section 8276.5 of the Fish and Game Code and Sections 132.1-132.5, Title 14, California Code of Regulations
- Explore tools to decrease the number of fishing lines in the commercial Dungeness crab fishery
- Inclusion of the central management area (District 10 south) and any other issues involving Tri-State and quality testing, Section 8276 and 8276.2 of the Fish and Game Code
- Explore opportunities and pathways to support a buy-out, especially for inactive permits

Approach

A number of tools will be utilized to ensure this work plan will be efficiently executed.

DCTF In-Person Meetings: One (1) DCTF meeting is anticipated to be convened annually to discuss the topics above and to confirm this work plan. DCTF recommendations resulting from those meetings will be forwarded to the appropriate entities via memorandums to inform the Legislature, Tri-State, CDFW,

and FGC in their efforts to manage the Dungeness crab fishery. *Timing:* Meeting dates are pending, but are anticipated to take place in October 2019 and October 2020.

Executive Committee (EC) Conference Calls: Up to six (6) EC conference calls (i.e., three calls per year) will be utilized for continuing discussions on priority topics as well as scoping other DCTF agenda items with the goal of developing draft proposals, options, and considerations for review at the in-person DCTF meeting. *Timing:* Conference call dates are to be determined but are anticipated to take place between January-October 2020.

Emails and Other Electronic Communications: Regular emails will be circulated to the DCTF public email list and to all DCTF Members to share Dungeness crab fishery updates, circulate materials that may inform DCTF discussions, and follow up on DCTF business. The [DCTF webpage](#) will also be regularly updated to ensure all materials, summaries, and memos/reports are available. *Timing:* Ongoing.

Internal Planning: The Admin Team will maintain regular communications with CDFW, in partnership with the OPC, to ensure this work plan is successfully completed. *Timing:* Ongoing.

Background Research: The Admin Team will investigate all topics to the extent feasible and will provide background information to DCTF deliberations. *Timing:* Ongoing.

DCTF Follow Up: In addition to email communications, the Admin Team will conduct semi-regular phone calls with DCTF Members to ensure emails are being received and make sure all Members are up-to-date on DCTF business. *Timing:* Ongoing.

Milestones and Timeline

Milestone	Description	Timing
DCTF Meeting 1	<p><i>Purpose:</i> To finalize 2019-21 work plan and discuss biotoxin management, Tri-State quality testing protocol, updates on marine life entanglement risk management, update Executive Committee membership, discuss election process for DCTF 2020, and any other management updates.</p> <p><i>Approach:</i> CDFW to present proposed Biotoxin Mgmt. Zones, scope evisceration process w/ support from CDPH, review Working Group process and Incidental Take Permit process, discuss recent updates to pre-season testing protocol</p>	October 16-17, 2019
DCTF 2019 Report	Summary of recommendations developed during fall 2019 DCTF meeting (see above) and will be forwarded to the appropriate entities which may include the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee, Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, CDFW, and FGC.	TBD- Anticipated January 2020
EC Conference Call 1	<i>Purpose:</i> Scope current and future management topics	TBD- Anticipated January 2020
DCTF Elections	Hold 2020 DCTF elections for remaining ports: Non-resident, Eureka, Bodega Bay and Half Moon Bay (no elections scheduled until 2022)	Winter-Spring 2020

EC Conference Call 2	<i>Purpose:</i> Scope current and future management topics	TBD- Anticipated Spring 2020
EC Conference Call 3	<i>Purpose:</i> Discussion of priority issues for upcoming DCTF Meeting October 2020	TBD- Anticipated Summer 2020
DCTF Meeting 2	<i>Purpose:</i> TBD	TBD- Anticipated October 2020
EC Conference Call 4	<i>Purpose:</i> Scope current and future management topics	TBD- Anticipated Fall/Winter 2020
DCTF 2020 Report	Summary of recommendations developed during fall 2020 DCTF meeting and will be forwarded to the appropriate entities which may include the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee, Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, CDFW, and FGC.	TBD- Anticipated January 2021

Deliverables

All interim and final reporting of all deliverables will be developed by the Admin Team on behalf of the DCTF. DCTF Members will be provided an opportunity to review all meeting summaries, memos, and reports, before they are finalized.

- *Meetings and Conference Calls*
 - Agendas for DCTF meetings and EC conference calls to be posted on the DCTF webpage no later than 10-days prior to the scheduled meeting.
 - High-level summaries of DCTF meetings and EC conference calls that will be posted on the DCTF webpage as they are available.
 - Materials developed to inform DCTF/EC discussions (e.g. options documents, public comment letters, presentations, etc.).
 - Calls with DCTF Members to inform meeting agenda development.
- *Reports*
 - Reports summarizing DCTF recommendations