

California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF)
2019-2021 Work Plan Implementation
Worksheet for DCTF and Executive Committee Review/Use
Drafted January 2020

During the October 2019 DCTF meeting, the DCTF Executive Committee was tasked with considering ideas and options for full DCTF review on a number of priority issues:

- Consider how to impose mandatory assessments on the industry to help fund priority topics/issues (e.g., 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

The DCTF Administrative Team has developed the following questions for the DCTF's review and input. Information gathered will be used to support the Executive Committee's discussions on these topics.

Exploring Mandatory Assessments

The DCTF explained that funds obtained through these mandatory fees would be used to cover costs to address/be responsive to high priority issues, including litigation, facing the industry.

Foundational Questions

- Are there examples of a mandatory fee being assessed to a specific fishery to help fund priority topics/issues?
 - Are there examples of a mandatory fee being assessed on a fishery (or broader group of citizens) for use in legal defense?
- What mechanisms could be used to implement a mandatory assessment in California? (e.g., CA Dept of Food and Agriculture, etc.)
 - What are the legal/practical constraints with the mechanism(s)?
 - Where would those funds be housed?
 - How would the funds be collected?
- How much money would need to be collected?
- How long would the assessment be imposed on the fleet?

Organizational Questions

- Who would manage the funds? (e.g., a Legislative Committee, a convened board, an Executive Director?)

- How would the funds be distributed?
- How would decisions on the use of the funds be made?
- Who(m) has the authority to decide how the money is spent/prioritized?
 - Do certain safeguards need to be in place to prevent improprieties?
 - Would additional funding need to be allocated for administration of the funds?
- How would financial decision-making be shared with stakeholders?
- How would the need/effectiveness of the assessment be evaluated long-term?

Options for Reducing the Number of Vertical Lines

The DCTF is interested in considering how best to reduce vertical lines to help address entanglements and other issues.

- Are there examples of other fisheries in California (or elsewhere) that have taken steps to reduce vertical lines? If so, please share details.
- What would need to be in place to reduce vertical lines in the commercial Dungeness crab fishery?
 - Are new regulations needed to implement these options?
- Are there impacts to the fleet that should be considered?
 - Would there be impacts to the fleet's productivity?
 - Would there be impacts to the fleet's safety?
 - Are there mitigation options to avoid/minimize potential impacts?
- What is the associated cost?
 - Are there costs in terms of materials/gear?
 - Are there socioeconomic costs?

Exploring a Permit Buy-Out Program

- Are there examples of permit buy-out programs in other fisheries in California? Elsewhere? If so, please share details.
- What funding sources could be used to support a California commercial Dungeness crab buy-out program?
 - How much money would be needed?
- What is the goal for the number of commercial Dungeness crab fishing permits in California?
- Who would implement the program?