

California Dungeness Crab Task Force
November 2023 DCTF Member Prep
Drafted by the Administrative Team
Circulated October 2023

This document is intended to help Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) Members prepare for the November 2-3, 2023, DCTF meeting in Santa Rosa, CA. It is also intended to help support discussions that will be had in ports throughout California in anticipation of the meeting. The document contains questions and ideas generated by the Executive Committee at their May 25 and July 13, 2023, meetings. [DCTF Members are encouraged to discuss the questions with their ports/production level in preparation for the November 2023 DCTF meeting.](#)

***This is not an exhaustive list of what the DCTF will discuss during the November 2-3, 2023, DCTF meeting. Additional questions, considerations, and options may be developed for these agenda items and voted on during the November 2023 DCTF meeting.*

AGENDA ITEM (3) DCTF CHARTER

- Please review the DCTF draft updated charter as it will need to be voted on and approved at the start of the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM (5) EXPERIMENTAL FISHING PERMITS (EFPs)

- What are your thoughts on allowing the fishing/testing of gear prior to the fall opener? In the spring while the fishery is open? After the fishery closes in spring/summer?
- What are your thoughts on allowing the use of alternative gear in the fall prior to the opener with the use of traditional gear?

AGENDA ITEM (6) ALL THINGS WHALES AND RAMP

Gear-marking

- Provide guidance on how the state could phase in gear/line-marking without a need to purchase all new line at once. Ideas generated at recent DCTF Executive Committee meetings include:
 - Use dyed rope, paint, or tape to mark lines until new line can be purchased.
 - Marked line wouldn't need to be the full extent of the line, only shots that could be added to existing setups. *(Note: the length and location of the shot would need to be discussed)*
- How long would it take for fishermen to phase in line-marking so there is 100% compliance (if new line isn't needing to be immediately purchased and tools like paint, etc. can be used)?

Gear Reduction

- Does your port support gear reduction as a means to allow the commercial fishing season to open sooner in the Fall if whales are still present?

- If yes, what percent of gear reduction is it no longer feasible to open the season and operate your business?

Whales Best Practices Guide

- Members discussed the Best Practices Guide at the July Executive Committee meeting and suggested it was a priority for the November DCTF meeting as described in the [meeting summary](#). Since that discussion, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has updated the document. The DCTF will decide during the meeting if it is still a priority for the November discussion.

AGENDA ITEM (7) The Tri-State Quality Testing Program

- The state of California uses the [Tri-State Quality testing protocols](#) to guide the testing program. What are your concerns with the program, if any?
 - Is there support in your port to change the pick rate? If yes, what are your collective thoughts on 25% pick rate? If not, please provide alternative proposals.
 - Should protocols dictate how much bait should be used in tests? If so, what is a reasonable amount?
 - Should the protocols be revisited to specify a minimum/maximum number of traps that should be used as opposed to a minimum poundage of crabs required to do the testing?
 - Should the requirement related to minimum poundage for a test be revised so that a minimum number of crabs are needed for the test (e.g., 100 crabs)?
 - Should protocols remain the same?
- The Executive Committee expressed concerns about testing procedures that are not part of the protocols. What are your port's concerns?
 - How should vessels be selected to test for crab quality? Ideas generated at recent DCTF Executive Committee meetings include:
 - CDFW selects vessels with good standing with CDFW and who are available.
 - Port associations will provide vessel names, and CDFW will follow up.
 - If there is insufficient budget/capacity for observers to be engaged at all stages of quality testing, what stage(s) are the highest priority for observers to ensure a legitimate process: 1) Setting gear, 2) Pulling traps, or 3) In the processing facilities?
- Should California revisit and explore the inclusion of the Central Management Area in the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Agreement with the Tri-State Committee?

AGENDA ITEM (12) POSSIBLE REINTRODUCTION OF SEA OTTERS

- What message should the DCTF send to the California Legislature, CDFW, and the Fish and Game Commission regarding the potential sea otter reintroduction along the North Coast of California?