

January 21,2025  
Trinidad Bay Fisherman's Marketing Association  
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Trinidad, CA. 95570

California Fish and Game Commission  
715 P St.,16th Floor  
PO Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Dear President Murry and Commissioners,

We are writing to share our associations comments on the importance of derelict commercial Dungeness crab gear retrieval.

It is clear over the past several years that the majority of humpback whale entanglements are due to derelict gear, Dungeness Crab and at least 8 other fisheries.

We believe there are a number of factors contributing to these entanglements. Among them, regulations and permitting for derelict gear retrieval, increasing humpback populations, and other fishing regulations.

Our goal is to minimize the interaction between the increasing populations of humpback whales and Dungeness crab gear. To that end, derelict gear retrieval is an integral step in achieving that goal.

It is clear that derelict gear quickly attracts whales and other marine life due to the marine growth and ecosystems that develop on and around the ropes of derelict gear.

Indeed, removing derelict gear from the ocean is a proven method of decreasing entanglements.

The permit and retrieval process for derelict gear has become so burdensome and cumbersome from beginning to end that more and more derelict gear remains in the ocean. We must streamline the process, and develop reporting that is simple and easy. We do not have to reinvent the wheel. Many of Oregon's current derelict gear regulations can be adopted. For example, in season 25 pots, a day can be retrieved, crab can be retained and sold, location and owner entered into the onboard log and pots are returned to shore. Another example is an Oregon statute that allows fishermen to retrieve gear of another disabled vessel proactively before it becomes stuck or derelict. Oregon allows for the retention of crab thus incentivizing the gear retrieval.

We would like to work together with the department to improve the derelict and disabled vessel gear retrieval process. We believe partnering together and prioritizing the development of innovative technologies such as computer applications to identify the location of derelict gear and log when it has been removed will be instrumental in achieving our goal.

The removal of derelict gear will decrease entanglements and interactions with humpback whales. We are willing to do our part to prevent and remove derelict Dungeness Crab gear. We look forward to a partnership with the department.

Respectfully,

John Provolt, President

Alex Schmit, Vice President

Trinidad Bay fisherman's marketing Association

CC: Senator Mike McGuire

Charles Bonham, Director CDFW

Dungeness Crab Task Force