



Leveraging Partnerships & Technology for Improved Lost Gear Recovery

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.



Presentation to
Dungeness Crab Task Force
Executive Committee
May 28, 2025



~California Dungeness Crab Task Force~

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

At the October 2024 Dungeness Crab Task Force Meeting, the DCTF voted unanimously (19-0) for the following recommendations:

The DCTF recommends the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Association PCFFA and the Nature Conservancy (TNC) work collaboratively to expand California's lost-gear retrieval efforts.

The DCTF recommends the industry work with PCFFA and TNC to coordinate the use of a user-friendly smartphone app developed by TNC. This app would allow commercial Dungeness crab fishermen and all other boaters to document the latitude and longitude from images taken of lost gear on the water and track retrieval efforts. The DCTF believes that crowdsourcing lost trap location data will better support a coastwide, voluntary lost gear recovery effort by the fleet.

The DCTF recommends CDFW, TNC, and PCFFA coordinate immediately to identify an expedited way to incorporate the data collected from the TNC app to satisfy gear retrieval reporting requirements outlined in §132.2, Title 14, CCR. The data collection from the app should eventually replace the monthly reporting outlined in §132.2 and provide more robust and real-time data of lost gear retrieval efforts, including the quantity of Dungeness crab lost gear retrieved from the water. The DCTF requests an update on the progress of this data integration process by the summer of 2025.



Since 2015, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations (PCFFA) have led the way in lost gear recovery, pioneering a port-based retrieval model in Half Moon Bay and San Francisco that has successfully removed hundreds of traps from California's waters.

In response to the recommendation from the Dungeness Crab Task Force, we are now planning to expand these efforts to additional ports across the state to further protect marine life and support sustainable fisheries.



LOST GEAR RECOVERY PORT PROGRAM MODEL

- This successful model has been operational for 10 years and is designed to generate funds to help cover the costs of recovery efforts through the collection of a trap fee.
- From 2015 until 2021 the program operated voluntarily
- 2021-2023 These programs operated under a CDFW permit process to allow recovery after early closure
- New regulation changes to Title 14 § 132.2 enacted by CDFW allow for lost gear retrieval as authorized by the Director after a RAMP closure.

Recovery
Captains bring in
gear and are
paid per trap
recovered.

Gear is stored
while port
coordinator
contacts owners

Original Owners
pick up gear and
pay trap fee

Remaining
pots are sold
or salvaged



CrabGear

CrabGear supports the efforts of the West Coast Dungeness Crab Fishery to collect lost fishing gear. Recovery Captains in participating ports can use this mobile application to report where and when gear are recovered.

CrabGear is available for both iOS and Android

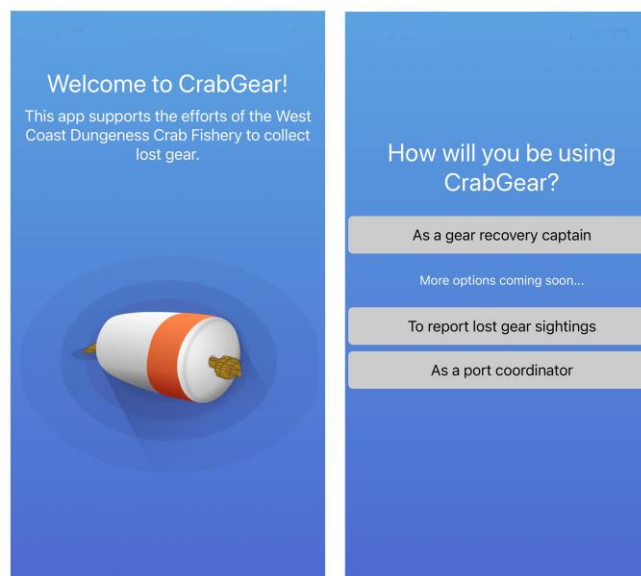


PORT COORDINATOR LOGIN

[Terms of Service](#)

Tools & Technology

Over the past 10 years, we have used technology solutions to streamline lost gear recovery for captains and port coordinators. This has culminated in the creation of an app called Crab Gear.





Recovery Tools



Recovery Captains
receive tags to identify
retrieved pots

Crab Industry Lost Fishing Gear
Recovery Program



5,810



Recovered On	03/11/2025
Time	9:28 am
Latitude	-122.433
Longitude	37.459

A simple scan of the tag
captures recovery time
and location

Save



LOGBOOK INSTRUCTIONS- CDFW LOST GEAR RECOVERY

Logbook Pages Available to Print:

<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=175844&inline>

CrabGear Half Moon Bay

- Vessel Reports
- Yard List
- All Recoveries
- People
- Map
- Project Settings
- Data Export
- Print Tags

Recoveries, 2025

This list includes *all* recoveries from 2025. For gear currently in the yard, refer to the [Yard List](#). Click on any tag to see recovery details.

0 Recoveries
0 Returned
0 Auctioned
0 Destroyed
0 CDFW Destroyed
0 CDFW Auctioned

Tag	Status	Recovered At	Owner Name	Vessel Name	Condition	Amount Received
Rows per page: 15 0-0 of 0						

Port Coordinators play a critical role in coordinating recovery efforts and managing communication, logistics, finances, and reporting.

Logbook data is entered into the Crab Gear Application to track Port Coordinators' efforts in contacting gear owners and facilitating gear returns.

The Crab Gear Application also supports reporting and tracking gear from recovery through final distribution.

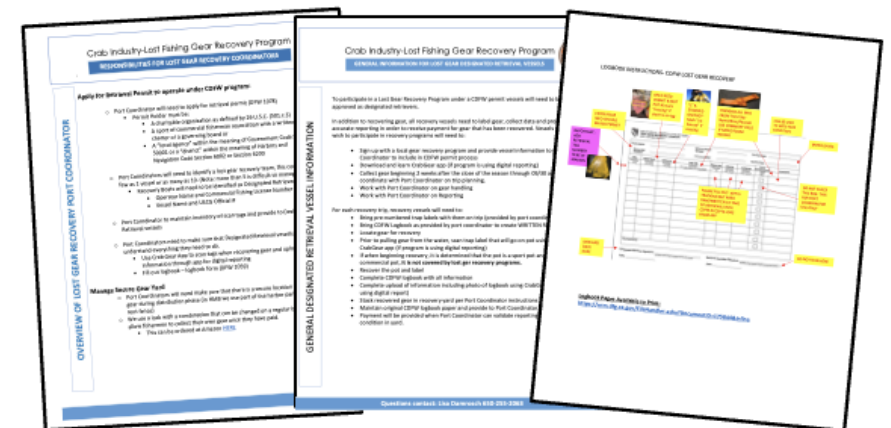


Scaling Up Solutions

Building on this foundation, our initiative will strengthen existing efforts to:

- **Expand port-based recovery programs** beyond Half Moon Bay and San Francisco to key fishing ports statewide.
- **Increase fleet participation** by leveraging new regulatory opportunities for voluntary gear retrieval.

Training Materials and Support will be available to new ports





NEW

Gear Spotting

Enhance the Crab Gear application with a public-facing gear spotting feature (in development)

Empower, whale watchers, and the broader maritime community to report lost gear using geotagged photos

Supply Port Coordinators with sighting locations to guide and optimize retrieval efforts

Provide opportunity for interested parties to receive news updates on retrieval initiatives through email



More Information Coming Soon