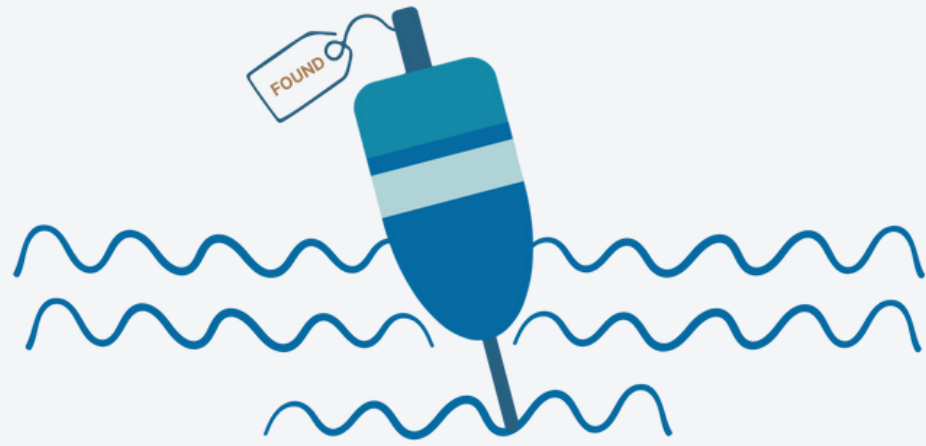




Fishermen's Gear Recovery Network

Powered by California's Commercial Fishing Fleet





BUILDING A STATEWIDE NETWORK

- At the 2024 Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) meeting, there was a formal recommendation for TNC and PCFFA to partner and expand recovery efforts statewide.
- With the generous support of the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), this vision is now becoming reality.
- Together, we are building a formalized Fishermen's Gear Recovery Network and working with ports to launch new programs and expand efforts across California.



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

The Fishermen's Gear Recovery Network is a fishermen-led program that coordinates the retrieval of lost Dungeness crab gear. Ports appoint a coordinator, recruit retrieval captains, and use shared tools like the CrabGear App and Gear Spotting Form to track, store, and return gear. The program ensures retrieval crews are compensated and lost gear is managed efficiently under CDFW regulations.



THE NETWORK & CDFW PATHWAYS

Fishermen-led, operating within CDFW regulations

- Run by the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations (PCFFA)
- Coordinates retrieval of lost Dungeness crab gear, ensures gear is returned, and retrieval crews are compensated
- Operates under two CDFW regulatory pathways: Authorized Retrieval by Dungeness Crab Vessels or Permitted Trap Gear Retrieval

UNDERSTANDING THE TWO RETRIEVAL PATHWAYS

Authorized Dungeness Crab
Trap Retrieval (Section
132.2(a))

Permitted Trap Gear Retrieval
Program (132.7)

Either (or both) of these programs can be operated in any given port

Gear Retrieval Pathways

	Authorized Dungeness Crab Trap Retrieval (Section 132.2(a))	Permitted Trap Gear Retrieval Program (132.7)
Retrieval Permit Required for CDFW	No	Yes, Trap Gear Retrieval Program (TGRP)
Retriever Requirements	Current Commercial Dungeness Crab Permit	•Designated by TGRP permit holder AND •Commercial fishing license AND •Trap fishery experience within past 3 years
In-Season Trap Recovery Limits	Up to 6 traps per trip, unless a waiver is issued	•Not allowed
Post-Season Trap Recovery Dates	July 16 - Oct 31, or as authorized by the Director when implementing RAMP closures	•15 days after scheduled season closure (or as authorized by the Director) and until Sept 30
Post-Season Trap Recovery Limits	Unlimited	Unlimited
Documentation Requirement	Noted on vessel's log	On DFW 1059 logbook form-proof of notification
Reporting Requirement	Monthly reporting to CDFW	Logbooks returned to CDFW at end of retrieval period
Who Owns Retrieved Gear	Original Dungeness crab trap owner	Retrieval Permittee
Required to contact Dungeness Crab Permit Holder	No	Yes, within 7 days
Payment for Returning Retrieved Trap	Voluntary by original Dungeness crab trap owner	Yes, by original Dungeness crab permit holder or CDFW if all notification and permit conditions are met



HOW WE STRENGTHEN BOTH PATHWAYS

We Provide

- Permit support (for permitted pathway)
- Training & outreach materials
- Reporting templates & admin support
- Ongoing guidance & troubleshooting

Program Tools

- CrabGear App – digital gear logging
- Gear Spotting Form – public & fleet reports of lost gear

HOW TO BE A PART OF THE NETWORK

Bringing the Network to Your Port

- Join the Network – choose exempt or permitted retrieval pathway
- Identify a Port Coordinator –Coordinator will set up port specific processes and accounting supported by the network as needed
- Recruit Retrieval Captains – fishermen who run retrieval trips
- Access Tools & Training Materials – the network provides CrabGear App, logbooks, and Gear Spotting Form;



How the program works:

OVERVIEW



**Gear is spotted by
maritime users and
reported**



**REPORT GEAR
to help inform
recovery
efforts**



**Gear is recovered
by compensated
commercial
fishermen**



**Port coordinators
process
recovered gear, &
locate the owner**



**Recovered gear is
sold back to its
owner at a low
cost**

How the program works:

REPORTING & PAYMENT

Closing the Loop

- Port Coordinator tracks all gear in CrabGear.org/Excel
- Payments collected → captains compensated
- Unclaimed gear handled per port process (sale, extended storage, disposal)
- PCFFA provides templates & staff support for reporting
- Data shared back to CDFW & the Network to show progress



NETWORK RESOURCES

Training & Guidance

- Step-by-step materials for Port Coordinators & Retrieval Captains
- Support on gear logging, storage, reporting, and outreach

Program Tools

- CrabGear App – digital gear logging
- Paper logbooks & templates – standardized tracking
- Gear Spotting Form – public & fleet reporting

Ongoing Support

- Permit application assistance (for permitted pathway)
- Reporting templates & admin support
- Staff troubleshooting & guidance
- Community of practice across participating ports



PROGRAM TOOLS

CrabGear App

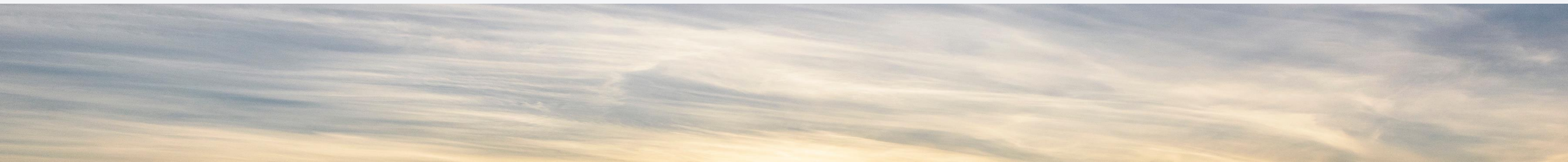
- Used by retrieval captains to scan and log every trap recovered
- Creates a digital record linked to paper logbooks
- Data flows to Port Coordinators for reporting and tracking

Gear Spotting Form

- Online form for recreational fishermen, maritime professionals, and the public
- Reports sightings of lost gear directly into the Network
- Provides additional leads for Port Coordinators to assign to retrieval captains

Together

- Ensure all lost gear is documented, traceable, and recoverable
- Make gear recovery efficient, transparent, and collaborative across fleets and communities



OUTREACH MATERIALS

Port Flyer



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About the Program

An industry-led effort of Dungeness crab fishermen working together to recover lost fishing gear and keep California's ocean clean.

The program helps:

- Reduce gear conflicts
- Protect marine life
- Promote resilient coastal fisheries

Start Reporting Lost Gear!



How it Works:

- 1 Spot lost gear buoy after the season ends
- 2 Scan the QR code & submit a quick form
- 3 The captains in our network recover the gear!

Are you a...



Maritime Professional:
Help us by spotting lost gear while you're out on the water.



Commercial Fisherman:
Contact your Port Coordinator or PCFFA to get involved in gear recovery.



Ocean Lover:
See gear? Tell your captain.
Be a steward – spread the word.

Learn more at
PCFFA.ORG/LOSTGEAR



Lost Gear Form QR Code Sticker



Fishermen's Gear Recovery Network

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Do you see lost fishing gear?



- 1 Scan QR Code when you see lost gear.
- 2 Select 'DISCARD' to start a new form.
- 3 Fill out lost gear information and submit!

If you think you may be observing entangled marine life, call (877) 767-9425





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Reporting Gear Sightings

How will you be using
CrabGear?

As a gear recovery captain

To report lost gear sightings

Gear Spotting

Lost Fishing Gear Reporting Form

Thank you for helping us track and clean up lost fishing gear

Your submissions will be used by local ports to direct lost gear recovery efforts. Please allow the form to view your location so that the abandoned gear can be retrieved and cleaned up. The form takes your location automatically when you open a new form. You can make multiple submissions. This information is anonymous unless you choose to include your name and contact information.

*How would you like to provide the location of the gear?

- ☐ Have your phone capture your current location
- ☐ Manually enter lat/long in degrees, minutes, seconds
- ☐ Provide a picture of your plotter showing coordinates

*Use your camera to take a photo of the fishing gear

You can also upload an image from your phone

Click here to upload file. (< 10MB)



When did you see this gear?

yyyy-mm-dd

hh:mm



*What kind of gear is it?

- ☒ Crab buoy
- ☐ Lobster buoy
- ☐ Lobster trap
- ☐ Net
- ☐ Other/unknown



What depth were you at when you saw this gear?

Please include units.

*Are you a participating vessel of the Fishermen's Gear Recovery Network?

- ☐ Yes, I've received training
- ☐ No

Add any notes or comments regarding the gear.

Name

Email

Thank You



The Nature
Conservancy

