



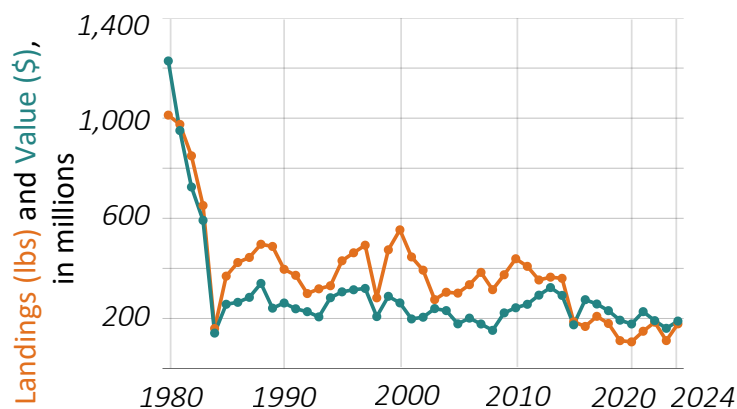
COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

California Coast and Ocean Report *Status, Progress, and What's Ahead* 2026

Commercial fishing is woven into the fabric of California's coastal communities, supporting thousands of fishing families and delivering local, wild-caught seafood to millions of Californians each year. State and federal agencies work to manage these fisheries sustainably, balancing the health of the ocean with the livelihoods that depend on it. But a changing ocean is putting both fish populations and the people who depend on them under growing pressure.

STATUS

Most commercial fisheries in California are in good condition, with healthy stocks, stable catch, and consistent dockside value. However, **climate change is causing major disruptions to some of the most important fisheries in California**. These disruptions include continued impacts to the commercial Dungeness crab fishery and an unprecedented three-year closure of the commercial salmon fishery.



Over the last decade, two major metrics of fishery health – “catch,” or total pounds of fish landed, and “ex-vessel value,” or total amount paid for fishermen’s catch – have remained generally stable, despite an overall trend of decline in both of these metrics over the last fifty years.

PROGRESS

In the last several years, the state has **taken major action to support healthy commercial fisheries**. California made history with the removal of four dams on the Klamath River, completed in 2024, as the largest dam removal and river restoration project ever undertaken in the United States. For the first time in over a century, salmon can reach hundreds of miles of spawning habitat once blocked by dams. State agencies are also working to improve the “climate readiness” and adaptability of fisheries management through innovative methods like **modernized fisheries data collection**.

LOOKING AHEAD

The **accelerating impacts of climate change** – from drought and wildfire to warming waters and kelp loss – **pose significant risks to California’s commercial fisheries**. Through proactive, climate-ready fisheries management, technological innovation, and investments in coastal community resilience, the state will continue to **work with fishing communities to combat these threats and support healthy and profitable fisheries into the future**.

FISHERY SPOTLIGHTS

DUNGENESS CRAB

One of California's oldest and most valuable fisheries, the commercial Dungeness crab fishery generates tens of millions of dollars in revenue each year. However, the long-term health of this fishery is under threat due to multiple climate-driven issues, including increases in whale entanglements from crab fishing gear.



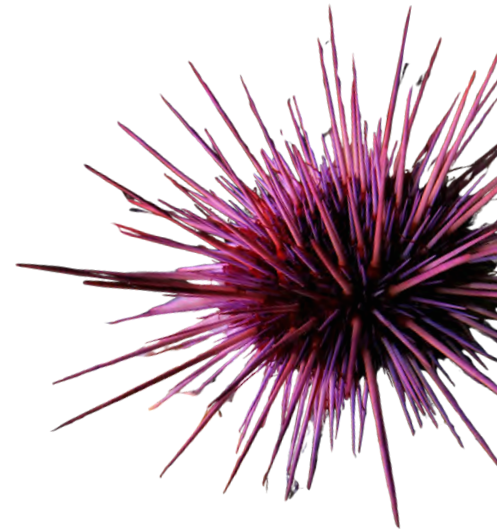
CHINOOK SALMON

California's commercial chinook salmon fishery has been closed since 2023, largely because of impacts to salmon populations caused by drought, wildfires, and the loss of river habitat that salmon need to spawn. Chinook salmon was declared a federal fishery disaster in 2023 and 2024.



RED SEA URCHIN

The health of the commercial red sea urchin fishery varies across the state. In Southern California, red sea urchins are generally abundant and the fishery is profitable. However, in Northern California, widespread kelp forest losses have led to fishery collapse. The federal government has allocated millions of dollars since 2016 to support the recovery of the Northern California red sea urchin fishery.



MARKET SQUID

Generally considered the most valuable fishery in California, commercial market squid landings were worth \$78 million in 2024, with most landings occurring in Monterey Bay and the Channel Islands. However, the health of the market squid fishery is highly dependent on ocean conditions; landings decrease in warm-water years.



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