



Frequently Asked Questions: Dungeness Crab Task Force Commercial Fishing Elections *March 2026*

What is the Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF)?

The DCTF is an advisory body that reviews and evaluates Dungeness crab fishery management measures and provides recommendations to the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the Fish and Game Commission (FGC). The representative(s) elected from each port will represent and communicate their respective port/production level's views on the fishery's management and develop recommendations for the State of California. Pursuant to subsection (e)(1) of Fish and Game Section 8276.4, recommendations can be made no later than January 15, 2022 and every three years thereafter through 2028.

What is the composition of the DCTF?

The composition of the DCTF is described in Fish and Game Code Section 8276.4. The DCTF is composed of various members, including commercial and recreational fishermen, a member representing commercial passenger fishing vessel interests, crab processors, as well as non-voting members from non-governmental organizations, California Sea Grant and CDFW. The 17 commercial fishermen will be elected by their peers to serve on the DCTF. For more information and to sign up for the DCTF listserv, visit the DCTF homepage: <https://opc.ca.gov/dungeness-crab-task-force>.



How many representatives will each port have?

Representation for the following port complexes (ports) is as follows:

- Crescent City, 3 members
- Trinidad, 1 member
- Eureka, 2 members
- Fort Bragg, 2 members
- Bodega Bay, 2 members
- San Francisco, 2 members
- Half Moon Bay, 2 members
- Ports south of Half Moon Bay, 2 members
- California nonresident crab permit holders, 1 member (includes all out of state vessel port registrations designated as Unknown)

For ports with two elected members, one member shall represent the upper production level and one member shall represent the lower production level. For ports with three elected members, one member shall represent the upper production level, one member shall represent the lower production level, and one member shall represent both the upper and lower production levels. For ports with one elected member (Trinidad and nonresident), the member shall represent both the upper and lower production levels.

Who is allowed to participate in DCTF commercial fishing elections?

Valid Dungeness crab permit holders are eligible to vote in the port complex where the vessel is registered. In an election year, all elected members in a port are subject to reelection.

What is the election process and how do I participate?

During each election cycle, elections will be carried out with two separate mailings:

Mailing #1: Nomination Form: All Dungeness crab permit holders, regardless of their home port, will be mailed a letter to solicit nominations. Self-nominations are welcome and encouraged. To participate in the nomination process, you must provide your CDFW vessel ID number, commercial fishing permit number, and updated contact information and also indicate if you would be willing to serve on the DCTF if elected.

Mailing #2: Ballot: Ballots will be compiled from the list of nominees and will only be mailed to permit holders within the specific port complex up for election in 2025. Permit holders will only be able to vote for their representative(s) at the same registered port/production level and may only cast one vote per permit. Votes tallied from these ballots will determine the members who serve on the DCTF.

How is my home port determined?

Port representation is determined by the home port designated for your Dungeness crab permitted vessel in the Automated License Data System (ALDS). For the purposes of the DCTF election process, you can request a change to your home port if supported by your residence location and/or a recent history of landings at the port. However, this would not be an official change of your vessel registration's home port. Questions related to changing your home port on your vessel registration can be directed to CDFW's License Revenue Branch (LRBCOMM@wildlife.ca.gov).

Which ports are up for election in 2026?

As described in Fish and Game Code Section 8276.4, commercial fishermen will be elected to the DCTF by their peers to represent their port. DCTF elections shall be held every three years in each port, on a staggered basis across ports. The following ports are up for election in 2026:

- Eureka (includes Shelter Cove and all ports within Humboldt Bay)
- Bodega Bay (includes Bolinas and all ports within Tomales Bay)
- Half Moon Bay
- Non-resident California Dungeness crab permit holder (includes all out of state vessel port registrations designated as Unknown)

How are production levels calculated for the purposes of the DCTF elections?

Subsection (b)(2) of Fish and Game Code Section 8276.4 states, upper and lower production levels will be based on an average landing of Dungeness crab permitted vessels who landed a minimum of 25,000 pounds of crab during the five-year period before the beginning of an election cycle. This average is determined on a per port basis for Dungeness crab vessel permits registered at that port.

To determine production levels for the 2026 election, CDFW extracted Dungeness crab landings data for the last 5 seasons between 2020-21 and 2024-25 to sum up cumulative statewide landings

for each vessel permit. Dungeness crab permits were grouped by their current home port. Those within the ports that have cumulative total landings greater than or equal to 25,000 pounds were used to determine the average cumulative total per port. Permits having cumulative totals greater than the average are considered upper production level while permits having cumulative totals below the average are considered lower production level, including those who landed less than 25,000 pounds. Please see the enclosed Production Table document for the calculated average for each port that requires more than two members.

How does my production level relate to my pot tier?

Production levels consider cumulative landings in the 5 seasons before the election for purposes of creating the DCTF so does not consider your pot tier in the determination.

How will I learn about the results of the election?

Results of the DCTF elections will be posted on the DCTF website and shared via the DCTF listserv.