

STAFF SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 21, 2020

12A. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – STAFF REPORT**Today's Item****Information** **Action**

Receive the executive director's staff report, including staff recruitment, sesquicentennial planning, website/document accessibility, California Law Revision Commission recommendation, delegations to staff, 2019 mountain lion necropsy report, and Dungeness Crab Task Force 2019 report.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions (N/A)**Background*****Staffing and Recruitment***

During the last year, several out-of-class assignments helped keep FGC operating. Last week Susan Ashcraft completed a year as the acting deputy executive director and returned to her position as FGC's marine advisor; as deputy she helped keep us moving forward in a multitude of ways, including for strategic planning and service-based budgeting. With Susan returning to her marine advisor position, Elizabeth Pope returned to DFW's Marine Protected Areas Management Program. We are grateful to DFW's Marine Region for loaning Elizabeth to us for the last year to support MRC and for allowing her to return the last two weeks to complete meeting materials and join us today. We want to acknowledge the great work of Susan and Elizabeth and thank them both for their valuable contributions.

Multiple recruitment efforts are currently in process; with limited staff, such efforts have been staggered.

Deputy Executive Director. After a competitive recruitment effort, staff is pleased to announce that Rachel Ballanti has been selected and accepted the offer to fill the position. Rachel joins the team from the California Department of Water Resources and brings a wealth of policy and program experience. We are fortunate she can join us today to assist with the meeting; her first official day with FGC is Mar 2.

Administrative Assistant. Interviews for filling the vacant position are complete and references are being checked; staff expects to make a hiring decision within the week.

Regulatory Analyst. Sheri Tiemann, a longtime member of the staff, unexpectedly retired last month. Recruitment efforts for her replacement are underway. Staff expects to hold interviews for this position in early Mar. Staff also plans to hold a proper farewell for Sheri when she is able and will notify commissioners when it is scheduled.

Sea Grant State Fellow. Rose Dodgen, our 2020 fellow, has joined FGC staff as of Feb 18. Rose is finalizing her master's in biological sciences from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo later this year. Her thesis is focused on abundance and length patterns of rockfish species from fisheries-independent and fisheries-dependent surveys on the central coast of California. She hopes that her research will help determine how best to integrate fisheries-independent data into stock assessments of rockfish.

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150th Anniversary Celebrations

FGC and DFW turn 150 this year! The official anniversary date is Apr 2, 2020; initial preparations began last fall to commemorate the sesquicentennial. A number of activities will be scheduled throughout the year, beginning in Apr with a modest event on the north steps of the California State Capitol and a potential evening celebration at the Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park. Other activities include storytellers at future FGC meetings, a special issue of *Outdoors California*, a collection of historical public photos, a wildlife artwork competition, special tours at DFW wildlife areas and ecological reserves, and publications on the history of the two organizations. Another idea that has been suggested is creating a perpetual FGC award in recognition of outstanding conservation efforts. Staff will continue working with commissioners, DFW and stakeholders to advance the various activities.

Website / Document Accessibility

Meeting state-mandated accessibility standards continues to be a time-consuming challenge for staff, especially given the large volume of materials posted to the FGC website. To comply with website content accessibility standards, many staff members have taken an introductory course, but we have found that additional training is needed and ongoing. Challenges include trying to address software-specific requirements, tight deadlines and large volume of meeting materials, and the need to convert documents received by other agencies and the public. Staff continues to work to find solutions to this challenging situation.

California Law Revision Commission

Staff review of the California Law Revision Commission's (CLCR) tentative recommendation to revise the California Fish and Game Code, released last year, is still underway; the two-phase review process represents a significant workload. The recommendation includes a change in the name of the code book to the California Fish and Wildlife Code and, while not intended to be substantive, the proposal is a complete reorganization of the code. In the first phase, FGC staff is analyzing each CLRC comment and evaluating potential impacts to Title 14; our response is due no later than Jul 1, 2020. Consistent with the authority you granted the executive director in 2017, staff will develop and submit a response to CLRC on the first phase. The second phase response will focus on the reorganization and are due to CLRC no later than Jul 1, 2021.

Delegations to Staff

FGC's authorities require daily actions to meet its responsibilities and, hence, it employs an executive director and other staff to assist in conducting FGC's operations. Staff reviewed its delegated authorities from FGC and determined that it would be advisable to develop a more complete list of delegated tasks (Exhibit 2). Staff brings this list to you as a draft for initial consideration and feedback, with the goal of returning in Apr 2020 with a revised version intended for adoption; at any time, FGC may amend the delegations.

Mountain Lion Necropsy Report

To comply with Section 4807 of the California Fish and Game Code, DFW submitted its *2019 Mountain Lion Depredation Report* to FGC (Exhibit 3). As required, the report provides findings from necropsies conducted by FGC on any mountain lion taken for depredation and returned to

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DFW. FGC staff has submitted the report to the California State Legislature consistent with Section 4807 requirements.

Dungeness Crab Task Force 2019 Report

Fish and Game Code Section 8276.4 requires the California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) to review and evaluate commercial Dungeness crab management measures and submit recommendations to the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, DFW, and FGC. The DCTF administrative team has submitted a 2019 report with specific recommendations, in partial fulfillment of that requirement (Exhibit 4).

Significant Public Comments (N/A)**Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. [Staff Report on Staff Time Allocation and Activities](#), dated Feb 12, 2020
2. [Draft FGC delegations to staff](#), dated Feb 14, 2020
3. [DFW memo transmitting 2019 Mountain Lion Depredation Report](#), received Feb 11, 2020
4. [Email from Rachelle Fisher and Kelly Sayce, on behalf of the DCTF Administrative Team](#), transmitting the DCTF recommendations report, received Dec 11, 2019

Motion/Direction (N/A)

California Fish and Game Commission
Staff Report on Staff Time Allocation and Activities

February 12, 2020

Commission staff time is a tangible and invaluable asset. Especially since the Commission’s staff is so small, where and how staff members spend their time is important. This report identifies where Commission staff allocated time to general activity categories and to specific activities during December 2019 and January 2020. The general allocation table summarizes time across all staff classifications, though some classifications require a greater emphasis on certain task categories than others. For example, advisors can spend 25% or more of their time on special projects due to committee project assignments, while regulatory analysts spend up to 70% of their time on regulatory program tasks.

In this reporting period, the special projects category continues to take a larger proportion of staff time for items such as document accessibility, strategic planning, and work related to the California Law Revision Commission review. In December, staff spent considerable time preparing the Commission’s first risk assessment report to comply with the State Leadership Accountability Act; a biennial report that identifies risks to our organization and mitigating strategies, it was submitted to the California Department of Finance by the year-end deadline.

As noted in the staff summary and the table below, staff departures resulted in vacancies in approximately one quarter of our positions. With a small staff, even one departure has a tremendous impact on staff workload, so refilling positions swiftly is a high priority.

General Allocation

Task Category	December Staff Time	January Staff Time
Regulatory Program	13%	17%
Non-Regulatory Program	2%	3%
Commission/Committee Meetings	26%	12%
Legal Matters	5%	5%
External Affairs	4%	7%
Special Projects	9%	7%
Administration	15%	18%
Leave Time	15%	13%
Unfilled Positions	24%	26%
Total Staff Time ¹	108%	107%

¹ Total staff time is greater than 100% due to overtime

Activities for December 2019

- Prepared for and conducted one publicly noticed meeting (December 11-12 Commission)
- Began preparations for two publicly noticed meetings (January 15 Wildlife Resources Committee, January 16 Tribal Committee)
- Advertised and recruited for the deputy executive director position
- Participated in Red Abalone Fishery Management Plan Project Team and Administrative Team meetings
- Conducted stakeholder discussion about the draft Delta fisheries management policy and potential revisions to the Commission's Striped Bass Policy
- Participated in multi-agency Chronic Wasting Disease Task Force meeting
- Prepared and submitted biennial report to comply with the State Leadership Accountability Act

Activities for January 2020

- Finalized preparations for and conducted two publicly noticed meetings (January 15 Wildlife Resources Committee, January 16 Tribal Committee)
- Began preparations for one publicly noticed meeting (February 21 Commission)
- Conducted interviews for the deputy executive director position
- Advertised and recruited for staff services analyst and regulatory analyst positions
- Participated in Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies mid-winter meeting in Monterey
- Participated in public outreach for recreational Dungeness crab marine life protections regulations
- Conducted stakeholder discussion about the draft Delta fisheries management policy and potential revisions to the Commission's Striped Bass Policy
- Participated in Red Abalone Fishery Management Plan Project Team and Administrative Team meetings
- Participated in a DFW-hosted stakeholder workshop on experimental fishing permits program development
- Attended information session and site tour of the Wildlife Way Station in Los Angeles County with DFW staff and Commissioner Burns
- Conducted planning meetings with DFW for FGC/DFW sesquicentennial celebrations
- Participated in quarterly regulation coordination meeting with DFW
- Participated in Marine Protected Areas Statewide Leadership Team meeting to review joint work plan tasks

General Allocation Categories with Sample Tasks

Regulatory Program

- Coordination meetings with DFW to develop timetables and notices
- Prepare and file notices, re-notices, and initial/final statements of reasons
- Prepare administrative records
- Track and respond to public comments
- Consult, research and respond to inquiries from the Office of Administrative Law

Non-Regulatory Program

- DFW partnership, including jointly developing management plans and concepts
- Process and analyze non-regulatory requests
- Develop, review and amend Commission policies
- Research and review adaptive management practices
- Review and process California Endangered Species Act petitions

Commission/Committee Meetings and Support

- Research and compile subject-specific information
- Review and develop policies
- Develop and distribute meeting agendas and materials
- Agenda and debrief meetings
- Prepare meeting summaries, audio files and voting records
- Research and secure meeting venues
- Develop and distribute after-meeting memos/letters
- Make travel arrangements for staff and commissioners
- Conduct onsite meeting management
- Process submitted meeting materials
- Provide commissioner support (expense claims, office hours, etc.)
- Process and analyze regulatory petitions

Legal Matters

- Public Records Act requests
- Process appeals and accusations
- Process requests for permit transfers
- Process kelp and state water bottom leases
- Litigation
- Prepare administrative records

External Affairs

- Engage and educate legislators, monitor legislation
- Maintain state, federal and tribal government relations
- Correspondence
- Respond to public inquiries
- Website maintenance

Special Projects

- Coastal Fishing Communities
- Fisheries Bycatch Workgroup
- Streamline routine regulatory actions
- Strategic planning
- Aquaculture best management practices

- Website accessibility issues

Administration

- Staff training and development
- Purchases and payments
- Contract management
- Personnel management

Leave Time

- Holidays
- Sick leave
- Vacation or annual leave

- Service Based Budgeting Initiative

- Budget development and tracking
- Health and safety oversight
- Internal processes and procedures
- Document archival

- Jury duty
- Bereavement

California Fish and Game Commission

DRAFT Powers of the Executive Director

February 14, 2020 DRAFT

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) has a wide range of responsibilities, some general in nature and some very specific. While the Commission meets at least once per month via committee or regular meetings, its authorities require daily actions to meet its responsibilities and, hence, employs an executive director and other staff to assist in conducting the Commission's operations.

The Commission believes that inherent in the employment of its executive director and other staff, those staff members have authority to carry out functions to help the Commission fulfill its responsibilities. However, the Commission adopts this document to explicitly authorize and ensure that its staff has the ability to maintain full functionality of the Commission.

By adopting this document, the Commission grants power for future actions and ratifies past staff action consistent with this grant.

Conditions of Delegations

1. The Commission reserves the power to continue to exercise all lawful authority and this action is not a relinquishment of any such authority.
2. The delegations herein are not exclusive and the Commission reserves the power to delegate other powers by other means on a temporary or permanent basis
3. These delegations do not supersede any previous delegations (including authority in regulation such as: CESA petition processing in Section 670.1, regulatory petition processing in Section 662, and adding meeting agenda items in Section 665(a)(3)(B)4.).
4. The executive director is granted the power to further delegate to other Commission staff or legal counsel the authority provided herein to the extent not expressly prohibited by this delegation, or not expressly prohibited by law.
5. The executive director shall report to the Commission at each regular meeting on important delegated actions.

Delegations

The Commission hereby grants the following authority upon its executive director:

Regulations

1. Perform all functions necessary to carry out decisions of the Commission regarding regulatory actions; those functions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Prepare and submit notices and other documents to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) consistent with Commission action on a regulatory agenda item.
 - b. Communicate with OAL regarding submissions and responding to issues raised by OAL or the public.
 - c. Withdraw rulemaking submissions in response to OAL objections or proposed objections and resubmit revised documents addressing OAL issues or concerns

- d. Develop final statements of reason and associated responses to public comments.
- e. Draft and file statements of proposed emergency regulatory action, consistent with Commission actions.
- f. Submit to OAL amendments to Commission regulations in response to a final determination regarding the listing status of a species under the California Endangered Species Act.
- g. Submit to OAL amendments to Commission regulations for autoconformance to federal regulations.

Adjudicatory Matters

2. Issue warnings in lieu of instituting a discretionary suspension or revocation of any license or permit.
3. Issue notice of revocation for instances of non-discretionary revocation (such as that under California Fish and Game Code Section 12155).
4. Assign hearing officers for the conduct of hearings on adjudicatory matters pending before the Commission (with a proposed decision resulting for the Commission's final consideration).
5. Entry of any orders that do not terminate the proceeding either in response to a party's motion or without prompting.
6. Issue notices regarding the status of adjudicatory matters pending before the Commission.
7. Reject untimely appeals.
8. Enter orders terminating any proceeding in response to settlement of the parties or in an otherwise uncontested matter.

Ongoing and Pending Litigation

9. Accept service of process on behalf of the Commission.
10. Refer litigation to the Office of the California Attorney General and request representation.
11. Make procedural determinations related to litigation strategy.
12. Negotiate terms of settlements in response to offers from other parties (with final approval reserved to the Commission).

California Environmental Quality Act

13. All actions necessary to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the guidelines generally implementing CEQA, and the Commission's Certified Regulatory Program approved under CEQA, except that the following authority is not delegated: (1) Reviewing and considering a final environmental impact report (or equivalent document) or approving a negative declaration prior to approving a project, and (2) making findings as required by Sections 15091 and 15093 of the Public Resources Code. This delegation includes but is not limited to:
 - a. Determining whether a project is exempt.
 - b. Conducting or causing to be conducted an initial study and deciding whether to prepare a draft EIR or negative declaration.

- c. Preparing a negative declaration or EIR.
- d. Determining that a negative declaration has been completed within a period of 180 days.
- e. Preparing responses to comments on environmental documents.
- f. Filing notices.

Contracts and Procurement

- 14. Obligate and manage Commission funds and all associated processing for the expenditure of those funds.
- 15. Execute contracts and amendments to contracts on behalf of the Commission or authorize the execution of those documents.
- 16. Acquire, maintain and dispose of tangible property, excluding real property, deemed appropriate for aiding in Commission and Commission staff functioning.
- 17. Execute leases and amendments to leases consistent with Commission approval to lease specific water bottoms for purposes of aquaculture.
- 18. Execute leases and amendments to leases consistent with Commission approval to lease kelp beds for the exclusive harvest of kelp.

Interagency and External Affairs

- 19. Act as tribal liaison and engage in consultations and negotiations with California tribes and tribal communities.
- 20. Represent Commission interests on formal and informal interagency and stakeholder work groups, leadership teams, and committees.
- 21. Submit reports to the California State Legislature where required by California Fish and Game Code.
- 22. Meet with legislators, legislative staff, and legislative committees and caucuses concerning subjects related to the work of the Commission, consistent with Commission direction.
- 23. Meet with local, state and federal government entities concerning subjects related to the work of the Commission.
- 24. Meet with members of the public and representatives of organizations concerning subjects related to the work of the Commission.

General Administration

- 25. Administer all personnel rules and take any personnel actions relating to employees of the Commission, contractors, or volunteers.
- 26. Make all necessary preparations for conducting Commission meetings.
- 27. Receive and send correspondence.
- 28. Develop and maintain document retention schedules for all Commission records and maintain Commission records consistent with those schedules.

29. Authorize federal acquisitions through the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, when the affected county/counties and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife are in support.
30. Perform other administrative actions as may be necessary to supervise, direct, conduct, and administer the operations of the Commission pursuant to its duties under the California Fish and Game Code and other provisions of California law applicable to the Commission.

Memorandum

Date: February 10, 2020

To: Melissa Miller-Henson
Executive Director
Fish and Game Commission

From: Charlton H. Bonham
Director

Subject: Mountain Lion Necropsy Report for 2019

Please find the attached report on mountain lion necropsies performed by the Department during 2019. This report was compiled by Department staff to comply with Section 4807 of the Fish and Game Code.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Kari Lewis, Chief, Wildlife Branch, at (916) 445-3789.

Attachment

ec: Stafford Lehr, Deputy Director
Wildlife and Fisheries Division
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Kari Lewis, Chief
Wildlife Branch
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State of California
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
Department of Fish and Wildlife

**Report to the Fish and Game Commission
Regarding Findings of Necropsies on Mountain Lions
Taken Under Depredation Permits in 2019**

**Prepared by the Wildlife Investigations Lab
Wildlife Branch, Wildlife and Fisheries Division**

January 10, 2020

Submitted in compliance with Section 4807 of the Fish and Game Code

Summary

According to California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) records at the time of this report, CDFW issued 194 mountain lion depredation permits in calendar year 2019 and 50 mountain lions were reported as being lethally taken.

The CDFW amended its mountain lion depredation, public safety, and animal welfare policy in December 2017. The purpose of the amendment is to avoid, where possible, mountain lion mortalities resulting from the issuance of depredation permits within specific geographically and genetically isolated mountain lion populations in Southern California as defined by Ernest et al. 2014¹. A three-tier stepwise process allows the CDFW to first issue non-lethal mountain lion depredation permits that include hazing by the permit holder or authorized agent prior to the issuance of a lethal depredation permit within the Santa Ana and Santa Monica Mountains (implementation areas). In 2019, four non-lethal depredation permits were issued in these implementation areas. Only one of these incidents from the Santa Ana Mountains subsequently resulted in the lethal take of a mountain lion on depredation.

CDFW staff issued the greatest numbers of permits in April, May, September, and December (Figure 1). The reasons for property owners obtaining mountain lion depredation permits varied; however, goats accounted for the highest number of the total reported incidents (43%) followed by sheep (32%) (Figure 2).

Although 50 mountain lions were reported as being taken in 2019, CDFW staff necropsied 67 depredation carcasses, with five necropsies still pending at the time of this report. Fifty-eight percent of mountain lions necropsied to date were male and 35% were female; the sexes of four lions were not specified (Table 1). Sixty-seven percent of mountain lions necropsied to date were aged as adults (24 months or older); 22% were sub-adults (13-24 months of age); 7% were juveniles (12 months or younger); and the ages of 2 mountain lions were not recorded (3%; Table 2). The highest number of depredation mountain lion carcasses came from CDFW's North Region (34%; Table 3).

Necropsied mountain lion stomach contents that could be identified most frequently contained hoofstock such as goat (18%); however, other contents were observed including a mylar balloon (Figure 3).

Note: There are two main factors that may contribute to a greater number of depredation necropsies recorded than the number of mountain lions reported as taken on depredation by the CDFW Wildlife Incident Reporting system (WIR). First, reporting parties and CDFW staff have reported intermittently being unable to close WIR depredation incidents and report take. Additionally, the WIR system experienced technical difficulties during the month of August and paper permits were issued during that time. CDFW continues to make efforts to recover these permits, input reported data, and update the WIR system.

¹ Ernest, Holly B., T.W. Vickers, S.A. Morrison, M.R. Buchalski, W.M. Boyce. 2014. Fractured Genetic Connectivity Threatens a Southern California Puma (*Puma concolor*) Population. PLoS ONE 9(10): e107985. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0107985.

Figure 1. Monthly summary of lethal and non-lethal mountain lion depredation reports for 2019. The number of depredation permits issued each month and the number of mountain lions taken are shown.

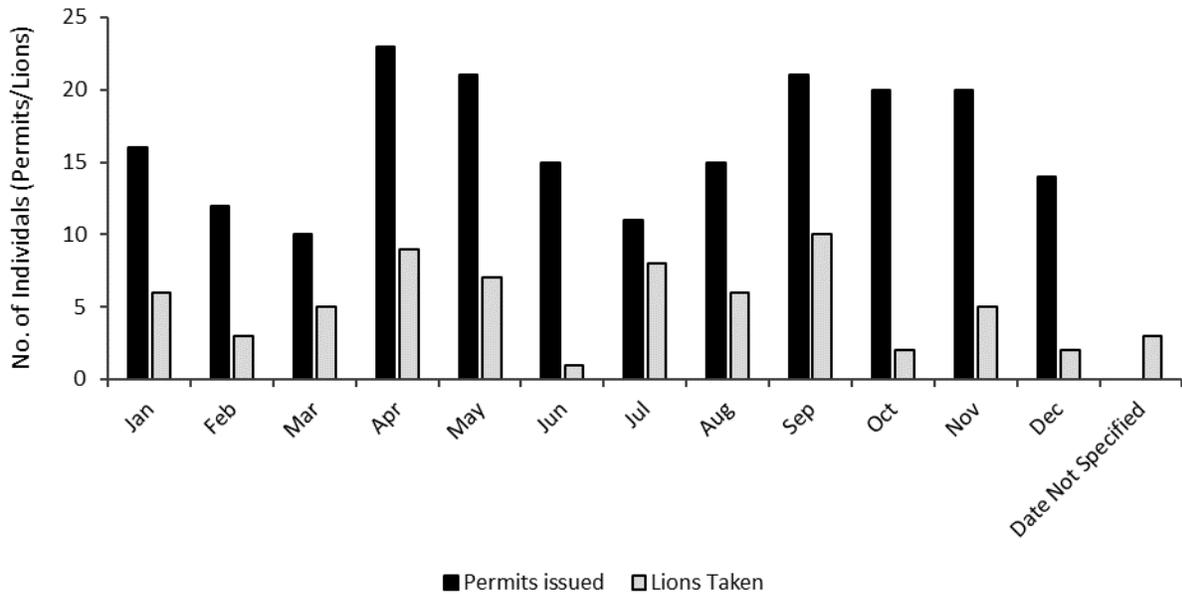


Figure 2. Number of lethal and non-lethal depredation permits issued in 2019 and the type of property damage reported (i.e. animal(s) reported to have been taken by a mountain lion). These numbers are based upon the number of incidents and not the total number of animals claimed to have been taken in a single incident.

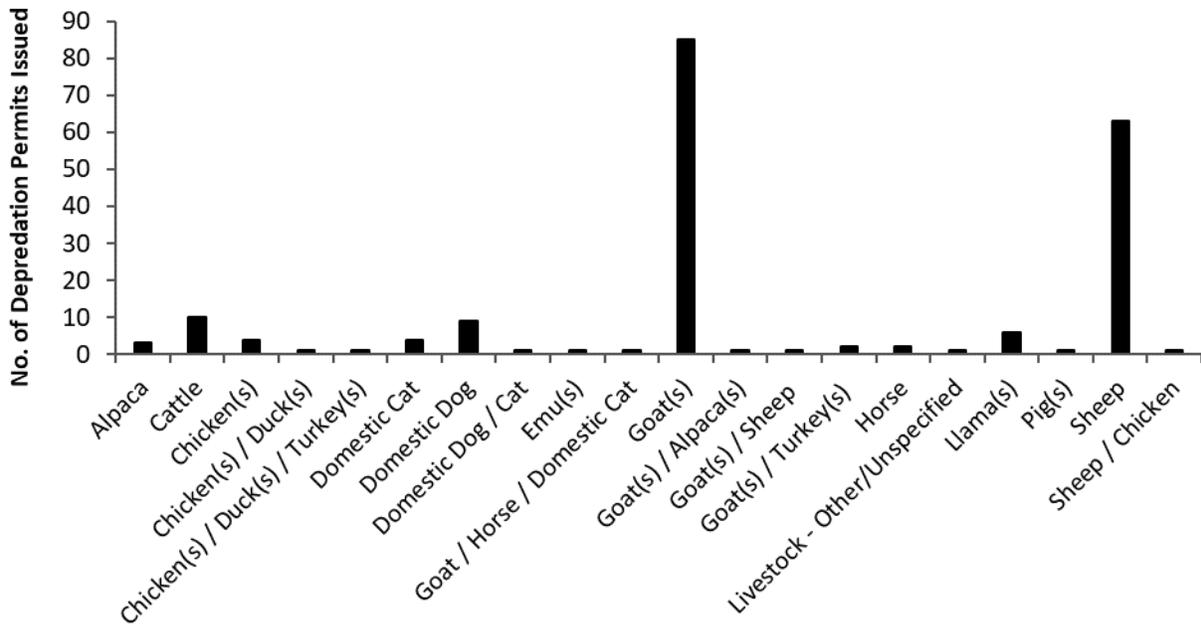


Table 1. Sex of depredating mountain lions necropsied by CDFW in 2019.

Sex	Total by Sex
Male	39
Female	24
Not indicated	4

Table 2. Ages of depredating mountain lions necropsied by CDFW in 2019.

Age Class	Total by Age Class
Juvenile ¹	5
Sub Adult ²	15
Adult ³	45
Not indicated	2

¹ Juvenile: 12 months or younger

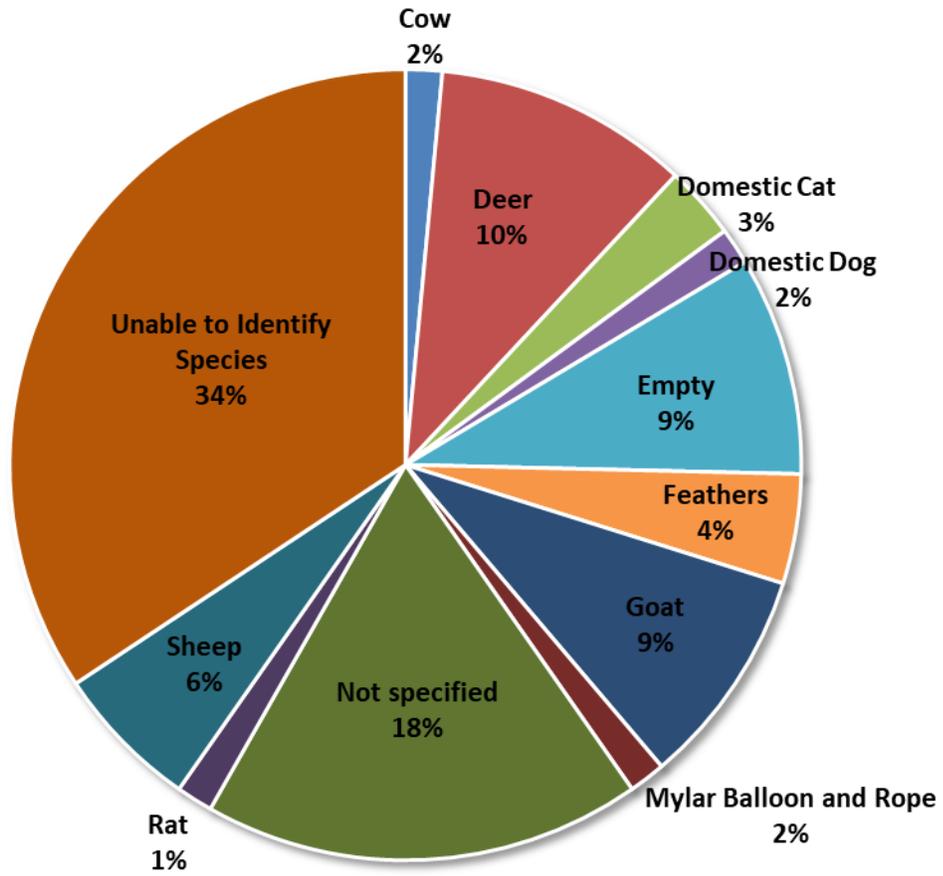
² Sub Adult: 13-23 months

³ Adult: 24 months or older

Table 3. Geographic distribution of depredating mountain lions necropsied by CDFW in 2019.

CDFW Region	Total by Region
Northern	21
North Central	16
Bay Delta	12
Central	11
South Coast	6
Inland Desert	1

Figure 3. Stomach contents of depredating mountain lions necropsied by CDFW in 2019[†].



[†] Note: One lawful method of take for depredating mountain lions is by cage trapping. Cage traps are typically baited with the remainder of a depredated carcass.

From: Rachelle Fisher <rachelle@strategicearth.com>

Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2019 1:01 PM

To: FGC <FGC@fgc.ca.gov>

Cc: Miller-Henson, Melissa@FGC <Melissa.Miller-Henson@fgc.ca.gov>; Ashcraft, Susan@FGC <Susan.Ashcraft@fgc.ca.gov>; Pope, Elizabeth@FGC <elizabeth.pope@fgc.ca.gov>; DCTF <info@dungenesscrabtaskforce.com>

Subject: Dungeness Crab Task Force - Submission of 2019 Legislative Report

Dear President Sklar,

On behalf of the California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF), the DCTF Administrative Team would like to submit the following report containing recommendations from the DCTF regarding management of the California Dungeness crab fishery. The report can also be accessed via the [DCTF's webpage](#).

Pursuant to [Fish and Game Code Section 8276.4](#), the DCTF is directed to review and evaluate the California Dungeness crab fishery and make management recommendations to the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the Fish and Game Commission. The recommendations in this report seek to respond to a range of issues facing the industry (e.g., marine life entanglements, domoic acid, Assembly Bill 1472, regulatory needs, etc.) and help inform the efforts of fisheries managers in addressing them.

If you have any questions about this document or about the DCTF, please contact Rachelle Fisher at 805-845-9852 or info@dungenesscrabtaskforce.com.

Sincerely,

Rachelle Fisher and Kelly Sayce

DCTF Administrative Team

--

Rachelle Fisher, MAS

Senior Associate

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~California Dungeness Crab Task Force~

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

REPORT

TO: Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, Mike McGuire, Chair
California Fish and Game Commission, Eric Sklar, President
California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Charlton Bonham, Director

CC: California Ocean Protection Council, Mark Gold, Executive Director
California Fish and Game Commission, Melissa Miller-Henson, Executive Director
California Fish and Game Commission, Elizabeth Pope, Acting Marine Advisor
California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Craig Shuman, Marine Region Manager
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Dave Colpo, Sr. Program Manager

FROM: California Dungeness Crab Task Force

DATE: December 11, 2019

RE: October 2019 recommendations from the California Dungeness Crab Task Force as requested by Fish and Game Code 8276.4

APPENDICES: (1) Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group Fact Sheet
(2) DCTF Charter - Updated October 2019
(3) DCTF Summary from October 16-17, 2019
(4) January 15, 2016 Interim Report
(5) January 13, 2017 Final Report
(6) December 20, 2017 Final Report
(7) Marine Life Entanglement Settlement 2019- Case 3:17-cv-05685-MMC
(8) DCTF Meeting Summary from October 16-18, 2017 meeting
(9) Tri-State Dungeness Crab Commission Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
(10) DCTF Membership List
(11) Assembly Bill 1472
(12) Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group Updates and Recommendations, November 12, 2019

This report provides recommendations from the California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) to the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (the Legislature), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the Fish and Game Commission (the Commission) to inform future Dungeness crab fishery management. The report includes an update on the DCTF's activities since October 2017, and more specifically, recommendations for a financial audit of the Dungeness Crab Account, new Legislation to address safety concerns in the fishery, address requests from the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee, and to address domoic acid and marine life entanglement issues..

The DCTF's work was completed pursuant to Fish and Game Code §8276.4 with financial support as directed by Fish and Game Code §8276.5.

Additional information, including DCTF history, previous reports, and meeting summaries with details on the development of the recommendations provided in this report, is available on the DCTF webpage: <http://www.opc.ca.gov/2009/04/dungeness-crab-task-force/>.

BACKGROUND

The commercial Dungeness crab fishery is one of the most valuable and productive fisheries in California^{1, 2} with an average ex-vessel value³ of approximately \$55.6 million per calendar year.⁴ This is due in large part to strong demand for product by consumers, including international markets. The California Dungeness crab fishery has faced recently unprecedented events (e.g. elevated levels of domoic acid, whale entanglements ([Appendix 1](#)) resulting in litigation against the industry) that have created management and economic challenges for fishery managers and the Dungeness crab industry. Members of the Dungeness crab industry continue to show an interest in remaining engaged on the fishery's management to maintain the health of the fishery, safeguard its economic viability, minimize ecological impacts, and preserve the California fishing communities that rely on the resource.

The fishery consists of a diverse group of individuals, communities, viewpoints, and opinions regarding the management goals and objectives for the California Dungeness crab fishery generally vary by production level, vessel size, and homeport location.^{5, 6} This makes it challenging at times for fishery participants to reach agreements. Nonetheless, the DCTF continues to reach agreements and forward recommendations to fisheries managers and those with decision-making authority. The DCTF looks forward to continuing this work and informing the Legislature, CDFW, and the Commission on the outcomes of their discussions regarding the industry's priority issues.

Management of the California Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery

The California Dungeness crab commercial fishery is managed by CDFW pursuant to California Fish and Game Code §8275 *et seq.*, which requires the fishery to use a 3-S management strategy (sex, size, and season). Commercial harvest is restricted to male crabs, greater than 6.25 inches carapace (body) width, from mid-November through the end of June (Central Management Area⁷) and December 1 through July 15 (Northern Management Area). The California Fish and Game Code specifies the opening of the season for the Central Management Area (the area between in Sonoma-Mendocino county line and the Mexican border) as November 15 and the Northern Management Area (the area between in Sonoma-Mendocino county line and the Oregon border) as December 1.⁸ In 2018-19, there were 552 permits, of which 437 were active and

¹ Hackett, Steven, D. King, D. Hansen and E. Price. 2009. *The Economic Structure of California's Commercial Fisheries*. Technical Report . California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento.

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/economicstructure.asp>

² The Dungeness crab fishery is an important contributor to the economy of several port communities such as Crescent City (Pomeroy, C., et al. 2010. Pomeroy, C., et al. (2011). *California's North Coast Fishing Communities: Historical Perspective and Recent Trends*. California Sea Grant Technical Report T-072,. La Jolla, CA: 350p.

<http://www.csgc.ucsd.edu/EXTENSION/ADVISORS/Pomeroy.html>

³ Ex-vessel value is the amount paid to fishermen when they land (deliver) their catch to buyers the docks.

⁴ Pers. communication C. Juhasz, California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

⁵ Dewees, C.M. et al. 2004. Racing for crabs: Cost and management options evaluated in Dungeness crab fishery. *California Agriculture*. Vol. 58(4): 186-193.

⁶ Pomeroy, C., et al. 2010. *California's North Coast Fishing Communities: Historical Perspective and Recent Trends*. California Sea Grant Technical Report T-072. La Jolla, CA: 350p.

<http://www.csgc.ucsd.edu/EXTENSION/ADVISORS/Pomeroy.html>.

⁷ The Central Management Area refers to all coastal districts south of the Mendocino/Sonoma County Line to the Mexican border.

⁸ Preseason crab quality testing is used to predict the meat recovery rate prior to the season opener. A recovery rate of 25% is required for the December 1 season opener in the Northern Management Area. If this standard is not met, testing

115 were inactive (or “latent”⁹ referring to those permits (vessels) with landings of less than 200lbs in the previous season).

In contrast to the commercial fishery, the Dungeness crab recreational fishery is managed by the Commission, with measures such as a specified season, daily bag limits, and minimum size requirements. The specifics of the season vary by region while CPFVs are the only sport fishing mode that has trap limits.

DCTF PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

The DCTF’s operating and voting procedures are described in Fish and Game Code §8276.4 and the DCTF Charter ([Appendix 2](#)). The DCTF is composed of 27 members, including 17 members representing commercial fishing interests, two members representing sport fishing interests, two members representing crab processing interests, one member representing commercial passenger fishing vessel (CPFV) interests, two members representing nongovernmental organization interests, one member representing University of California Sea Grant, and two members representing the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

The California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and CDFW carried out the most recent DCTF commercial fishing elections (as described in Fish and Game Code §8276.4) for half of the port complexes. Commercial fishermen are elected to the DCTF by their peers to represent their home port complexes and production level. The other half of the ports will have elections in 2020 and OPC and CDFW will conduct DCTF elections every three years in each port, on a staggered basis. Additionally, as mandated in Fish and Game Code §8276.4, the Chair of the OPC appointed members for the seven non-commercial fishing seats following a public solicitation for nominations. The results of the 2019 DCTF commercial fishing elections and the results of the non-commercial fishing representatives from the public solicitation are available on the [DCTF’s webpage](#).

The DCTF Charter establishes ground rules, member roles, and voting procedures for the group and was most recently amended in October 2019. In keeping with those procedures and in response to the Legislature’s request for management recommendations, the DCTF Charter states that, “a proposed recommendation that receives an affirmative vote of at least 15 of the voting members of the DCTF may be transmitted ... [and] shall be considered to be the consensus of the task force, and shall be considered to be evidence of consensus in the Dungeness crab industry.” The following voting protocol, described in the DCTF Charter, was used to conduct straw polls and final voting on DCTF recommendations:

- **Thumbs Down:** I do not agree with the proposal. I feel the need to block its adoption and propose an alternative.
- **Thumbs Sideways:** I can accept the proposal although I do not necessarily support it.
- **Thumbs Up:** I think this proposal is the best choice of the options available to us.
- **Abstention:** At times, a pending decision may be infeasible for a Member to weigh in on.

Thumbs up and thumbs sideways are *both* counted as affirmative votes in determining whether a recommendation has the required 15-vote majority.

is repeated at specific time intervals until this recovery rate is achieved, with the fishery opening no later than January 15, regardless of test results at that time. Requirements for preseason testing do not apply in the Central Management Area.

⁹ The Department does not use the term “latent” permit(s) formally. The definition of latent was developed by the DCTF.

DCTF VOTES AND ANALYSIS

The following recommendations were developed by the DCTF over the course of one meeting held on October 16-17, 2019. The recommendations represent agreements of DCTF members (as per voting protocols defined in the DCTF Charter ([Appendix 2](#))); however, in some cases they are not the *verbatim* language used when the votes were taken. Because of the iterative nature of the conversations at the DCTF meetings, the language of some of the recommendations has been adjusted to improve clarity. The verbatim language, together with the voting record is included in [Appendix 3](#) for reference. Some recommendations are grouped together for clarity. Explanatory notes are provided below recommendations when necessary.

DCTF RECOMMENDATIONS- October 16-17, 2019

The Dungeness Crab Account, Fish and Game Code §8276.5

Fish and Game Code §8276.5 mandates that an annual accounting of the Dungeness Crab Account be provided by CDFW. During the October 2019 DCTF meeting, CDFW provided an update of the accounting through the 2018-19 fiscal year. The DCTF provided recommendations for transparency and use of the Dungeness Crab Account.

Recommendation 1: In accordance with Fish and Game Code §8276.5, the DCTF recommends CDFW conduct a detailed audit of the Dungeness Crab Account. The DCTF recommends additional reporting information with more information about income (i.e., income from biannual tags, biannual tag permits, replacement tags, and fines) and expenses (i.e., additional detail on Licence and Revenue Branch, Law Enforcement Division, and Marine Region expenses and other overhead expenses). The detailed audit should also include annual income, expense, and balance for all years since inception of the commercial Dungeness Crab Trap Limit Program and the Dungeness Crab Account.

Vote of all DCTF Members (ex officio Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
18	1	0	0	1

NOTES:

An accounting of the uses of the Dungeness Crab Account through the 2018-19 fiscal year was provided at the October 2019 DCTF meeting.¹⁰ The DCTF continues to have questions as to the sources of revenue in the account (e.g., Is the revenue only based on biannual trap tag sales? Does it also include replacement tags and/or the biannual permit?) and requests clarity on where the funds paid as part of the commercial Dungeness Crab Trap Limit Program are deposited. Additionally, the DCTF continues to have questions about how funds are being used within all areas of CDFW. For example, commercial fishermen indicated they have not seen changes in enforcement activities since the inception of the program and are concerned the funds are being used to subsidize other enforcement needs outside the Commercial Dungeness Crab Trap Limit program. With a \$2.2M surplus following the 2018-19 fiscal year, the DCTF requires a detailed audit of the account to better assess whether the CDFW is collecting excess funds. If excess funds are being collected, the DCTF would like to explore opportunities to reduce the costs of the program to fishermen as

¹⁰ California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2019. 2019 Dungeness Crab Fishery Updates. Presentation to the California Dungeness Crab Task Force. Santa Rosa, CA. October 2019.
http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/project_pages/dctf/meeting-5/CDFWData_DCTF%20Meeting_Oct262015-2.pdf

outlined in Fish and Game Code §8276.5, and/or recommend other uses for the excess funds collected to support the commercial Dungeness crab fishery (e.g., support litigation on behalf of the fleet).

Recommendation 2: Reiterating recommendation 3 from the December 20, 2017 report ([Appendix 6](#)), the DCTF recommends amending Fish and Game code §8276.4 and §8276.5 to prioritize the allocation of \$150,000 dollars per year from the Dungeness Crab Account to support the administration and facilitation of the DCTF through 2029.

The DCTF recommends that the Legislature and the Administration (California Natural Resources Agency, Ocean Protection Council (OPC), CDFW) work together to ensure that Dungeness Crab Account funds are used to support a higher level of administration and facilitation support of the DCTF than is currently allocated within the 2019-2021 DCTF administration and facilitation contract, including, but not limited to, funding DCTF member/alternate travel, increasing the number of DCTF and Executive Committee meetings per year, and supporting emergency meetings, as needed.

The DCTF recommends expanding the spending authority of the Dungeness Crab Account to CDFW, as needed and available, to support priority needs identified by the DCTF including \$150,000/year for DCTF operations.

Vote of all DCTF Members (ex officio Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
19	0	0	0	1

NOTES:

In the DCTF’s January 2016 report ([Appendix 4](#)), the DCTF expressed support for reauthorizing and continuing the DCTF beyond 2019. In the DCTF’s last report ([Appendix 6](#)), a recommendation was made to amend Fish and Game code §8276.4 to allocate \$150,000 per year from the Dungeness Crab Account (see Fish and Game code section §8276.5) to support the organization’s activities. As of July 2019, CDFW entered into a two-year contract with a contractor to facilitate and administer the DCTF at a rate of \$75,000 per year. The contract stipulates that the contractor administer up to one DCTF meeting and up to three Executive Committee conference calls per year. The DCTF believes this is inadequate to allow the DCTF to adequately and efficiently address the evolving priorities of the industry (see January 2017: Recommendation 4, page 14 of this report and [Appendix 5](#)). The DCTF believes the request to use funds from the Dungeness Crab Account is reasonable considering an October 2019 presentation from CDFW indicating a \$2.2M surplus in the Dungeness Crab Account.¹¹ The DCTF appreciates that CDFW must use the Dungeness Crab Account to cover costs to administer and enforce the commercial Dungeness Crab Trap Limit Program and continues to recommend full vetting and annual reporting of the use of the Dungeness Crab Account as required by Fish and Game Code Section 8276.5(a) to ensure transparency of the account’s use (see Recommendation 1, above).

Domoic Acid and The Dungeness Crab Fishery

¹¹ California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2019. 2019 Dungeness Crab Fishery Updates. Presentation to the California Dungeness Crab Task Force. Santa Rosa, CA. October 2019.
http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/_media_library/2009/04/DCTFUpdates-Oct2019Meeting-10142019.pdf

Since the 2015-16 commercial fishing season, elevated levels of domoic acid have threatened delays in the commercial California Dungeness season opener. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and CDFW are continuing to work collaboratively to ensure an orderly, timely openers that also consider public safety. At the October 2019 DCTF meeting, the agencies requested guidance from the DCTF related to the management of domoic acid in the Dungeness crab fishery.

Recommendation 3: The DCTF supports the concept of biotoxin management zones to create more understanding and predictability for the fleet in how the commercial Dungeness crab fishing season may open every year. The DCTF understands that CDPH, OEHHA, and CDFW (the agencies) will be working to develop a proposal for the biotoxin management zone areas. DCTF members will work with their ports to identify suggestions for zone lines to be considered by the agencies. The DCTF expects a follow up discussion with the agencies prior to the finalization of the biotoxin management plan zones.

Vote of all DCTF Members (nonvoting Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
17	2	0	1	1

NOTES:

The DCTF supports biotoxin management zones in concept as it provides more predictability to help fishermen better plan for the upcoming season based on their business model. Biotoxin management zones are a tool currently employed in other states to manage sampling and domoic acid delays. Biotoxin management zones are predefined areas that help improve the predictability of the boundaries within which delays and openers will occur. The size of each zone would need to be considered based on fishing effort, known domoic acid hot spots, number of sample sites available per area, buffer areas, etc.

The DCTF understands that the agencies will be working in the coming months to develop draft biotoxin management zones for the DCTF’s consideration. DCTF Members will work within their ports to provide the agencies with guidance in the near-term and anticipates CDFW sharing the draft biotoxin management zones with the DCTF at their October 2020 meeting.

Recommendation 4: The DCTF supports CDPH, OEHHA, and CDFW (agencies) pursuing the authority to implement evisceration options in California through the appropriate legislative processes as an option that could be available to the industry in response to elevated domoic acid levels in Dungeness crab. The DCTF also recommends the California Legislature approve a bill(s) that would provide these legal authorities to the agencies.

Once California is in a place to begin implementing evisceration options, the DCTF recommends Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans be developed in consultation with the industry. The DCTF recommends the evisceration option not be available to the industry unless there is a delay in fishing until or after February 1.

Vote of all DCTF Members (nonvoting Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
17	1	0	1	1

NOTES:

Since the 2015-16 season, the commercial Dungeness crab fishery has continued to experience hardship and loss of certain markets due to domoic acid season delays. Some members of the industry would like there to be opportunities available to fish in the event of domoic acid delays. That being said, the DCTF flagged that HACCP plans would only be available to a few processors that have operations that would qualify for such a plan. Evisceration options will be unavailable to those who serve the live markets, which are predominant in the Central Management Area (south of the Mendocino/Sonoma County line). The DCTF highlighted that there would be less than a handful of processors who would qualify for a HACCP plan and they all reside in ports in the Northern Management Area (CA/OR border south to Mendocino/Sonoma County line) which would create economic disparities for those who fish in the south. For that reason, the DCTF believes evisceration options should only be considered if the fishery remains delayed on/beyond February 1 due to domoic acid to allow fishermen a fishing season in light of this issue of whale entanglements.

Marine Life Entanglement in Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear

The ensuing recommendation is directly related to DCTF discussions about the efforts being made by the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group to address marine life entanglement in Dungeness crab fishing gear ([Appendix 1](#)).

Recommendation 5: The DCTF thanks the Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group for its continued efforts to support thriving whale and sea turtle populations along the West Coast together with a thriving and profitable Dungeness crab fishery.

Vote of all DCTF Members (nonvoting Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
19	0	0	0	1

NOTES:

The DCTF agrees that the issue of whale entanglements in the Dungeness crab fishery is an important priority for the fleet to address and supports the efforts of the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group (Working Group).¹² Marine life entanglements in California Dungeness crab fishing gear has been identified as a high priority issue by the industry especially in the face of a settlement agreement between the Center for Biological Diversity and CDFW ([Appendix 7](#)). Marine life entanglements create a risk for whales and sea turtles while also threatening the stability of the fishery and coastal fishing communities, both of which the public values. DCTF members support the work of the Working Group and see value in having fishermen in the group helping to develop strategies to address this issue.

Legislative and Regulatory Needs

During the October 2019 DCTF meeting, the DCTF reviewed relevant active legislation and discussed recommendations related to potential regulatory and legislative needs.

¹² The Working Group was established in 2015 to explore ways to reduce the risk of entanglements with Dungeness crab fishing gear. The Working Group is composed of commercial fishermen (including two DCTF Members), a recreational fisherman, a CPFV fisherman, environmental organizations, a whale disentangler, a processor, and state and federal agencies. For information about the Working Group is available online: <http://www.opc.ca.gov/whale-entanglement-working-group/>

Recommendation 6: The DCTF recommends amending Fish and Game code §8283 to change the Central Management Area’s commercial fishing presoak period from 18 hours to 64 hours.

Vote of all DCTF Members (nonvoting Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
18	0	1	0	1

NOTES:

Fish and Game code §8283 mandates an 18-hour presoak in the Central Management area. Many commercial fishermen have stated that the 18-hour presoak in the Central Management Area creates safety concerns for the fleet, especially during domoic acid delays. The DCTF last discussed this topic during the October 2017 meeting ([Appendix 8](#)) where it was not approved by the DCTF primarily because some individuals saw the issue as a business decision for traveling vessels and a negotiation tactic to require crab quality testing in the Central Management Area (see Recommendation 8). During the DCTF’s October 2019 meeting, they revisited the Central Management Area presoak and generally agreed that safety in the commercial Dungeness fishery should be paramount to all other issues. The precedent for a 64-hour presoak in California has already been set in the Northern Management Area and would not be unfounded. The DCTF acknowledges that managers would like to minimize the length of time fishing gear is in the ocean to reduce the risk of marine life entanglements. However, the DCTF believes that the safety of fishermen should be the highest priority for the state of California.

Recommendation 7: If the Central Management Area’s commercial fishing presoak period changes from 18 hours to 64 hours, the DCTF supports also modifying the recreational fishing season in the Central Management Area to allow a 12-hour presoak period.

Vote of all DCTF Members (nonvoting Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
13	6	0	0	0

NOTES:

The DCTF does not want to hinder the recreational fishing season by extending the Central Management Area presoak period for the commercial fishery. To allow ample opportunity for the recreational fishermen to fish prior to the commercial opener, the DCTF believes it would be fair for the Fish and Game Commission to update the Title 14 regulations to allow a 12-hour recreational presoak period should the Legislature modify the commercial presoak period in the Central Management Area.

Tri-State and Preseason Quality Testing

At the May 2019 Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee Meeting¹³, the California representatives requested the opportunity to discuss new concepts within the DCTF before reaching an agreement at the Tri-State level. The DCTF provided recommendations for the California representatives to share with the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee.

¹³ Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. 2019. Coastal Dungeness Crab Tri-State Committee Meeting, May 13 and 14, 2019; http://www.psmfc.org/crab/2018-2019%20Files/TriState2019_SummaryDecisions_Final.pdf

Recommendation 8: The DCTF supports the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee’s suggestion to adjust California’s market quality pick rate from 25% (rounded) to 24% (no rounding).

Vote of all DCTF Members (nonvoting Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
8	8	1	2	1

NOTES:

In 1996, the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Agreement was established through an MOU between the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) and Washington, Oregon, and California to facilitate communication and cooperation between the states in managing their Dungeness crab fisheries (see [Appendix 9](#) for MOU). Most notably, this agreement established preseason crab quality testing from the Washington-British Columbia border to the Mendocino/Sonoma County Line in California. Through the Tri-State Coastal Dungeness Crab Committee, the three states have discussed and aligned management of Dungeness crab fisheries in their respective states including coordinating fair start clauses¹⁴ and season openers to the extent possible.

The preseason crab quality testing protocols, as part of the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Agreement, currently dictates that California’s Northern Management Area can not open until the meat quality reaches a 25% pick rate, rounded, for each test area. While the DCTF believes it is important to have the best product available on the market, reducing the pick rate overall by 0.5% may allow the season to open sooner, thereby reducing the risk of marine life entanglements¹⁵ without compromising the quality of the product. The DCTF also discussed modifying crab quality testing protocols further to average all northern port test sites and allow for projections by the third test. While the discussion did not result in a recommendation, the DCTF identified that the concept needed further discussion and could be revisited at the next Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee discussion.

NOTABLE MENTION

DCTF Discussion of Active Legislation - AB 1472

Although the DCTF does not usually share votes that do not meet consensus standards as outlined in their Charter ([Appendix 2](#)), the DCTF wanted to highlight the outcome of the discussion and subsequent failed vote on AB 1472 - California Dungeness Crab Commission ([Appendix 11](#)).

There was not sufficient support of AB 1472 by DCTF Members generally. As is evidenced by the votes below, there is also a great deal of divisiveness around the topic. While some Members saw value in a Dungeness Crab Commission becoming established through the California Department of Food and Agriculture to support the marketing needs of the industry, a number of DCTF Members abstained from voting because they believed a more thorough discussion was needed within each port before they could vote on support for the bill. A number of DCTF Members clearly expressed that they do not support the concept of a marketing association under AB1472.

¹⁴ Fair start provisions mandate that anyone fishing in the Central Management area must wait 30 days after the delayed northern opener (i.e. Northern Management area, Oregon, or Washington) to fish in those northern waters.

¹⁵ The risk of marine life entanglements increases in the spring months. The sooner the fishery opens, the sooner a majority of commercial fishing gear is removed from the ocean thereby reducing the risk of whale entanglements.

FAILED: The DCTF supports to Assembly Bill (AB) 1472 (session 2019-2020) and sees value in establishing a Dungeness crab marketing commission.

Vote of all DCTF Members (nonvoting Members abstained):

Thumbs up	Thumbs Sideways	Thumbs Down	Abstained	Absent
2	4	8	5	0

This bill was introduced without consulting the DCTF in the initial stages of the bill's development, which led many DCTF Members to express concern with the merits of the process in which the bill was created. Due to this, many DCTF Members generally agreed that any legislation affecting the Dungeness crab industry should be shared/reviewed by the DCTF prior introduction, when possible.

DCTF NEXT STEPS

As dictated by Fish and Game code §8276.4, the DCTF will deliver a report no later than January 15, 2022, and every third year thereafter. In an effort to ensure that recommendations are shared in a timely fashion and the appropriate entities are able to act on those recommendations while they are relevant, the DCTF anticipates sharing a report following each annual DCTF meeting. The DCTF looks forward to being responsive to the needs of the Dungeness crab industry and fisheries managers to discuss priority issues including those outlined in this report, and other priorities that may arise.