

*Public comment submitted to the California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) on July 1, 2017*

My name is Don Sack I tried to make a call in to the California Dungeness Crab Task Force yesterday. I typed in the number and my code and when I tried to get online and comment nothing happened. I couldn't get through.

I think this is just more of the controlling the harvest and putting small guys out of business and that's what you people are all about.

I own a 16ft small boat and my son runs a 15ft boat and we launch our boats daily out of Shelter Cove. One of the smallest boats in the fleet and I do not have the ability to move from port to port, to opener to open. I don't want to anyway because I believe that concentrated corporate control harvest is the reason for whale entanglements. I am concerned about not being able to fish while 25 million pounds seasons get put into record. I was shocked that there was that many crab caught this year because we certainly don't have any opportunity in Shelter Cove to make a living fishing any more because of these corporate controls of our crab season, which I completely find disgusting. The only thing that is needed to protect the whales is a statewide opener. Also, a fair start law is very important to the smallest fleet. Thank you very much I hope somebody hears this and makes the small boats feel like they are included in part of the United States too.

There is a need for a two-week grace period for gear retrieval after crab season closes, similar to Oregon's law. The gear to be left without bait with the lids wide open. Whales have finished the migration by then. This is very important to the small fleet and would allow for the safe retrieval of gear without cutting our important spring run season short or having to be forced to go out in rough weather. The last three weeks of crab season last year we had gale force winds which forced us onto the water and put our lives at risk..

Another thought - Please track the gear that whales are getting tangled up in - all buoys have specific fisherman IDs on them and the fishermen will be able to tell you where the gear was fishing when it got entangled. Personally, in 50 years of fishing full-time I have NEVER seen a whale entanglement and of the photos I've seen posted on the web only one may have been crab gear - all of them do not have crab ID tags on the buoys - some look like longlines and others have floats used by seine or trawl netters. The only whale death I know about in this area that was not natural was caused by a vessel strike while the vessel was mapping the bottom for the creation of MPAs a few years ago.