

2018-19 DCTF Work Plan

Dungeness Crab Task Force

Approved June 6, 2018

This document was developed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) with support from the California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) Administrative Team. The DCTF approved and finalized the 2018-19 DCTF Work Plan during the June 5-6, 2018 DCTF Meeting. More information about the DCTF including meeting agendas and materials is available at: <http://www.opc.ca.gov/2009/04/dungeness-crab-task-force/>.

Work Plan Period: January 1, 2018- April 30, 2019

Overview

The California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) is directed by Fish and Game Code section 8276.4 to review and evaluate Dungeness crab fishery management measures and provide its recommendations to the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the Fish and Game Commission (FGC). This work plan identifies tasks that aim to achieve a number of CDFW's objectives over the next twelve months to improve the DCTF's efficiency, specifically:

- Discuss CDFW and DCTF priorities, determine the process for arriving at agreement, and identify areas of alignment (i.e. supporting an orderly fishery among the fleet)
- Facilitate and coordinate DCTF in-person meetings and discussions
- Review and develop recommendations on priority commercial Dungeness crab management issues, including but not limited to issues surrounding Tri-State, the fair start provision, and the pre-season quality testing protocol
- Develop ideas and recommendations to improve opportunities for new fishermen to enter the commercial fishery while supporting a sustainable and economically viable fishery
- Continue working on the implementation of the lost fishing gear recovery program to ensure flexibility within the program
- Work in collaboration with the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group to reduce the risk of whale entanglements in Dungeness crab fishing gear
- Serve as a conduit of information to/from the fleet to the Legislature, Department, and Commission
- Increase communications between the DCTF and broader industry (fishing participants, port associations, processors, etc.)

This work plan includes a general approach and schedule, including quarterly milestones, from January 2018 through January 2019 to ensure all CDFW priorities are addressed. This work plan will be reviewed by the DCTF prior to its implementation. Revisions and updates may be made by CDFW in direct consultation with the DCTF on an as needed basis. These changes will be evaluated against CDFW and DCTF priorities (see below), progress made in achieving objectives to date, and needs for flexibility to address unforeseen issues that may arise.

Proposed/Draft CDFW Priorities for the CA Dungeness Crab Fishery

CDFW has identified the following draft list of priority issues for the DCTF to address in 2018-2019.

This list is intended to act as a starting place for discussions between CDFW and the DCTF, with the goal to arrive at a list of shared priorities to help ensure key deliverables and recommendations are arrived at in

a timely, focused manner. Should urgent matters arise, this list may be adjusted accordingly after consultation with CDFW and the DCTF Executive Committee.

Top Priority for 2018

- Discuss and make recommendations to inform Tri-State/Preseason quality testing, Section 8276.2 of the Fish and Game Code, discussions
- Implementation of SB1287: Lost Fishing Gear Recovery Program, Section 9002.5, Fish and Game Code, including but not limited to reviewing draft Title 14 regulations and recommending allowing in-season retrieval of traps by unpermitted vessels
- Continued discussion of Dungeness crab Fishing Gear Working Group activities, update on piloting of RAMP, available management measures and future rulemakings and updates on research proposal projects to reduce risk of whale entanglements
- Discuss DCTF future operations including but not limited to implementing elections, Section 8276.4, Fish and Game Code
- Discuss and consider amending the 96-hour trap servicing requirement, Section 9004 of the Fish and Game Code
- Consider a recommendation adjusting central management area presoak of 18 hours, Section 8283 of the Fish and Game Code
- Track domoic acid issues as they relate to impacts on the fleet including implications for fair start provisions, etc and consider how the DCTF can support research efforts.
- Continue to track the status of disaster relief funds

A variety of other topics have been requested by the DCTF and public to be added to future DCTF discussions. However, CDFW believes that these topics have either been discussed at prior meetings with little to no change in DCTF's recommendation or are not as pressing to undertake at present and may detract from the other high priority issues. These topics, which are listed below, may be addressed following April 2019.

Low Priority for 2018

- Issues of the Dungeness crab commercial trap limit program including but not limited to waivers for more than stacking 175-trap permits, replacing biennial with annual buoy tags and in-season replacement tags, Section 8276.5 of the Fish and Game Code and Sections 132.1-132.5, Title 14, California Code of Regulations
- Changing the central management area start date and inclusion in Tri-State, Section 8276 of the Fish and Game Code
- Implementing zone declarations for each year that permit holders renew their California Dungeness crab fishing permits
- Changing the Central Management Opener to the first Tuesday of November
- Investigating and considering evisceration orders

Approach

A number of tools will be utilized to ensure this work plan will be efficiently executed.

¹ The DCTF is not intending to convene a formal discussion on this topic, and encourages their constituents to participate in CDFW-led efforts to inform the distribution of disaster relief funds.

DCTF In-Person Meetings: Two (2) DCTF meetings are anticipated be convened to discuss the topics above and to confirm this work plan. DCTF recommendations resulting from those meetings will be forwarded to the appropriate entities via memorandums to inform the Legislature, Tri-State, CDFW, and Fish and Game Commission in their efforts to manage the Dungeness crab fishery. *Timing:* Meeting dates are pending, but are anticipated to take place in May/June and October 2018.

Executive Committee (EC) Conference Calls: Up to five (5) EC conference calls will be utilized to begin discussion on these topics with the goal of developing draft proposals, options, and considerations to support the fall DCTF meeting. *Timing:* Conference call dates are to be determined but are anticipated to take place between May-October 2018.

Emails and Other Electronic Communications: Regular emails will be circulated to the DCTF public email list and to all DCTF Members to share Dungeness crab fishery updates, circulate materials that may inform DCTF discussions, and follow up on DCTF business. The DCTF webpage ([here](#)) will also be regularly updated to ensure all materials, summaries, and memos/reports are available. *Timing:* Ongoing.

Internal Planning: The Admin Team will maintain regular communications with CDFW, in partnership with the OPC, to ensure this work plan is successfully completed. *Timing:* Ongoing.

Background Research: The Admin Team will investigate all topics to the extent feasible and will provide background information to DCTF deliberations. *Timing:* Ongoing.

DCTF Follow Up: In addition to email communications, the Admin Team will conduct semi-regular phone calls with DCTF Members to ensure emails are being received and make sure all Members are up-to-date on DCTF business. *Timing:* Ongoing.

Milestones and Timeline

Milestone	Description	Timing
EC Conference Call 1	<i>Purpose:</i> Discuss current DCTF Facilitation Contract & priority issues for upcoming DCTF Meeting 1	April 12, 2018
DCTF Meeting 1	<i>Purpose:</i> To finalize 2018-19 work plan and discuss, update Executive Committee membership, discuss new elections for DCTF, and inform CDFW/state’s priorities and interests at 2018 Tri-State meeting <i>Approach:</i> CDFW to present Fishing Regulations 101 to highlight current issues surrounding pre-season testing protocol, fair start, and others w/focus on CDFW and DCTF alignment of objectives. CDFW will also present gear retrieval program draft regulations for review.	June 5-6, 2018
DCTF Tri-State Memo	Memo will formalize the recommendations developed during spring 2018 DCTF meeting (see above) and will be forwarded to the appropriate entities which may include the Tri-State Dungeness	TBD- Anticipated late

	Crab Committee, Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, CDFW, and FGC.	June/ early July 2018 (Tri-State Meeting July 24-25, 2018)
EC Conference Call 2	<i>Purpose:</i> To update DCTF on process and outcomes of piloting RAMP during 2017-18 season, Tri-State meeting outcomes, and any updates on future DCTF operations. Develop ideas and proposals related to high priority topics.	TBD- Anticipated Summer 2018
EC Conference Call 3	<i>Purpose:</i> Provide updates and continuing discussion on high priority topics.	TBD- Anticipated Summer/Fall 2018
EC Conference Call 4	<i>Purpose:</i> Discussion of priority issues for upcoming DCTF Meeting 2	TBD- Anticipated Fall 2018
DCTF Meeting 2	<i>Purpose:</i> To continue discussion on outstanding high priority topics, finalize recommendations for any 2019 Legislative or regulatory needs to address Dungeness crab fishery management.	TBD- Anticipated October 2018
EC Conference Call 5	TBD	TBD- Anticipated Fall/Winter 2018
DCTF 2018 Memo	Memo will formalize the recommendations developed during fall 2018 DCTF meeting (see above) and will be forwarded to the appropriate entities which may include the Tri-State Dungeness Crab Committee, Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, CDFW, and FGC.	TBD- Anticipated December 2018

Deliverables

All interim and final reporting of all deliverables will be developed by the Admin Team on behalf of the DCTF. DCTF Members will be provided an opportunity review all meeting summaries, memos, and reports, before they are finalized.

- *Meetings and Conference Calls*
 - Agendas for DCTF meetings and EC conference calls to be posted on the DCTF webpage no later than 10-days prior to the scheduled meeting.
 - High-level summaries of DCTF meetings and EC conference calls that will be posted on the DCTF webpage as they are available.

- Materials developed to inform DCTF/EC discussions (e.g. options documents, public comment letters, presentations, etc.).
- Calls with DCTF Members to inform meeting agenda development.
- *Reports*
 - Reports or memos summarizing DCTF recommendations to inform state and Tri-State discussions on Dungeness crab fishery management.

Table. 1 Budget for Contract to Administer DCTF: January 1, 2018 - March 31, 2019*

Description	Budget
DCTF Meetings (2 in-person meetings including meeting prep and follow up)	\$68,000
DCTF Tri-State Memo and Final Report	\$4,000
EC Conference Calls (up to five including meeting prep and follow up)	\$26,000
DCTF Communications (i.e. phone calls, emails, maintenance of public email list, etc.)	\$48,000

*April 1, 2019 is the sunseting date for Section 8276.4 of the Fish and Game Code. By January 1, 2019 this code section and sunset date could be updated through legislation developed in 2018.