Draft Meeting Summary
DCTF Executive Committee
Thursday, February 27, 2014

Meeting Participants

EC Members Present	Geoff Bettencourt, Bill Blue, Larry Collins, Mike Cunningham, Vince Doyle, Brett Fahning
EC Members Absent	Bill Carvahlo
Other Meeting Participants:	Valerie Termini, Ocean Protection Council Bob Farrell, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Tom Barnes, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Pete Kalvass, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Christy Juhasz, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Tina Fahy, NOAA, West Coast Protected Resources Division Rachelle Fisher, DCTF Administrative Team Kelly Sayce, DCTF Administrative Team

Meeting Summary
*All "next steps" are **in bold** below*

a) Updates

Updates- Admin Team and OPC

- The DCTF Administrative Team (Admin Team) walked through the agenda and outlined the primary purpose for the meeting: To begin preparing for the upcoming DCTF meeting in April.
- The Admin Team provided a brief update to the EC on the Admin Team's activities since the previous Executive Committee (EC) meeting on November 8, 2013. The Admin Team:
    - Continued coordinating with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Ocean Protection Council (OPC), and legislative staff on all DCTF related issues including, but not limited to, tri-state issues, the trap limit program, and sport related topics.
    - Maintain open lines of communication with DCTF members and providing regular updates (via email and phone) to keep members informed on Dungeness crab issues at the local, state, and tri-state levels.
    - Checked in with Carrie Pomeroy, DCTF Sea Grant representative, on the DCTF's informational needs for the review and evaluation of the trap limit program. Dr. Pomeroy confirmed that the draft list of data needs developed by the Admin Team for the DCTF's review and discussion would provide valuable information to the DCTF at their April meeting and provided additional insights.
    - Continued researching and networking to stay informed and on top of all Dungeness crab issues.

Updates- Executive Committee

- The EC did not have any updates to provide at this time.

Updates- CDFW

- CDFW provided a number of updates, including:
    - Pete Kalvass provided an update on the status of appeals that have been filed as a result of the trap limit program. A total of 29 appeals were filed: 3 were won by the appellant, 9 were denied, 4 were settled, 2 appeals have been heard and are still awaiting a verdict,

and 11 are still to be scheduled heard. CDFW has filed a writ for 4 of the decisions that have been made so far due to disagreements with the judges' interpretation of the law.

- CDFW explained that the most common type of appeal is when an individual sold their high tier permit prior to the implementation of the trap limit program and is looking to have the catch history of the old permit apply to the current permit. This scenario leads to multiple individuals qualifying under a single permit.
- CDFW will provide an update of the status of the appeals at the April DCTF meeting. However, all appeals will be heard prior to the April DCTF meeting.

o Bob Farrell provided an update on enforcement of the trap limit program and the Dungeness crab fishery.

- He stated that crab season has been very busy, with a lot of activity on the water. The nature of the violations included: one boat running multiple person's gear and traps set in the new MPAs.
- To-date there has only been one waiver submitted to CDFW to retrieve another person's gear. The process went smoothly, but someone else expressed frustration with the process. Enforcement is interested in discussing the waiver process with the full DCTF to fine-tune the waiver process without generating new loopholes.
- **The EC requested that the DCTF discuss the issue of multiple people's gear being run off one boat at the April meeting.**

o Christy Juhasz provided a brief update on the landings for the 2013/14 season:

- Although data is only available through December, more than 10 million pounds have been landed; 7 million from District 10 and 3 million from areas north of Pt. Arena. Landings for District 10 were close to last season, however landings for the areas north of Pt. Arena were considerably lower than the previous year. Oregon's landings were in the 12 million pound range.

o There were no updates available on the pending lawsuit. **The Admin Team will support CDFW in having updated information about the lawsuit available for the DCFT at its April meeting.**

b) April DCTF meeting

<u>April DCTF meeting- Scheduling date(s) and Discussion of draft meeting agenda items</u>

- The Admin Team outlined a number of possible dates for the April DCFT meeting that consider the PFMC meeting (April 3-10), Commission Meeting (April 16 & 17), tax day, Easter/Passover, and the Fisheries Forum (April 24).
  - o Due to the considerable items the DCTF is tasked with discussing at the April meeting, the EC agreed a 2-day meeting is necessary.
  - o Agenda topics the DCTF will be tasked with include:
    - Trap limit evaluation and adaptive management, including reviewing data needs
    - Tri-state issues, including: Reviewing crab quality testing protocols, consider flexibility in setting start date outside of 15-day increments, consider December 15 (or alternative date) target start date, consider how and whether to include the District 10 area using the current Tri-State protocol, and consider revising the pre-soak period and start time to avoid a 12AM start time for pulling gear.
    - Discussion about latent permits
    - Crab quality testing including prioritization of crab quality funding

        - Convene sportfishing workgroup
        - EC functioning
    - **The Admin Team will contact the full DCTF to confirm that a quorum of members can attend a meeting on Tuesday, April 22 and Wednesday, April 23 with a possible early start on the second day.** The meeting will be held at the Ukiah Valley Conference Center.

April DCTF meeting- Trap limit program Data needs

- The Admin Team reviewed the list of draft data needs developed in anticipation of the April meeting.
    - During this meeting, the DCTF will discuss a range of topics as listed above. A range of analyses and information from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and other sources will be required to inform these discussions. The draft list, developed by the Admin Team and informed by EC/DCTF member discussions, will be used to guide the Admin Team and CDFW in their efforts to compile data to share at the upcoming DCTF meeting and to inform DCTF deliberations.
    - Landings data for the 2013/14 season will not be complete at the April meeting since the season will not yet be over and all landings tickets will not have been received by that time. Data will likely include information gathered up to February 2014.
    - Ideas for additional or modifications to the data needs document:
        - Suggestion to remove "landings over the last 10 years by tier." The trap limit program has only been in place for one season and tiers were not in place prior to this season.
        - How many latent permits are there in the fishery compared to before the program?
        - Can someone renew a permit without purchasing tags? **CDFW will confirm this with the License and Revenue Branch (LRB).**
        - How many fishermen are applying for in-season replacement tags? Is the replacement tag system being abused?
            - Reminder that tags are reissued every two years, with fishermen able to request replacement tags during the season and between seasons.
            - What will be the method for issuing replacement tags between seasons (i.e., at the end of the first season and between the 2-year cycle)? **CDFW to check with LRB.**
                - CDFW confirmed that, to date, 1,188 in-season tags have been requested and issued.
    - The Admin Team will share the updated draft data needs document with the full DCTF work with CDFW to compile the data included in this list. **Additional input from DCTF members is welcome, and should be submitted to the Admin Team no later than April 4, 2014 so there is time to gather the data requested.**

April DCTF meeting- Tri-State

- The Admin Team reviewed the Tri-state issues the DCTF will be tasked with addressing at its April meeting, including:
        - Consider flexibility in setting start date outside of 15-day increments.
        - Consider December 15 (or alternative date) target start date.

- Consider how to move the Tri-State southern boundary line to the CA/Mexico border to include the District 10 area using the current Tri-State protocol as a template and starting point. Recommendations developed by the Task Force would be brought back to Tri-State for review and discussion.
- Consider revising the pre-soak period and start time to avoid a 12AM start time for pulling gear.

o These issues were brought to the DCTF's attention last summer and briefly discussed during the November 8, 2013 EC conference call. In anticipation of the May 2014 tri-state meeting, these issues will be brought before the DCTF for discussion and a possible vote(s).

o The Admin Team invites the EC and DCTF to discuss and/or develop proposals related to the tri-state issues and submit them to the Admin Team for circulation to the DCTF (and the public) to initiate discussions at the April meeting.

- EC members generally agreed that California would benefit by having a unified voice on all tri-state issues, which will provide the most protection for California's fishery. Oregon and Washington have the ability to make regulatory changes within a short timeframe whereas California takes longer. The DCTF's 2015 legislative report is a good opportunity for the DCTF to request changes to the California fishery.
- Members of the EC representing District 10 explained that the DCTF should begin deliberations about tri-state issues before discussion of District 10's involvement in the tri-state agreement, which could be initiated at the port level.
    - District 10 is not formally part of the Tri-State Committee, however representatives from District 10 are able to participate in tri-state discussions and decisions. If District 10 were included in tri-state, there would need to be discussions about testing into the season, fair start, etc.
    - EC members expressed that they would not be able to bring anything to District 10 constituents until there is a better understanding of the DCTF's recommendations on most tri-state issues (e.g., moving opener to December 15 or alternative date, etc.).
    - There was also concern expressed that the DCTF should not be making decisions about District 10 without an opportunity for the full fleet to vote. The Admin Team reminded the EC that the DCTF only provides recommendations, and could make a recommendation that these issues be discussed and voted on by the full fleet.
- EC members expressed an interest to maintain the status quo of the season opener and not change the start date. Concern was expressed about how a shift in the start date may affect District 10 (i.e., increase pressure and less incidence of fair start). There was a discussion around the palatability of a later northern opener with a fair start provision for District 10 every year.
- CDFW requested the EC discuss the crab quality testing protocols given the challenges CDFW experienced prior to the 2013/14 season. CDFW is interested in ensuring that reliable data is gathered from the pre-season testing. Changing the season opener may help address instances of limited/poor or unreliable data available for pre-season testing.
    - **CDFW offered to provide an analysis of the probability of a season opening on less than 25% yield for a given date.** This analysis would allow the DCTF to assess what type of risk would be involved setting

modifying the northern start date. Members of the EC confirmed this data would be helpful for the upcoming DCTF meeting.

- The EC discussed the history of crab quality testing and suggested that the DCTF revisit the goals of the program (e.g. Is it intended to ensure a quality product is available on the market, or provide fishermen with information to plan for their season?) and the testing protocol.
- An EC member recommended exploring the idea of hiring an independent, third-party to conduct the quality testing in place of CDFW and volunteers. **The Admin Team will reach out to the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSFMC) to see what funding is available from the last two seasons of crab quality testing.**

- When considering tri-state issues, CDFW and the Admin Team encourages the DCTF to think through options they would like to see, rather than a straight "yes" or "no" vote. For example, for a vote regarding the start date, the DCTF may suggest alternatives to December 15 and/or a rationale for why they prefer status quo.
- **The Admin Team will put together a list of options related to the tri-state issues that have been expressed by the EC, as well as other DCTF members, in anticipation of the April DCTF meeting. This list will be available to help support the DCTF's discussions.**

April DCTF meeting- Discussion of latent permits and options for management

- A discussion of latent permits will be postponed until the DCTF meeting when there will be more data to inform this discussion.

c) Presentation, NOAA Whale Entanglement Workshop

- The EC was provided a brief presentation by Tina Fahy, NOAA West Coast Protected Resources Division, which included background information about a recent NOAA Whale Engagement Workshop held in Portland on November 13-14, 2013. NOAA is interested in working with fishermen to improve reporting of whale entanglements, as well as to train fishermen as volunteers to assist with disentangling whales.
    - The EC acknowledged that incidents of whale entanglements in Dungeness crab gear was rare and expressed an interest to remain informed of the project and it's progress. However, the EC is not interested in participating in port-based small group discussions at this time.

d) Final thoughts and next steps

- Closing updates included:
    - A number of suggested changes to the sport fishery have been presented to the Fish and Game Commission. The DCTF will have the opportunity to discuss the need for convening a sportfishing work group at the April meeting.
    - The Admin Team will work with OPC, CDFW, and the DCTF to prepare for the April 2014 DCTF meeting and will be in touch soon with meeting dates and information.