

California Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF)

Draft Options/Considerations for Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery Capacity

To support DCTF + Executive Committee Discussion - during meetings and with peers

Drafted by the DCTF Administrative Team - April 20, 2022

Overview

This draft document is intended to support a discussion during the May 4, 2022 DCTF Executive Committee (EC) regarding commercial Dungeness crab fishery goals over the next 5 years. The EC is reviewing this content to determine how, if, and when the options outlined below should come into full DCTF discussions.

The information included in this document was informed by previous DCTF and Executive Committee discussions, public comments received, and conversations with DCTF members and their constituents. This list of ideas and options is not exhaustive and new ideas may be considered during EC and DCTF meetings. The EC may update/refine this document during their May 4, 2022 meeting before the topic of capacity goals is brought to the DCTF.

Problem

1. *What is the problem to be solved?*

- Ensure the longevity and economic sustainability of the fleet
- Reduce overcrowding in fishing grounds that is expected to result from new ocean initiatives (e.g., 30x30, wind)
- Reduce marine life entanglements
- Increase profitability of the fleet
- Maintain strong political voice of commercial fleet
- Other?

Questions & Options

2. *What are the capacity goals for the commercial Dungeness crab fishery? And why (see problems above)?*

- Decrease the size of the fleet?
- Maintain the size of the fleet?
- Increase the size of the fleet?

3. a. *What needs to be addressed to accomplish one or more of the capacity goals?*

- # of boats
- # of permits
- # of traps
- # of lines
- Geographic distribution of the fleet?
- Type of operation, diversity within the fleet?
- Other?

3. b. If a capacity reduction is explored, how much should the reduction be?

- 10% of boats, permits, traps, and/or lines
- 20% of boats, permits, traps, and/or lines
- 30% of boats, permits, traps, and/or lines
- 40% of boats, permits, traps, and/or lines
- Other?

Strategies/Tools to Reduce Fleet Capacity

- Capacity Reduction
 - Attrition (i.e., permits are removed from the fishery when not renewed/fees not paid (currently happening))
 - Permit Stacking (e.g., require individuals to acquire 2 permits when making a transfer (2 for 1))
 - Buyout Program (i.e., Appropriate funding sources identified together with optimal fleet size and make-up)
 - Trap Reduction Program (i.e., program that further decreases gear beyond the current Trap Limit Program)
 - Reducing Vertical Lines (e.g., allow long-lining gear)
 - Other?
- Maintain Capacity
 - ?
- Increase Capacity
 - ?

Questions & Considerations

- Which tools are financially feasible (for both the fleet and the state)?
 - Who will pay for the costs of a strategy/tool?
- How will the strategy/tool/goal financially effect the fleet?
- How easy/difficult will it be to implement the strategy by the state? By the industry?
- Consider which tool(s) could solve more than one issue facing the fishery simultaneously
- Concerns have been expressed about the need to create a “more professional” and experienced fleet. How can this be done?
- When reducing capacity:
 - How to prevent permits/boats/people from re-entering the fishery?
 - How to prevent putting more pressure on other fisheries due to capacity reduction in the Dungeness crab fishery?
 - Should non-transferable, grandfathered permits be allowed to receive compensation from any of the tools (e.g., a buyout)?
 - Consider how best to maintain the diversity of the fleet (e.g., don't remove permits from a single production level, all production levels should be involved)