

**Draft Meeting Summary  
DCTF Executive Committee  
Thursday, March 3, 2016**

***Meeting Participants***

EC Members Present	Geoff Bettencourt, Bill Blue, Bill Carvahlo, Larry Collins, Mike Cunningham, Vince Doyle
EC Members Absent	Brett Fahning
Other Meeting Participants:	Julie Oltmann, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Craig Shuman, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Sonke Mastrup, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Pete Kalvass, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Christy Juhasz, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Cpt. Steve Riske, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Cpt. Bob Puccinelli, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Maria Melchiorre, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Ruth Flores, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife Valerie Termini, Ocean Protection Council Miriam Goldstein, Congresswoman Speier's Office Noah Oppenheim, Congressman Huffman's office Rachelle Fisher, DCTF Administrative Team Kelly Sayce, DCTF Administrative Team

**Meeting Summary**

All “next steps” are ***in bold*** below.

1. *Welcome, introductions, agenda overview*

- The DCTF Administrative Team (Admin Team) introduced call participants and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The purpose of the call is to receive updates on disaster relief and the lost fishing gear recovery program, learn of the progress of disaster relief efforts and the lost fishing gear recovery program, learn of the progress of domoic acid sampling, and discuss the long-term functioning of the DCTF beyond January 2017.
- The Admin Team explained the Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) Executive Committee (EC) is a subcommittee of the DCTF. The EC cannot make decisions on behalf of the DCTF and will report back to the full DCTF with the outcomes of this conference call. The EC was directed by the DCTF to address the topic of domoic acid during the October 26-27, 2015 DCTF meeting. Additionally, the EC is tasked with moving DCTF recommendations forward, including the lost fishing gear recovery program.
- Meeting ground rules and [guidelines for providing public comment](#) were reviewed, and the Admin Team walked through the agenda. The Admin Team reminded those on the call that public comments are also welcomed via email at [info@dungenesscrabtaskforce.com](mailto:info@dungenesscrabtaskforce.com) if they are having trouble getting through on the line. Emailed comments received during the conference call will be read aloud during the call as time permits, and also included in the meeting summary (which may be paraphrased to improve readability). Additionally, those comments received in advance or immediately following the call will be circulated to the EC and posted on the DCTF webpage.
- The Admin reminded call participants this is a working meeting of the EC. Public comment is welcomed, however will be limited if we are unable to get through the agenda in a timely fashion.

2. *Updates on issues involving the Dungeness crab fishery including, but not limited to, disaster relief efforts and the lost fishing gear recovery program bill.*

- The Admin Team explained that although the DCTF/EC is not actively engaging in disaster relief efforts, EC calls are an opportunity to provide updates to the industry. On February 9, 2016, [Governor Jerry Brown requested a federal disaster declaration](#) for the Dungeness crab fishery. Currently the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is determining whether or not a federal disaster will be declared.
- Miriam Goldstein, Congresswoman Speier's Office, explained that Congresswoman Speier and Congressman Huffman would introduce the Crab Emergency Disaster Assistance Act of 2016 to congress on Thursday, March 3, 2016. The bill identifies \$138.15M to be appropriated to Dungeness crab and rock crab fishermen and related businesses. Drawing on the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission's (Pacific States) experience assisting with the salmon disaster a few years ago, Pacific States is identified in the bill as the party responsible for dispersing Dungeness crab disaster relief if funding becomes available. The dollar figure and process were derived through conversations with industry and Pacific States, and is justified based on estimated impacts to the industry. Additional funding has been requested for research, including \$1M for West Coast domoic acid sampling and monitoring and \$5 M for competitive grants for research on harmful algal bloom prediction and evaluation of domoic acid toxicity. There will be a press conference on the bill in the Scomas parking lot on Friday, March 4, 2016. Copies of the bill will be shared during the press conference.
  - **The Admin Team agreed to circulate the bill via the DCTF email list once it is posted online and a bill number becomes available.**
- The Admin Team reminded call participants that a disaster declaration has not yet been made by NOAA, but that the Crab Emergency Disaster Assistance Act of 2016 will be in place if and when that declaration is made by NOAA.
- EC Members expressed gratitude for all the efforts at the federal, state, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) levels. Members asked what the expected timing is if/when a disaster declaration could be made.
  - Ms. Goldstein explained that NOAA is actively working on the disaster relief declaration process, and there is not any information on a timeline.
  - CDFW is continuing to work with NOAA to share information for the formal evaluation.
- The Admin Team provided additional updates:
  - The Whale Protection and Crab Gear Retrieval Act (Senate Bill 1287) was introduced by Senator McGuire's office and is available online at [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov). Call participants are encouraged to contact Senator McGuire's Office ([senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov](mailto:senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov)) to express support/concerns about the bill. Senator McGuire's Office is interested in understanding the specifics of any concerns shared.
  - The California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) has hired Deborah Halberstadt as the new [Executive Director](#).

***Public comment***

- Geraldine Davis, commercial fishing permit holder, expressed her thanks for the state and federal relief efforts. She participated in the trap retrieval program in Eureka and thought it was very successful, and she supports the trap retrieval bill (SB 1287). She asked if those attending the Speier/Huffman press conference will have an opportunity to comment on the opening of the commercial Dungeness crab fishing season.
  - Ms. Goldstein explained that since the commercial opener is a state issue it will not be discussed during the press conference.

- Todd Coarse, commercial fisherman, asked how the Dungeness crab industry is going to respond to potential questions from the government including: What the industry is doing to mitigate its losses? He believes that disaster relief is the path of disillusion since CDFW gave the industry an opportunity to open the commercial fishery.
  - One EC Member explained industry members are contacting their local congressional and legislative representatives, as well as continuing to work with CDFW to open the commercial fishing season.
  - Another Member explained that industry and port associations have been working with local harbor districts to provide local relief through waiving slip fees and establishing funds to help with groceries.
  - An EC Member explained the domoic acid fishery closure caught everyone by surprise and the industry has been reacting to it. The \$6M in the disaster relief bill allocated to research and monitoring can help us better understand bioaccumulation so everyone can be more responsive to these kinds of issues in the future.
- Mark Gentry, commercial fisherman, expressed concern that SB 1287 (the lost fishing gear recovery program) was too open-ended and would like it to include more specific language. As currently written, it allows the DCTF, EC, and CDFW to move forward recommendations that are not covered by law. He expressed concern that the DCTF is currently functioning beyond the legal premise of the DCTF's founding legislation.
- Stephen Melz, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: Disaster relief has been asked for. An area within California that is the size of Oregon has tested clean, yet the majority of the DCTF Members have voted for their constituents to not fish. How do the executive members feel this will be viewed by the legislature in getting this disaster relief bill passed?
  - One EC Member explained everyone is suffering as a result of the continued delay in the fishery, even the processors who have \$50k of fixed overhead every month specific for processing crabs. The last EC conference call demonstrated a majority of the industry is concerned with the safety and quality of the product, and would like to act as responsible stewards of the resource.
- Geraldine Davis, commercial fishing permit holder, expressed support for Mr. Coarse's comments and stated the individuals who are participating in EC conference calls are part of port associations and are not representative of the industry.
- Zach Rotwien, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: It is not helpful to bring unfounded environmental issues into the dialogue (i.e., global warming, whale entanglements, crab mating season).
- Kathy Fosmark, commercial fishing family member, expressed support for Oregon's lost gear recovery program.
- Gordon Fowler, commercial fisherman, is a new captain and just entered the Dungeness crab fishery this year. Money and fishing opportunities have already been lost, and he would like to see some sort of guarantee that fishermen will get some financial compensation in times of disaster. He made the comparison between farming and fishing, suggesting that fishermen should be guaranteed disaster relief money similar to farmers that experience drought, etc.
- Tom Walsh, commercial fisherman, expressed support for Mr. Coarse's comment. Disaster relief is a positive step, but it's a long time away. The Federal government is not going to prioritize disaster relief for the California Dungeness crab fishery over other national priorities. The EC turned down fishing when the industry should currently be fishing.
- Mike Haggren commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: The gear retrieval program is trying to address two problems with one solution, and two similar but separate solutions are needed. Fishers that intentionally abandon gear in the water should be prosecuted with the penalty of retrieval costs and potential non-renewal of licenses until gear is recovered etc. However, gear is also "lost", that is not abandoned intentionally, usually by tow boat entanglement, seaweed entanglement, sometimes currents hold buoys under for short stretches of strings, or missed when stacking out. The fishers that loose gear unintentionally should not be fined or held for non-renewal of

license. Everybody loses a small percentage of gear. Both Oregon and Washington have simple solutions that work well for this type of normal loss. It is not intentional and most fishers help others in their losses.

- Mark Gentry, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: The last hour discussion shows why there needs to be more details in SB1287 (the lost fishing gear recovery program, including the cost to purchase traps back, which should not exceed \$50/trap. This fishery has been well managed with simple legislation and size sex and season regulations for 148 years.
3. *Updates on domoic acid and its impact on the California Dungeness crab fishery including, but not limited to, the status of test results and of the season opener. The ensuing discussion may include, but will not be limited to, guidance to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and others regarding potential consideration(s) for opening the commercial fishery, regular domoic acid testing as part of annual pre-season crab quality testing, domoic acid protocols, etc.*
- The EC has held a number of conference calls (November 5, December 22, January 28, and February 16) to discuss the elevated levels of domoic acid in Dungeness crab. Following the February 16 call, the EC [provided guidance to CDFW on opening the commercial fishery](#).
  - CDFW provided updates on domoic acid sampling and referenced [updated domoic acid sampling maps](#). Tests are deemed “clean” following approval from California Department of Public Health (CDPH). [Test results are shared and posted on the CDPH website](#). CDFW continues to work with CDPH and the Dungeness crab fleet on this issue. CDFW confirmed they would continue to evaluate all information as it comes in when determining how to open the commercial Dungeness crab fishery. CDFW does not have authority to issue a “drop-dead date” where the fishery would remain closed for the rest of the season if it was not deemed “clean” by CDPH by a certain date (i.e. a “drop-dead date”).
  - The Admin Team asked CDFW and OPC if there was any additional guidance needed from the EC at this time. Both agencies explained they do not need any additional guidance at this time.
  - EC Members generally agreed it would be important to clear up any “loose ends” before the next season (2016-2017), including understanding and issuing legal authorities, developing new regulations, understanding the role of crab quality testing, and how the DCTF should communicate with the Fish and Game Commission moving forward. EC Members discussed next steps for addressing and managing domoic acid in Dungeness crab.
    - One EC Member would like a discussion on defining an appropriate buffer zone, including identifying a sliding scale. He explained if there is one crab testing high while neighboring areas are also high the area should remain closed. However, if there is one crab that is barely over the 30ppm threshold and adjacent areas are clean, there should be an opportunity to open the area.
    - Another Member requested information on the origin of the domoic acid testing protocols and requested clarification why all crabs must be clean before opening the fishery, but if one crab tests poorly once the season is open the fishery is not automatically closed. It would be valuable for fishermen and other members of industry to sit down with CDPH and CDFW so the agencies and industry can be more proactive, work together to streamline collecting, and brainstorm on what to do if this situation arises again.
    - There was an interest by some EC Members to have observers on boats that are pulling samples to help ensure credibility of testing results.
    - One EC Member asked what the domoic acid thresholds were in Canada and other countries.
      - It was understood the US FDA standard is based on Canadian standards, where Prince Edward Island mussels have to be below 30ppm to be deemed safe. **OPC will confirm this information and update the EC during a future call.**

- OPC is putting together a working group composed of members of the OPC Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT), CDPH, and toxicologists to discuss this year's testing regime and put together a guidance document by next fall. She asked if there were questions the working group should consider. The EC discussed questions and comments to be shared with the OPC-SAT working group:
  - Is the overall domoic acid testing protocol/methodology appropriate? Is it too stringent? Or too loose?
  - Is the 30ppm threshold for Dungeness crab appropriate? Too high? Too low?
    - Is this threshold more appropriate for mussels, where the entire organism is eaten? Since only the meat of the crab is consumed, is 30ppm an appropriate threshold?
    - If the public does consume the viscera, is 30ppm an appropriate threshold to keep people from getting ill?
    - Can the threshold be based on an average? Could the average of the sample be below a threshold, however the highest crab cannot exceed a certain level (e.g. 100ppm)?
  - Do males versus females respond differently to domoic acid?
  - Is there any variation on how sublegal versus legal crabs process domoic acid?
  - Should all sample crabs be legal sized males since those are sold for consumption?
  - Should there be different sampling for females to consider the sport fishery?
  - Is testing the viscera an appropriate proxy for understanding the domoic acid levels in the meat?
    - Can research be performed to show how much domoic acid is in the meat by looking at the viscera?
    - What is the level of domoic acid in the viscera when the meat also starts to test threshold levels?
  - Is a sample size of six crabs sufficient to truly understand the domoic acid content of the stock? Is a large, more representative sample size more appropriate?
  - What is an appropriate buffer between a closed and open area?
  - What is the ideal distance between sample sites?
  - Once a site or area tests "clean", should it continue to be retested until adjacent sites/areas are also "clean"?
    - Once a site or area tests "clean", should it be resampled after a designated period of time to ensure crabs have stayed clean?
  - Why is the process for closing the fishery different than the process for opening the fishery? For example, there can be up to four contaminated crabs before the fishery is closed, but there cannot be any contaminated crabs in a sample to open the fishery. Why is the industry allowed to fish on elevated crabs, but once the fishery is closed, not able to open the fishery if even one crab is elevated?
  - There are concerns about the impacts to the resource if the industry fishes on soft crabs, particularly if the season is delayed due to elevated levels of domoic acid.
    - Should crab quality testing also be required to open the fishery?
    - Does handling mortality from fishing soft crabs harm the resource?

- Could the Director of CDFW authorize a 10-day fair start within a management area if that management area had multiple openers?
  - How will the OPC-SAT confer with fishermen and the greater Dungeness crab industry on their questions, discussions, and results?
    - There is interest by the fleet in working with CDFW, CDPH, and scientists to discuss how to streamline sampling and minimize impacts to the fleet if this scenario were to occur again.
- The EC discussed concerns about the fishery opener.
  - One EC Member explained that while everyone agrees that the peak ripeness and marketability of the crab is in the winter, the fishery has never opened in late March/early April. It's unclear what kind of ramifications an opener this late in the season will have on next season, or long-term. Buyers and processors would like quality testing performed on the crab once/if the season opens.
    - An EC Member agreed, and explained that his port is concerned about fishing on low quality crabs with increased handling mortality. Due to these concerns, his port supports a "drop-dead date." The Admin Team explained CDFW will not explore a "drop dead date".

## **Public comment**

*All related questions/comments will also be forwarded to the OPC-SAT.*

- David Helliwell, commercial fisherman and DCTF Member, emailed the following comment: A question that needs to be considered is what is the appropriate test for determining an action level?
- Stephen Melz, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: As an upper tier permit holder in Half Moon Bay, I respectfully ask the response given by our EC member on the issue of opening clean areas be stricken. There was no all-port meeting to gather votes. Since the majority of permit holders did not have a say in the matter the opinion cannot be valid. Excusing this vote denies the EC a unanimous decision and that grants the Director the ability to open areas as they test clean."
  - The Admin Team and CDFW explained the decision by the CDFW Director to not open the fishery at this time is based on the totality of information received including guidance from the EC and during public comment at EC meetings.
- Stephen Melz, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: Observers should be placed on test boats, in response to what questions/comments should be shared with the OPC-SAT.
- Keith Gilmore, commercial fisherman and DCTF Alternate, expressed an interest in learning whether crabs sequester domoic acid in the viscera up to a certain (maximum) point. If they do, at what level does it become measureable in the meat? Perhaps there is a "permissible" level of domoic acid in the viscera, which could be marketed as section-only crabs (i.e., only meat will be sold)
- Christian Sjack, commercial fisherman, stated that domoic acid (in red algae) has been used in Japan as medication in doses of 20mg for hundreds of years. No ill effects have been reported from this. CDFW is relying on Oregon and Washington's protocols to open the California fisheries, and now Oregon and Washington's product is showing up in California markets. The concern level (30ppm) is so low and we don't know if there have been crabs with domoic acid at this level in the past. The domoic acid issue is made more challenging with the media's influence. He stated that observers should be required on sampling boats, and explained it was important to separate the domoic acid issue from the whale entanglement issue.
- Chris Lonero, commercial fisherman, explained that six crabs as a representative sample, compared with the actual amount of crab in the ocean, causes him to be concerned with the sampling methodology. An appropriate sample size needs to be determined, as the current sample size is too

small and test results are not illustrating a true picture of what is happening in the ocean. We may need to look further than Oregon and Washington to fine-tune California's sampling protocol.

- Wilber Jenkins, commercial fisherman, asked if California will do further studies to investigate the role of agricultural runoff on these harmful algal blooms.
  - The Admin Team reminded the group that if approved, the disaster relief bill includes funding for research and monitoring. The questions/comments generated today will be shared with the OPC-SAT and others to inform those efforts.
- Geraldine Davis, commercial fishing permit holder, is not in favor of a "drop dead date". Her family fishes every year until the very end, and there are strong markets available throughout the duration of the season. People have fished during this time of year and it has not harmed the crab. She stated that she has spoken with buyers and they are not looking for further quality testing. She further explained that disaster relief is not going to happen soon and requested California open the commercial fishery.
- Ryan Bolz, commercial fisherman, is from Washington and fishes District 10. Washington had the same problems as California over the summer, but when the fishery eventually opened in Washington, the markets were and have continued to be strong. People are buying crabs.
- Bob Berry, commercial fisherman, highlighted that research regarding mussel versus crab contamination would be valuable. The domoic acid threshold for mussels is 30ppm, and the whole animal is consumed whereas in Dungeness crab a lot of the parts don't get consumed. He has never seen anyone get sick from a crab, only mussels. He also stated he is unable to speak with his DCTF representative if he didn't pay to be a member of his local marketing association.
  - Lisa Damrosch, Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association, stated DCTF Members do not have a list of constituents due to confidentiality associated with permit information. DCTF Members are available to all crab permit holders, not just association members, either directly or during public comment at associate meetings.
  - The Admin Team explained a letter was sent to permitholders a few years ago with DCTF Member's information to get around the confidentiality issues. If individuals would like to be in touch with their DCTF Member, please contact DCTF Admin Team ([info@dungenesscrabtaskforce.com](mailto:info@dungenesscrabtaskforce.com) or 805-845-9852) and they will put you in touch with your DCTF representative.
- David Shogren, commercial fisherman, explained his family has fished the west coast for 90 years, and the current terrible situation is getting convoluted. He would like the fishery to open.
- Gerry Wedel, processor, stated he also wants the fleet to go fishing to begin generating income for his operation. However, his customers want clean crab and he doesn't want to take a risk if one crab out of six is contaminated.
- Tony Anello, commercial fisherman, expressed concern about the credibility of the tests and requested CDFW do the tests instead of fishermen.
- Gordon Fowler, commercial fisherman, asked what the plan of action would be if the state finds out that testing is politically driven, inaccurate, or not backed up. Fishermen should be reimbursed if the delay was caused by data that was interpreted inappropriately.
- Tom Walsh, commercial fisherman, explained the markets for Dungeness crab are ready and available, and fishermen should be allowed to go fishing.
- Tom Ruvie, commercial fisherman, asked if the commercial fishing season does not open, will fishermen still have to pay their license fees or will last year's fees be refunded?
  - CDFW stated that they did not have answers for fee-related inquiries at this time.

- Bob Bebout, commercial fisherman, explained it is vital for California commercial Dungeness crab to be able to catch crab and salvage the season to support themselves and their families. Some fishermen prefer to depend on federal aide but others want to fish.
4. *Discussion of the long-term structure and functioning of the DCTF including, but not limited to, the potential need to reevaluate the make up of the organization, long-term funding, etc.*
- The Admin Team explained that since 2009, funding has been provided by OPC to administer the DCTF. Following submission of the DCTF's January 2017 legislatively mandated report the OPC's financial support of the DCTF will come to a close.
  - During the October 2015 DCTF Meeting, the DCTF unanimously agreed there is value in continuing the DCTF or some version of the organization to help inform the management of the fishery. The DCTF requested the EC begin discussing this topic with the goal of providing the DCTF with options for their consideration for the anticipated October 2016 DCTF meeting.
  - Today's call is an opportunity to begin exploring this topic. The EC was reminded this is just the start of the conversation and there will be a need to discuss on another EC call and also be discussed at the DCTF level.
  - The Admin Team walked through the "[Long-Term Function of the DCTF, Considerations for Funding and Structure](#)" to help inform and guide the conversation.
  - Funding of the DCTF was discussed and the EC and Admin Team walked through the budget.
    - At the October 2015 DCTF meeting, the DCTF was considering requesting the excess funds from the trap tag program (i.e., Dungeness Crab Account) be allocated to the DCTF. The Admin Team asked if this idea was still appropriate or if there were other ideas that could be considered.
      - One EC Member stated if the budget is used efficiently, less than \$150,000/year would be needed. This translates to less than \$0.01/pound of crab landed. Processors would likely be interested in also chipping in. The DCTF is a helpful body, and a cooperative effort between the fleet and buyers should continue.
      - One EC Member asked why the DCTF currently costs \$43,000/year to fund, but the budget in the [Long-Term Function of the DCTF, Considerations for Funding and Structure](#) shows up to \$275,000/year.
        - The Admin Team explained the current operating budget does not include funding for the DCTF to respond to unexpected events (e.g., domoic acid, addressing whale entanglements, etc.), and limits the DCTF to approximately one meeting per year. The updated budget provides a range of how active an Admin Team could be supporting the DCTF. The current Admin Team has spent approximately 20 hours per week working on the DCTF.
        - One Member suggested that some of the line items in the budget could be cut or minimized. For example, elections and polls may not be needed annually and the website is likely a one time expense.
        - One EC Member asked for updated trap limit program accounting. The Admin Team and CDFW explained that this accounting is anticipated to be available by mid-March.
        - Another Member asked if the funds needed legislative approval to spend the money. The Admin Team and CDFW confirmed the Legislature would have to approve any expenditure from the Dungeness Crab Account.

- An EC Member indicated it would be valuable to leave the Dungeness Crab Account as an option. However, it will be important to take into account the membership of the DCTF, including how to consider sport and CPFV roles seeing that neither of these sectors contribute to this account/funding.
- At the last DCTF meeting, Members expressed interest in continuing to work with the OPC to help provide legitimacy to the body. The industry would be interested in allocating funding to support OPC administrative costs.
  - Seeing that the new Executive Director just started two days prior, no decision has been made internally on whether there is support for the OPC to remain engaged in the DCTF. There may be an opportunity to continue to provide administrative support by allocating time for a Sea Grant Fellow to provide part-time admin support for printing, reserving meeting rooms, etc. OPC staff anticipates the new Executive Director would be supportive of this idea, but it will take time to work out the logistics.
- Over the last several years, DCTF Members have expressed the need to revisit the make up of the DCTF. The EC walked through the [guiding questions in the document](#) to discuss the make up of the DCTF.
  - One EC Member explained when the DCTF make-up was originally developed there was a lot of negotiation to satisfy the entire coast. Although the fishery has evolved over time, this evolution is not reflected in the DCTF's current make up and suggested the DCTF be revisited. In particular, he would like to see more representation for the ports south of Half Moon Bay. Additionally, there should be equal representation north and south of the Mendocino-Sonoma County line, and there should continue to be Members representing both upper and lower tiers of production. The DCTF should also continue to focus on the commercial fishery, not recreational/sport.
  - Another EC Member indicated there were too many representatives from Crescent City and not enough south of Half Moon Bay. Two representatives from each port and an equal representation north and south of the Mendocino-Sonoma County line seem like good ideas.
  - One EC Member suggested one representative for every 25 vessels in each port.
  - One EC Member requested the opportunity to give this topic more thought. Questions he has when considering the make-up of the DCTF include: should the representatives be based on the number of permits? What should be done about ensuring smaller ports are also represented? The DCTF has spent many hours and meetings throughout the years to do the best job possible. It will be important to build on that momentum when considering the future of this body.
- The Admin Team asked if rather than creating new seats, perhaps the current seats could be redistributed. They reiterated that some Members would like to see more equal number of representatives north and south of the Mendocino-Sonoma County line and there should potentially be two representatives from each port.
  - One EC Member responded that he was not keen on redistricting or redistributing representatives/votes. The original composition of DCTF is based on the number of permits in each port, and by amount of landings each port generates. During the original landings window, Crescent City had the highest landings, which led Crescent City to be allocated four representatives. It may be helpful to base representation on trap tiers, but suggested moving away from the north-south distinctions since the issues the DCTF is addressing are statewide and not regional. He acknowledged there are always differences of opinion even without a north-south divide. He explained that northern ports have not strong-armed decisions (and can't because of the voting structure). He suggested that since there has been no substantial change in the fishery, DCTF representation should remain the same moving forward.

- The Admin Team highlighted in recent years, high landings have shifted from the northern management area to the southern management area. However, it is unclear if those higher landings are still held by northern vessels or if it has switched to southern vessels.
  - An EC Member explained there are high and low (and in many cases middle) producers in every port. Instead of having a single representative south of Half Moon Bay, it would make more sense to create port grouping (e.g., representatives for the Avila-Morro Bay area and the Monterey Bay-Santa Cruz-Moss Landing area). As a representative of Morro Bay, it is difficult to be in touch with and ultimately speak for those ports that are geographically distant from his homeport. The current domoic acid situation has further highlighted the need for more representation in those southern areas.
    - Another EC Member expressed support for adding another representative south of Half Moon Bay.
- The Admin Team highlighted that the EC Member from Crescent City was unable to be on the call to share to his views on this topic. During the last DCTF meeting in October 2015, there was discussion of inadequate representation for out-of-state vessels. The Admin Team suggested the EC keep this, and the other ideas generated during the call, in mind as the future structure of the DCTF continues to be discussed.
- OPC staff explained a neutral organization that can coordinate and manage the DCTF will be needed, similar to the role OPC has played since 2009.

***Public comment***

- Joe Tomosillo, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: Due to recent North Coast tests showing higher levels of domoic acid, the fear among many crab fisherman is there will be no commercial crab fishing in some areas this season. As of March 1st we request CDFW open any area deemed safe for harvest of Dungeness crab to commercial fisherman by the public health agencies. Also, in the event the areas that remain closed become safe to open for Dungeness Crab, those areas will have 30-day protection.
- Zach Rotwein, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: Trinidad would like to gain a extra seat before Crescent City loses a seat to areas south of Half Moon Bay..
- Mike Haggren, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: The make up of the California permitholders consists of 14% non residents yet the DCTF contains only one nonresident member, and the EC contains no nonresidents. It would benefit the DCTF to have a broader base of experience especially in the perspective of how issues are dealt with in other states. Also, the greatest production normally comes from northern CA so the DCTF make-up should reflect this. Also, District 10 should become part of the tri-state, which would simplify a lot of problems.
- Stephen Melz, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: The current voting set up is working. Representation is based more on pounds landed, not permits held. The landing shift is in the change of the biomass becoming stronger in the south.
  - **The Admin Team will work with CDFW staff to determine if there is a shift in landings from northern to southern vessels or if the shift in landings is geographic.**
- Andy Giuliano, commercial fisherman, emailed the following comment: The DCTF memo identifies high and low tier DCTF Members. What pot allocation distinguishes a high and low tier?
  - The Admin Team explained the high and low production tiers of the DCTF were determined before the trap limit program was established, and is based on landings not on trap allocation tiers. The breakdown of high and low tier representatives can be found on the DCTF webpage:  
[http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/project\\_pages/dctf/0903\\_ElectionDetails\\_DCTF.pdf](http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/project_pages/dctf/0903_ElectionDetails_DCTF.pdf).

- Nick Ricker, commercial fisherman, would like to see the DCTF continue to exist. He suggested the make-up of the DCTF be revisited every five years (approximately) to take into account shifts in landings. He further stated southern vessels are not landing more crab than northern vessels.
- Mark Gentry, commercial fisherman, expressed support for a discussion on how to procure funding to ensure elections occur more frequently. Shifts in effort and production have occurred over the course of the fishery. It doesn't make sense to lock seats individuals into DCTF seats. There needs to be a mechanism to be responsive to this fluid situation and suggested elections via mail no less than every 2 years since that was the original intent of the founding legislation. He further stated that SB396 required a vote by permitholders to seat DCTF commercial fishing representatives.
  - The Admin Team explained that SB396 was not specific on the process for DCTF Member stepping down. Over the years, some Members have retired, no longer qualified for their seats, or simply chose to no longer sit on the DCTF. Allocating sufficient funding for regular elections is a high priority for the next phase of the DCTF.
- Geraldine Davis, commercial fishing permit holder, could not locate the DCTF bylaws on website.
  - The DCTF's charter is available online ([http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/\\_media\\_library/2009/04/DCTF\\_Charter\\_FinalUpdate\\_10292014.pdf](http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/_media_library/2009/04/DCTF_Charter_FinalUpdate_10292014.pdf)) and will be shared in the meeting summary.
  - Ms. Davis also asked if there had been any new elections since the original election.
    - The Admin Team explained there have not been resources available to hold new elections. However, if the DCTF were to continue, it will be important to ensure regular elections are a priority item in the budget.
  - Ms. Davis suggested that if the DCTF cannot come up with funds to have elections every two years then the DCTF should not be renewed. The current make-up of the DCTF does not appropriately represent the sentiments of the fleet.
- Mark Gentry, commercial fisherman, expressed concern there were no elections between SB1690 and SB 369.
- David Evanow, commercial fisherman, provided the following comment: If I remember correctly the existing voting membership was set up by number of permits in a port & total landings in that port. I have two boats in Crescent City and if they made landings in Crescent City or ANY other port, including District 10 ports, those landings were used to help decide the number of representatives Crescent City received. On the other hand, if a Bodega Bay or Half Moon Bay vessel traveled to Crescent City & made crab landings, those landings would help their homeport secure DCTF seats.

If a restructuring of the DCTF make-up is decided, we will need to decide how to divide up DCTF Members by port. I caught a lot of crabs from Half Moon Bay South in the 2014-2015 season and those crabs were landed in San Francisco, but I call Crescent City home so my poundage would favor Crescent City. Lots of "Out of State" boats come to fish District 10 or Crescent City & those landings are not affiliated to any California port with the existing rules.

Ports South of Half Moon Bay get very few landings from "Out of the Area" boats due to the logistics of unloading crab in those small harbors. All landings go back to the homeport of the traveling permit holder. When the crab biomass moves back to the north, like it always has, boats coming from District 10 to fish the Northern Areas will again use those landings to help their homeport. It is tough to change the voting membership without changing the existing allocation criteria.

## 5. General public comment

- The Admin Team, on behalf of David Goldenberg, California Sea Urchin Commission, explained that Mr. Goldenberg would be happy to display any materials for the DCTF at the California Sea Urchin Commission's booth at the Seafood Expo North American in Boston. The show begins Sunday, March 6 and ends Monday, March 8. Please contact the Admin Team at [info@dungenesscrabtaskforce.com](mailto:info@dungenesscrabtaskforce.com) if you are interested in learning more.

6. *Adjourn*

- The Admin Team summarized the next steps that emerged from the call discussions.
  - **The Admin Team will produce a summary of this conference call and post it on the [DCTF webpage](#) once it has been reviewed for accuracy by the EC.** The EC is also working on the 2/16/2016 summary and hopes to have it available soon.
  - **The Admin Team will share the questions/comments from the EC and the public surrounding domoic acid to the OPC-SAT.**
  - **The next EC conference call may be scheduled in about two weeks.**
    - The agenda for the next call will look similar to this call and may include continued conversation on domoic acid, including discussions and updates about the season opener and disaster relief, and the continued, long-term functioning of the DCTF.
  - **The [2-pager for funding](#) will be updated to integrate some of the feedback from the day's call to show the progression of ideas and to help inform future EC and DCTF discussions.**