

**Draft Meeting Summary
DCTF Executive Committee
Wednesday, October 10, 2012
9am-11am**

Meeting Participants

EC Members Present Geoff Bettencourt, Bill Blue, Bill Carvahlo, Larry Collins, Mike Cunningham, Vince Doyle, Brett Fahning

EC Members Absent None

Other Meeting Participants: Rachelle Fisher, DCTF Administrative Team
Kelly Sayce, DCTF Administrative Team
Valerie Termini-McCormick, Ocean Protection Council
Bob Farrell, CA Department of Fish and Game
Tom Barnes, CA Department of Fish and Game
Pete Kalvas, CA Department of Fish and Game
Christy Juhasz, CA Department of Fish and Game
Dave Colpo, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
Carrie Pomeroy, CA Sea Grant/ DCTF Member

Meeting Summary

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

- The DCTF Administrative Team (Admin Team) provided updates to the Executive Committee (EC) including introducing the new Ocean Protection Council (OPC) project manager, Valerie Termini-McCormick, and providing updates on the Dungeness crab fishery including emergency transfers.
 - After discussion of the new procedures for emergency transfers as result of the passing of Assembly Bill (AB) 2363, one EC member asked the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to clarify how DFG intends to handle the emergency transfer renewals from the 2011-2012 season. DFG staff indicated that of the four vessels eligible for renewals, no renewal requests had been made at this time. However, if requests do come in, the Director will make all final decisions.
- The EC had no updates to provide at this time.
- The Admin Team and DFG provided updates on the status of the trap limit program. They explained that public comment period for the Title 14 regulations closed Monday October 8 and that no new comments were received. DFG is on track to send the rule package to the Office of Administrative Law this month. Barring no unforeseen circumstances as the regulations move through the regulatory process, the Title 14 regulations should be adopted by January 1 and the program implemented during the 2013/2014 Dungeness crab season.
 - An EC member inquired about when details on the trap tiers will be available to commercial fishermen. DFG staff explained they were still processing landings receipts that have been submitted and anticipate the trap allocation tier information will be available in March 2013.
- AB 2363 indicates that crab caught for the purposes of crab quality testing will be sold and the funds will be put into an account managed by Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC). DFG, in cooperation with delegates of the tri-state Dungeness crab committee or members of the Dungeness crab task force (DCTF), will develop guidelines for how the funds in the account may be spent. The group discussed the process for developing the guidelines.
 - It was acknowledged there is a pressing need to get guidelines in place for the 2012/2013 commercial Dungeness crab season to ensure that California pays for crab quality testing. It was also acknowledged it would be difficult to convene the full DCTF to discuss this issue prior to the opening of the 2012/2013 season.

- The EC agreed to would develop temporary, interim, and/or immediate funding guidelines for DFG and PSMFC to move forward with. These temporary funding guidelines will be used until the DCTF can convene in the future to discuss and finalize these guidelines.
- **The Admin Team will check in with DCTF members to determine when they would like to meet to finalize the crab quality testing funding guidelines. The Admin Team will continue checking in with DFG to ensure the DCTF timeline is acceptable.**
- The EC, DFG, and PSMFC discussed temporary, interim crab quality funding guidelines.
 - From a process standpoint, DFG and PSMFC will coordinate with ports and coordinate vessels with observers onboard. Crab will be brought in and given to a processor(s) to determine market quality. The processor will then provide PSMFC with an accounting of the weight of the picked meat and the market value of the canned meat to give an indication of the total available budget for the crab quality test. At this point, PSMFC will decide how that budget is allocated based on the funding guidelines currently under discussion.
 - When compared over 6 years, on average, each crab quality test yields approximately 700lbs per test (some years/tests more and some less). If the market value of canned crab is around \$20/lb, one can estimate the budget for crab quality testing to approximately \$14,000 per test.
 - Keeping this average approximation in mind, and the idea that some years will generate more funds and less in other years, the EC continued discussing expenses what should be reimbursed as part of the program.
 - The EC agreed at a minimum that observer costs, including the observer day rate and travel, should be a top priority in the funding guidelines. The observer providers dictate the cost of these expenses.
 - Processor costs should also be accounted for to ensure processors can recoup their direct expenses for processing the crab. Although, \$3/lb was suggested as a sufficient amount to cover these costs, \$5/lb was also suggested when considering trucking costs and workers compensation. The EC agreed they would check in with other processors to determine the fair and reasonable rate for reimbursement.
 - **Mike Cunningham will call Caito Fisheries, Pacific Choice Seafood, and North Coast Fisheries to inquire as to the fair, reasonable rate of reimbursement for performing crab quality tests.**
 - Vessel costs were also considered an important item. The EC agreed it is important to ensure individuals are reimbursed for gas and other vessel costs. The EC were also mindful that crab quality testing is not intended to be an opportunity for individuals to make a profit outside of crab season. To ensure that the reimbursement process is as uncomplicated as possible, the EC agreed that a flat rate of \$1,000 per port, per test was an acceptable amount to cover vessel costs.
 - The EC began discussing how to manage any remaining/surplus funds. Since the legislation says that excess funds may be donated to charity, they entertained the idea of donating excess funds to charity, but also, discussed the reserving the option to retain some funds to cover shortfall in some years or a combination of the two options. The EC agreed that management of surplus funds should be discussed in more detail by the DCTF. Until that time, PSMFC will retain all surplus funds in an account.
 - As part of the EC's suggested temporary, interim guidelines, if tests yield insufficient funds to cover all the costs laid out above, the EC agreed that observer costs should be prioritized and processor and vessel reimbursement costs will be pro-rated based on the availability for the remaining funds. In this case, processors and vessels would only be reimbursed for a percentage of their expenses. Local associations may be able to cover these shortfalls for processors and vessels.

- **The Admin Team will collate the points of agreement for the recommendations of temporary, interim crab quality testing funding guidelines as outlined by the EC and assist the EC in transmitting the temporary, interim guideline recommendations to DFG before October 22. This will include information gathered by Mike Cunningham regarding processor costs.**
- **The recommendations for temporary, interim crab quality testing funding guidelines agreed upon by the EC at this meeting are considered temporary measures that will be used by DFG and PSMFC until the DCTF can meet, discuss, and finalize these funding guidelines and any additional recommendations.**
- The EC discussed the evaluation of the California Dungeness crab trap limit program.
 - Senate Bill (SB) 369 charges the DCTF with providing a review/evaluation of the impact of the trap limit program. This information will be used to provide recommendations in the DCTF's 2015 report.
 - There was concern among the EC about developing a report on the trap limit program in 2015 since the program would have only been in place for one year. The Admin Team explained SB369 requires a report in 2015 with initial recommendations and a final report in 2017. The 2015 report can act as a progress report and express these sentiments.
 - The Admin Team and Carrie Pomeroy explained that it would be helpful for the EC to begin identifying the information the DCTF will need to review and evaluate the trap limit program. This process will help inform the 2015 legislative report and help guide the Admin Team, OPC, and DFG to begin seeking out requested sources of information.
 - Some EC members expressed difficulty in anticipating questions without the trap limit program in place. The EC also agreed that informational requests and questions about the trap limit program would continue to evolve.
 - The EC began brainstorming the issue. Initial questions/informational needs developed by the EC in cooperation with DFG are listed below:
 - How many traps are in the water? Are there more or less since the program was implemented? Is effort capped? Has the program maintained capacity at current levels?
 - Has the program reduced the number of pots in the water without reducing the efficiency of the large boats?
 - How has the program impacted latent permits (e.g. Have people dropped out of the fishery?)? If so, how many? Has the program caused latent permits to become activated?
 - Has the program improved data collection, quality, and speed? Can DFG process landings information quicker? If not, what do they need to improve speed?
 - Does DFG have the resources it needs to support the program?
 - What can be done to reduce the cost of the program for the fleet?
 - Has the program ensured that permits are attached to functioning vessels?
 - What are the program's costs?
 - Enforcement- Has there been compliance with the trap limit program? Is the program enforceable? How do we address potential enforcement issues? What are the compliance rates?
 - What are the mechanisms for new guys to be able to participate in this vibrant fishery?

- Although DFG generally supported these questions/informational needs, they identified the following as being of particular interest to their organization:
 - Enforcement: Has there been compliance with the trap limit program? Is the program enforceable? How do we address potential enforcement issues? What are the compliance rates?
 - Has the trap limit program had any environmental/conservation contributions to the health of the resource or ecosystem?
- **When additional questions and informational requests arise, EC members will contact the Admin Team so they can investigate how to obtain the appropriate information. The Admin Team will share these requests with DFG and OPC, as appropriate.**
- **In addition to the items mentioned above, the Admin Team will circulate a summary of the EC meeting to the participants of this meeting in the coming days. A final summary will be circulated to the full DCTF and posted online shortly thereafter.**
- The EC will not meet again until sometime in 2013. The Admin Team will keep in touch with DCTF in the interim.