



## **~California Dungeness Crab Task Force~**

<http://www.opc.ca.gov/2009/04/dungeness-crab-task-force/>

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### **The Dungeness Crab Task Force (DCTF) Outputs of the first meeting of the Sport Fishery Workgroup October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009**

The recently formed Sport Fishery Workgroup held its first meeting via conference call on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. Similar to exercises completed by Workgroups at meeting 2 of the DCTF (San Francisco), this meeting provided Members of the Sport Fishery Workgroup the opportunity to:

- Review proposed straw problem statements and objectives for the sport fishery;
- Collaborate to revise straw objectives and develop new objectives—understanding priorities and gaining shared meaning about objectives for the fishery; and
- Brainstorm and discuss approaches and tools to achieve objectives.

No Members were opposed to the refined objectives prepared during the meeting, thus consensus was achieved and the **PRELIMINARY** draft material below will be shared in plenary with the full DCTF for review, feedback and potential further refinement at meeting 3 in Ukiah, CA on October 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

#### Refined Problem Statements:

- The early high volume commercial harvest in district 10 limits opportunities for sport fishing interests.
- Existing rules allow commercial boats to harvest under sport rules.
- Existing rules allow Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessels (CPFV) to harvest under commercial rules.
- There is concern south of Point Arena in the commercial and CPFV sectors about the potential negative impact of the sport harvest of reproductive females. However there is little biological data to date to substantiate or inform this concern.
- There is little to no biological data to inform decisions on sport fishery management.
- There is no requirement for destruct devices used in sport pots.
- Regulations are unclear about allowing for pre-set, and thus being manipulated by resource users.
- There is a general lack of enforcement by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG).
- Theft of crab and crab pots in the recreational fishery is a problem.



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### Refined Preliminary Draft Objectives:

*Objective - By 2010, regulations eliminate ghost fishing of pots.*

#### Solutions brainstorm:

- Biodegradable cotton on pots.
  - Look to commercial standards as a model for sport pots.

*Objective - By 2010, regulations specify a pre-set time for sport crab that improves safety and effective enforcement.*

#### Solutions brainstorm:

- Set a pre-set time of 18 hours.
- Close rock crab for two weeks prior to the opening of sport Dungeness crab season.

*Objective - By 2010, eliminate the regulatory loopholes that allow different sectors of the fishery to overlap within the same season.*

#### Solutions brainstorm:

- CPFV, sport, and commercial fishermen can only participate in one fishery (i.e. not both sport and commercial) using the same vessel.
- CPFV fishermen can own a commercial permit, but have to declare at the beginning of the season what fishery they are going to participate in.
- Have a private sport pot limit.
- If you have a commercial crab permit, you cannot fish sport off the same boat.
- Refine language in regulations that is not clear on double dipping (i.e. different sectors of the fishery overlapping in the same season).
- Improved enforcement.

OUTSTANDING QUESTION: How do you address the guy that takes out pots on a small sport boat then later fishes commercially on a bigger boat?

Based on current regulations this would be illegal since a commercial pot is not allowed to be in the water until the preset time of the commercial opener. A commercial permit holder would only be able to participate in the sport fishery if they did so using a non-permitted vessel and were not using commercial (marked) pots.



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*Objective - By the 2010 season and beyond, implement a program to collect, analyze and disseminate data on the dynamics of the sport fishery (e.g. catch rate, total catch, effort patterns and biological data).*

### Solutions brainstorm:

- Expand the California Recreational Fishing Survey (CRFS) to include Dungeness crab.
- Report card.
- Stamp program.
- Biological research.

*Objective - By 2010, implement mechanisms that slow the commercial harvest in district 10 and allow catch throughout the whole season, thus providing added opportunities and benefits to sport interests and local communities.*

### Solutions brainstorm:

- Many solutions have been brainstormed by other workgroups that had similar objectives, so there is already a list of potential solutions for this objective.

*Objective - By 2010, the harvest of female crabs is reduced; adaptive management is informed by ongoing collection, analysis and dissemination of biological data on females.*

### Solutions brainstorm:

- Prohibit CPFV and private boats from taking females while still allowing shore-based fishermen to take females.
- Adaptive management informed by science.
- 6 inch size limit applied to sport and CPFV vessels.
- Prohibit the take of females from all sectors of the recreational fishery.

*Objective - By 2010, regulations are clarified and minimize theft of traps owned and crab being harvested by sport fishermen.*

### Solutions:

- Both trap and buoy have to be marked with CF numbers.
- Buoy must be marked with CF# or Vessel Documentation #
- Buoy must be marked with phone number.