



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Marine Resources Program

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February 20, 2020

Oregon Ocean Commercial Dungeness Crab Permit Holders, Processors, Buyers, and Interested Persons:

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) is sending you this notice to inform you that we are moving forward with **phase II whale entanglement mitigation measures**, to reduce the risk of whale entanglements with Oregon commercial Dungeness crab gear. We will recommend this regulatory package to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (OFWC) for adoption on April 17th in Reedsport.

Since the October 2019 industry meetings (held in Brookings, Coos Bay, Newport and Astoria), we have been considering the input received from industry members, conducting additional analyses, and consulting with the newly-expanded Oregon Dungeness Crab Advisory Committee (ODCAC), which now includes members of the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission, crab associations, and industry members from the Oregon Whale Entanglement Working Group. Recent ODCAC meeting summaries, materials, and a current list of members are available on our Reducing Risk of Whale Entanglements webpage https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/commercial/crab/whale_entanglement.asp.

The phase II regulatory package includes the following mitigation measures:

For implementation within the current crab season (2019/20):

- Late-season reduction of pot limits by 20%, effective June 1, 2020, for the 2019/20 season, and effective May 1 thereafter
 - Require late-season buoy tag in addition to primary season tag
 - Late-season 30 fathom depth restriction in combination with pot limit reduction
 - Sunset after three seasons for late season pot limit reduction, buoy tag and depth restriction to allow for evaluation
- Eliminate two-week post-season gear clean-up period
- Require taut lines best practice (effective June 1, 2020)

For implementation beginning next crab season (2020/21):

- Eliminate replacement tags, except
 - Retain opportunity for replacement tags due to “catastrophic loss” and “extraordinary event”

- Require line marking
 - Minimum two black marks, 12 inches in length
 - One within a fathom of the pot and one within a fathom of the main surface buoy

Materials for the Commission meeting, including proposed regulation language for each of these measures, will be posted here <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/commission/minutes/> as they are available. Please contact Marine staff at the phone numbers and emails below or the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (odfw.commission@state.or.us) if you would like to submit public comment on any of these proposed measures.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

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