



Marine
Resources

Oregon Dungeness Crab Advisory Committee

April 15, 2026
9am-1pm



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Ground rules



Photo: Chris Peterson, Action Works Photography

- Listen to understand and ask questions.
- Focus on interests and ideas, not positions or single solutions. Share your expertise.
- Respect different viewpoints. Speak honestly and disagree without being disagreeable.
- Share the airtime. Everyone participate, no one dominate. One speaker at a time.



Agenda

- **Welcome and agenda overview**
 - Upcoming recruitment needs
- **Marine life entanglement updates**
- **Season opening updates**
- **Derelict gear recovery programs update**
- **August Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting**
 - Five-year risk reduction measures evaluation
 - Vessel monitoring & electronic logbooks
 - Experimental fishing gear permits
- **Public comment**



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Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission petition



- Received: December 11, 2025
- Petitioners: Center for Biological Diversity, Oceana, Natural Resources Defense Council, the American Cetacean Society
- Proposed crab fishery rule changes related to:
 - Pop-up gear
 - Late-season vertical line restrictions
 - Public notice of entanglements
 - Emergency procedures
- Commission denied the petition and directed staff to continue planned rulemaking processes and engagement with NOAA Fisheries to obtain ESA coverage



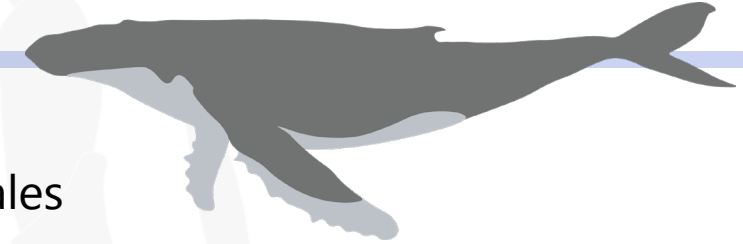
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Planned future rulemaking

- **August 2026**
 - Five-year risk reduction measures evaluation
 - Vessel monitoring requirements
 - Pop-up and longline experimental fishing gear permit program development
- Additional rulemaking as needed, pending outcomes of gear testing, work with stakeholders, and federal review of the CP



Conservation Plan status and scope



- **Covered species:** CAM and MX DPS humpback whales, blue whales, fin whales
- Key remaining steps:
 - Apply feedback on full draft received from NMFS Office of Protected Resources at end of Jan
 - Mid-May: Submit another full draft to NMFS for “full team” final review
 - ODFW review/apply “full team” feedback in consultation with NMFS
 - Late 2026: Formally submit CP/ITP application
 - NMFS reviews for sufficiency and, if necessary, works with ODFW to resolve any issues to deem the application ‘Adequate and Complete’
 - NMFS carries out NEPA evaluation, Section 7 consultation, MMPA permit authorization*, public comment periods
 - NMFS makes ITP issuance determination



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Season opening

Industry has brought concerns about season opening safety to the Commission

- **Longer pre-soak period**
 - Currently crabbers can set gear 73 hours prior to 9:00 am season opening
- **Barging**
 - Permit is not required for vessels solely setting gear for a permitted vessel
 - Cannot retrieve, retain, or possess Dungeness crab



Photo: Pat Knight, Oregon Sea Grant



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Derelict Gear

Current gear retrieval programs

- In-season allowances
- ODCC late-season program
- ODFW post-season program
- OCCA efforts

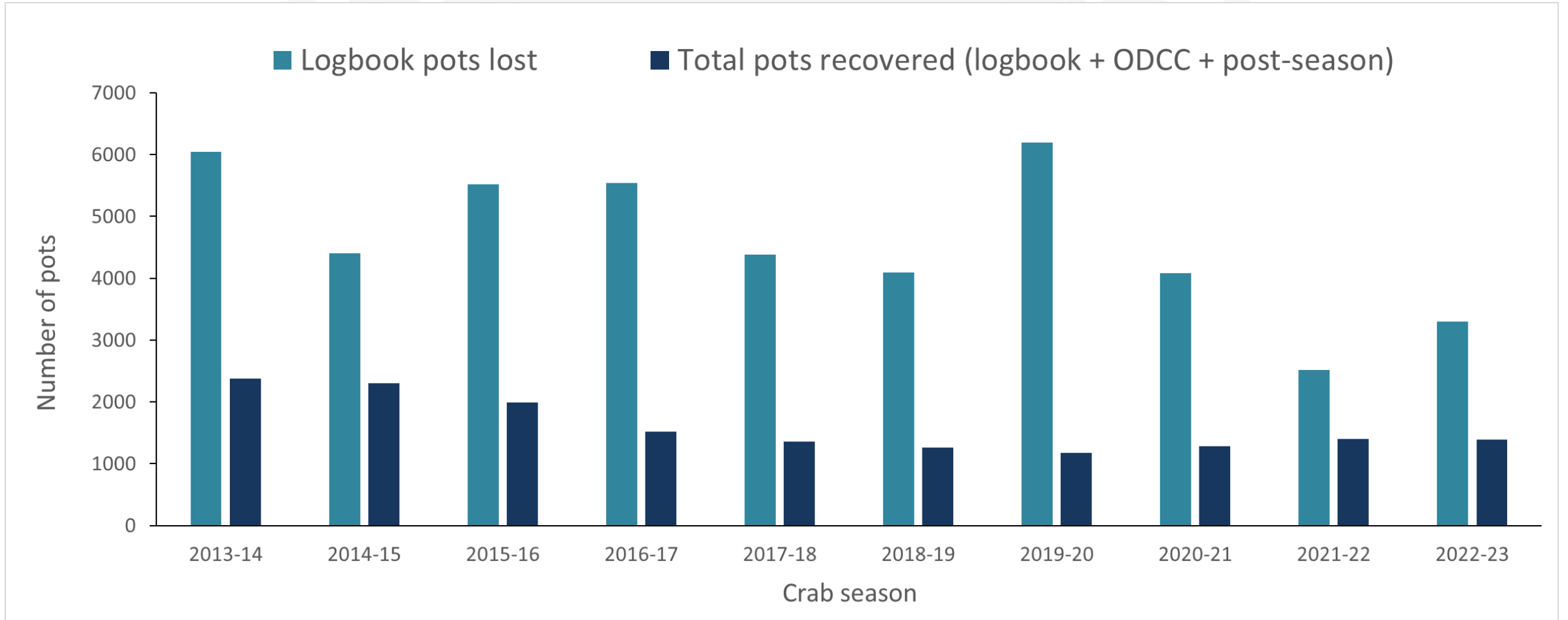
Idea sharing and lessons learned

- What has worked well in Oregon?
- What has worked in other states?
- What has not?
- How can we improve while keeping industry in lead?



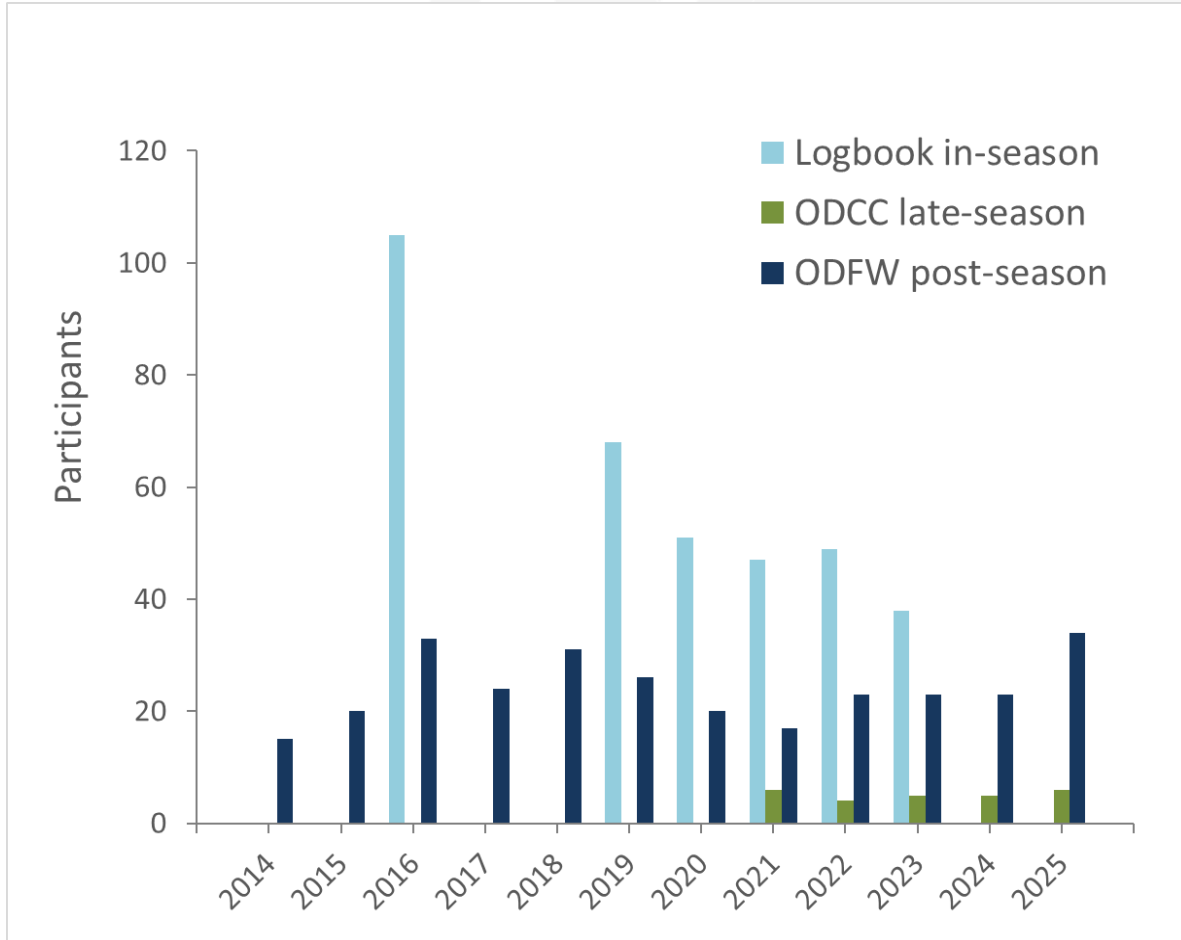
Photo: ODFW

Derelict Gear

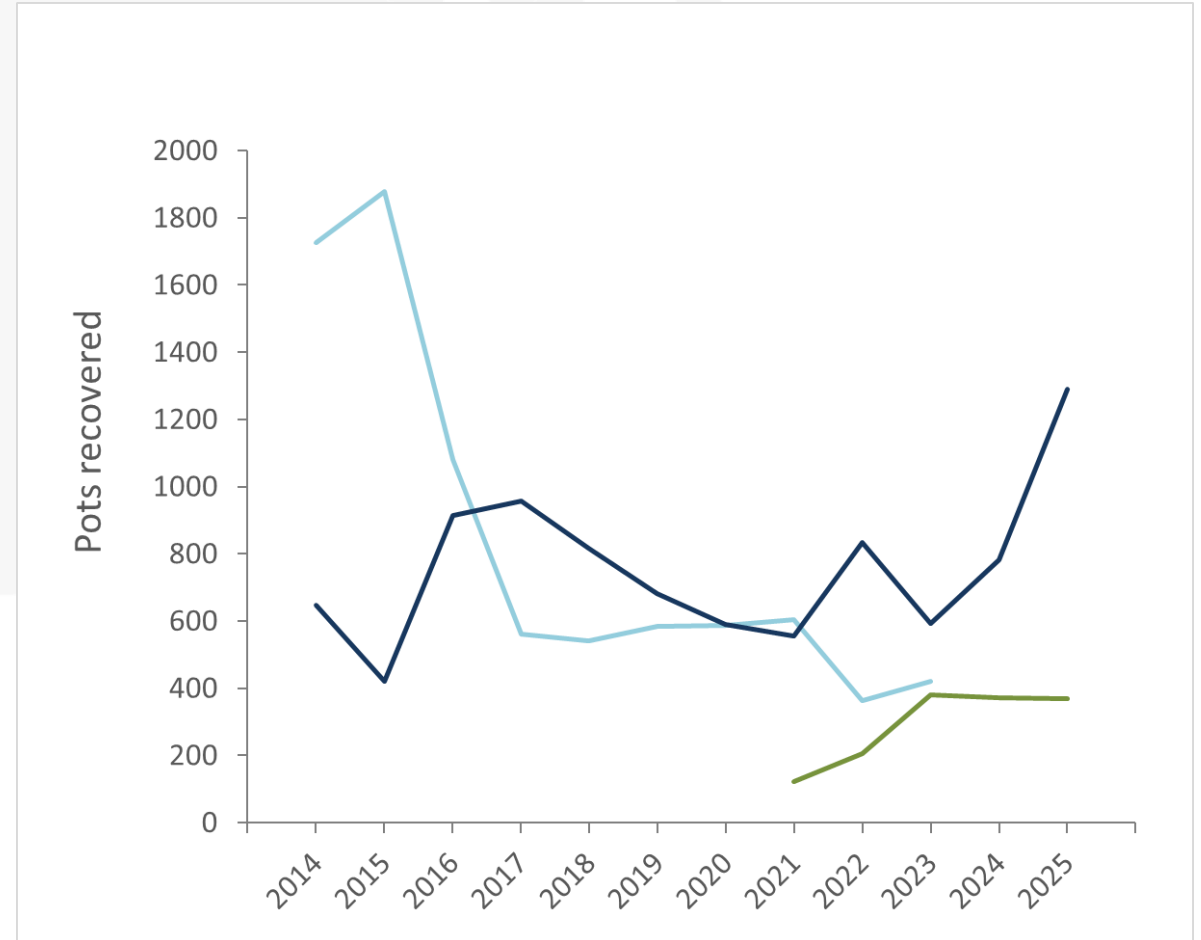


Derelict Gear

Number of boats participating



Number of pots recovered



Derelict Gear

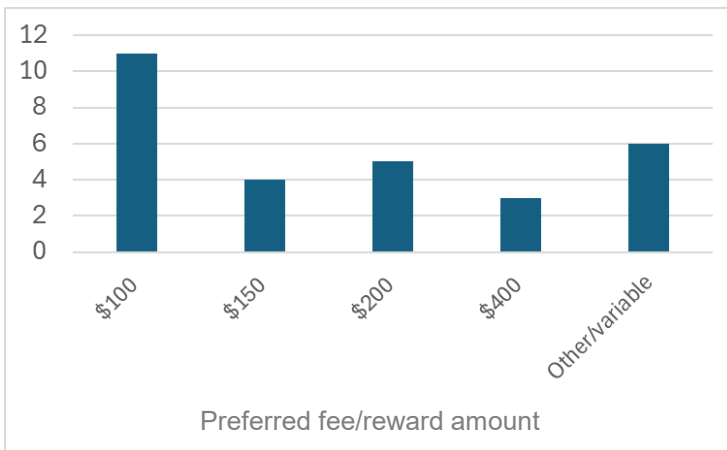
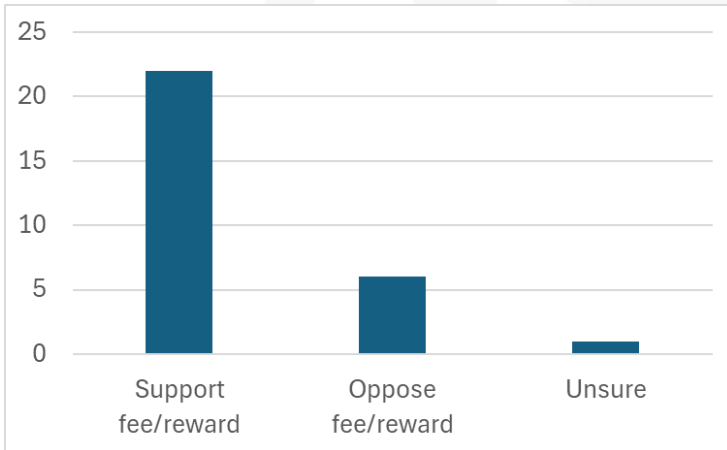
Buoy tags on pots recovered through the ODFW post-season program

| Year | Main season only | Main + Late season | Late season only | None | Total |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|--------------|
| 2021 | 421 | 45 | 1 | 88 | 555 |
| 2022 | 532 | 152 | 5 | 146 | 835 |
| 2023 | 327 | 171 | 77 | 18 | 593 |
| 2024 | 456 | 236 | 13 | 78 | 783 |
| 2025 | 808 | 326 | 7 | 148 | 1,289 |
| Total | 2,544 | 930 | 103 | 478 | 4,055 |



Derelict Gear

ODCC survey - fee/reward program concept (29 respondents)



Concerns with current post-season program

- "Finders, keepers" mentality/legal gear theft
- Starts too late in the season
- No cap on retrieval fees/unreasonable charges
- Insufficient incentive to recover poor quality gear
- Lack of owner opportunity to reclaim gear

Concerns with fee/reward concept

- Some people can't pay
- Tag loss too severe
- Should be owners' decision to buy them back or not
- Owners can already buy them back

Derelict Gear

HOW THE OCCA'S GRIP PROGRAM WORKS

Fishermen can participate in three key ways:

- Register gear at the end of the season so others know it can be safely retrieved
- Report gear that has been recovered, including photos and location details
- Report derelict gear observed at sea with coordinates and identifying information

All information is submitted through the QR-linked webpage, creating a shared system for recovery and awareness.

CAN I RETRIEVE THIS GEAR?



WHEN GEAR IS DERELICT

- ✔ Outside 40 fathoms after April 21
- ✔ Missing late-season buoy tag after April 21
- ✔ Clearly Lost, abandoned/damaged gear
- ✔ You may retrieve under derelict gear rules.

Cannot retrieve safely? Report the location.

HOW MANY POTS CAN I RETRIEVE?

In-season recovery limits under OAR 635-005-0490

| Period | Season Phase | Limit |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Season Opener → 2nd Monday in June | Early Season | 25 |
| 2nd Monday in June → Aug 14 | Late Season | 50 |
| Aug 15 → Oct 31 | Post Season | Unlimited |



RETRIEVAL RULES

- ✔ Unbait gear before landing
- ✔ Bring gear to shore on the same trip
- ✔ Log date, location, number of pots, owner ID
- ✔ Return gear to owner in accordance to property law
- ✔ Legal crab may be retained during crab season unless retrieved from a closed area.

If you cannot retrieve safely, report the gear location to OCCA.

CLOSED AREAS — CHECK BEFORE RETRIEVAL



CLOSED AREAS: Restricted for retrieval.

- ✔ **Marine Reserves:**
 - Allowed with OSP permission
 - No species may be retained
- ✔ **RCA: closed areas require continuous transit.**
- ✔ **When unsure → do not retrieve.**



WHY IT MATTERS

- ✔ Protects marine life from entanglement
- ✔ Reduces unintended fishing effort
- ✔ Cleans our oceans & prevents plastic pollution
- ✔ Prevents navigation hazards for vessels
- ✔ Helps sustain the future of crab fishing.

Oregon Fishermen Protect their Fishery.

Every Pot Counts. Every hand helps.

WAYS TO HELP

Participate in the **OCCA GRIP Derelict Gear Program**

- Register when you conclude your crab season so others know your gear can be safely retrieved
- Report gear you have retrieved to help return it to its rightful owner
- Report derelict gear observed at sea
- For information and links to **Oregon rules** and regulations for retrieving and reporting derelict gear, **see below**

WORKING TOGETHER MATTERS

By sharing information and participating in recovery efforts, we can return gear to its rightful owner, reduce loss, and help sustain Oregon's Dungeness crab fishery for generations to come.

CONSIDER PARTICIPATING IN

GREASE Program (ODCC)

ODFW After-Season Retrieval Program



Report Gear | Learn More | Get Involved
www.OCCA.org/GRIP



August Commission

BREAK
(10:30-10:45)



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Five-year evaluation: Overview



Requested by the OFWC in Aug 2023

To provide an assessment of the measures after five years of data are available



Planned for Aug 2026 OFWC meeting

May include staff recommendation for rule change, depending on full evaluation results and input from advisors and industry

Only rule change likely ready to recommend in Aug 2026 would be permanent change of late-season measures implementation date to April 1

Other changes could be considered in the longer term



ODCAC feedback request

Metrics/information to include in evaluation

Additional short- and longer-term regulatory changes, if any



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Five-year evaluation: Key measures to reduce vertical lines



Late-season measures, starting May 1

20% pot limit reduction

40-fathom depth restriction

Requirement for additional late-season tag



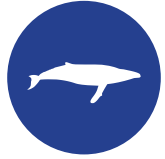
Elimination of standard replacement tag allowance

Up to 10% of pot limit



Elimination of two-week post-season gear clean-up period

Five-year evaluation: Metrics



Confirmed entanglements

Rate and species

Estimated gear set timing, depth, region



Entanglement risk reduction

Full and late-season line-days

Fishing effort inside/outside 40 fm



Fishery impacts

Active permits

Landings/value

By pot limit and/or port

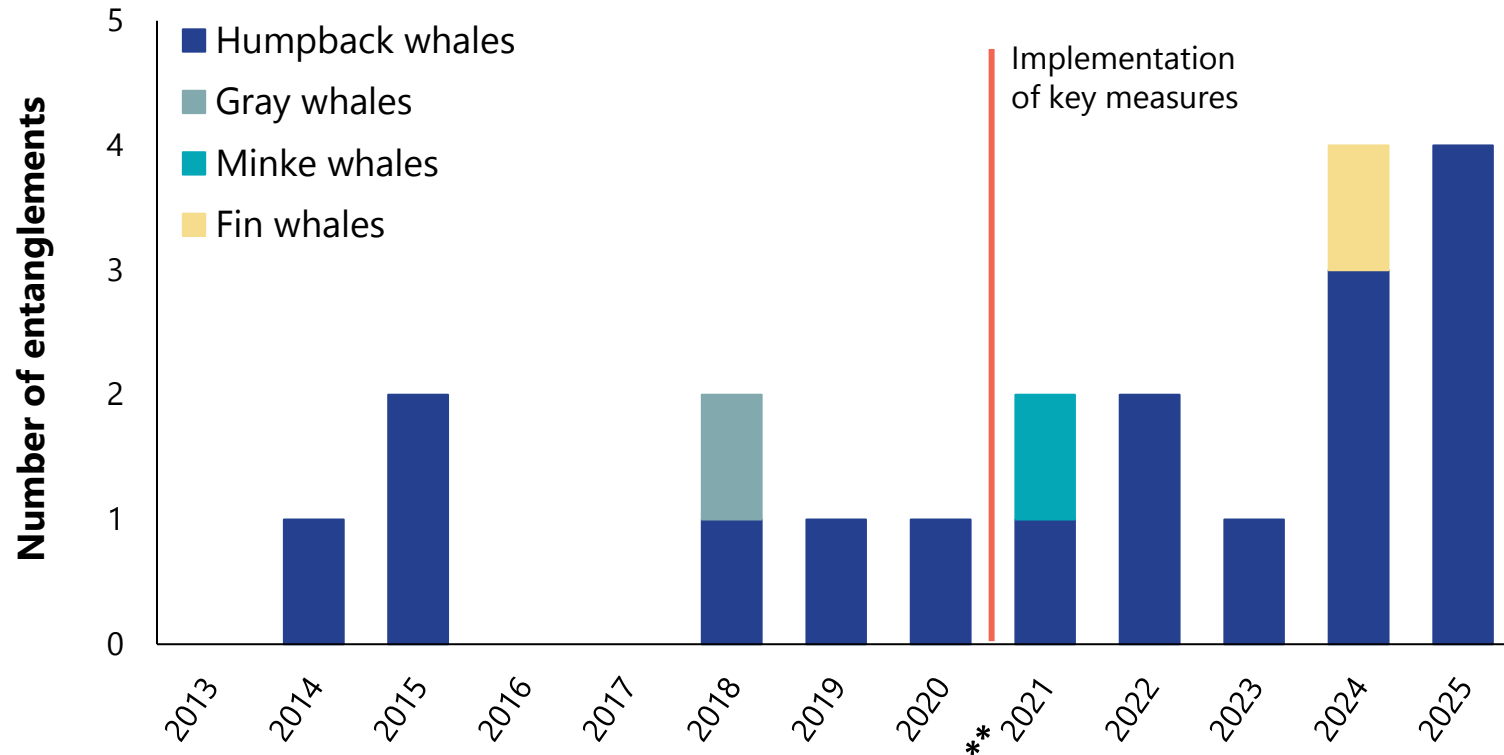


Compliance

Enforcement actions taken

Five-year evaluation: Confirmed entanglements

Oregon commercial crab entanglements*



Pre-implementation (2013 – 2020)

- Average: 0.875/yr
- 6 humpbacks, 1 gray

Post-implementation (2021 - 2025)

- Average: 2.6/yr
- 11 humpbacks, 1 minke, 1 fin

*Entanglements attributed to the Oregon commercial Dungeness crab fishery by NMFS

**2021 entanglements likely originated prior to implementation of key measures

Five-year evaluation: Confirmed entanglements

Fast facts – Oregon commercial crab humpback entanglements*

Pre-implementation (2013 – 2020, n=6)

- Reported Apr - Oct
- Reported Mexico, CA, and WA
- One suspected to involve derelict gear (reported 2015)

Post-implementation (2021 – 2025, n=11)

- Reported Jan – Nov, highest number in Sept
- Reported Mexico, CA, and OR
- Three suspected to involve derelict gear (reported 2021, and two in 2025)
- No late-season tags present

*Entanglements attributed to the Oregon commercial Dungeness crab fishery by NMFS

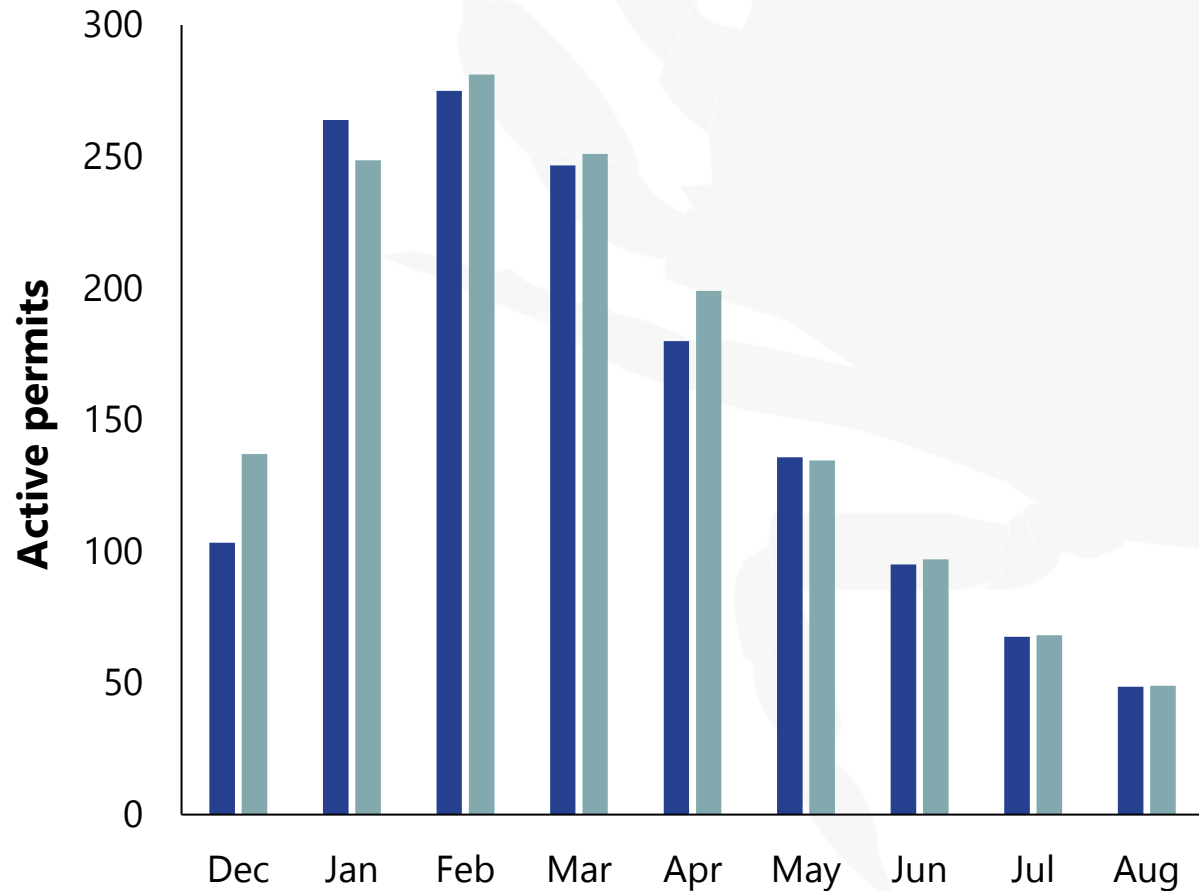
Five-year evaluation: Entanglement risk reduction

Late-season (May-Aug) line-days

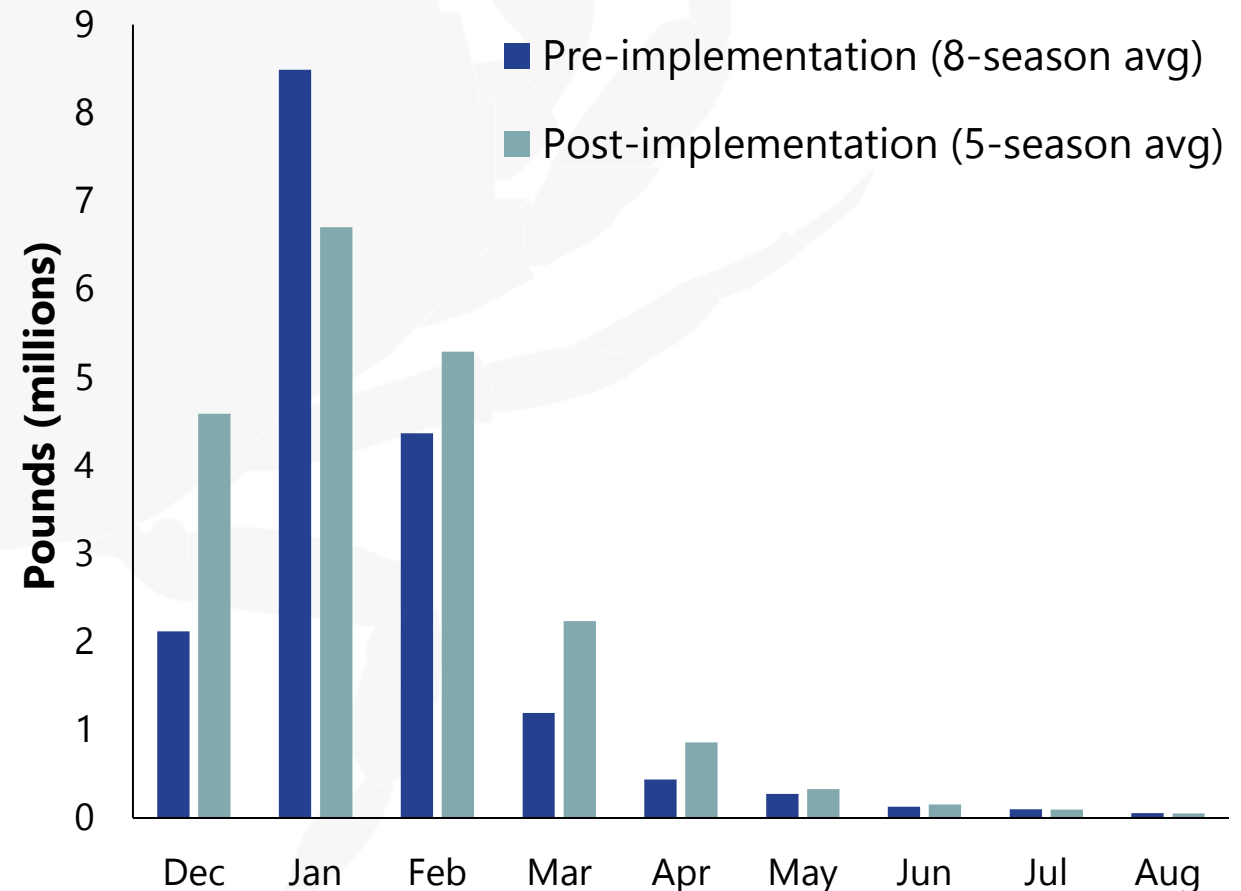
| | Total | Line-day change | % change |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------|
| Average pre-implementation (2012-13 - 2019-20) | 2,758,024 | | |
| 2020-21 | 1,808,320 | -949,704 | -34.4 |
| 2021-22 | 1,767,280 | -990,744 | -35.9 |
| 2022-23 | 3,175,120 | +417,097 | 15.1 |
| 2023-24 | 2,027,920 | -730,104 | -26.5 |
| 2024-25 | 1,623,280 | -1,134,744 | -41.1 |
| Average post-implementation (2020-21 – 2024-25) | 2,080,384 | -677,640 | -24.6 |

Five-year evaluation: Fishery impacts

Average monthly active permits



Average monthly pounds landed



Five-year evaluation: Preliminary staff assessment



Confirmed entanglements

Humpback entanglement rate in OR crab gear* has been elevated relative to historical levels



Entanglement risk reduction

Late-season risk has been reduced as intended



Fishery impacts

Little impact to overall fishery participation/landings/value, but potential impacts to certain segments or ports



Compliance

Compliance with late-season measures has been good overall, but challenges exist

*Entanglements attributed to the Oregon commercial Dungeness crab fishery by NMFS



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Five-year evaluation: Advisor feedback request

What other metrics or information should we be looking at?

- Confirmed entanglements
- Entanglement risk reduction
- Fishery impacts
- Compliance

What additional regulatory changes, if any, should we be considering in the short- and longer-term?



Vessel Monitoring

- **Electronic monitoring (EM):** a vessel monitoring system that automatically determines a vessel's position, records individual pot retrieval via a hydraulic pressure reading, and transmits this information to an EM system service provider.
- WA and CA currently require units that record vessel position, WA requires a hydraulic sensor
- **Proposed Oregon requirement:**
 - Any vessel participating in the Oregon commercial Dungeness crab fishery would require an EM system by December 1, 2026
 - Use of ODFW's electronic logbook application would be voluntary until December 1, 2030, then mandatory

Vessel Monitoring



Download on the
App Store



GET IT ON
Google Play

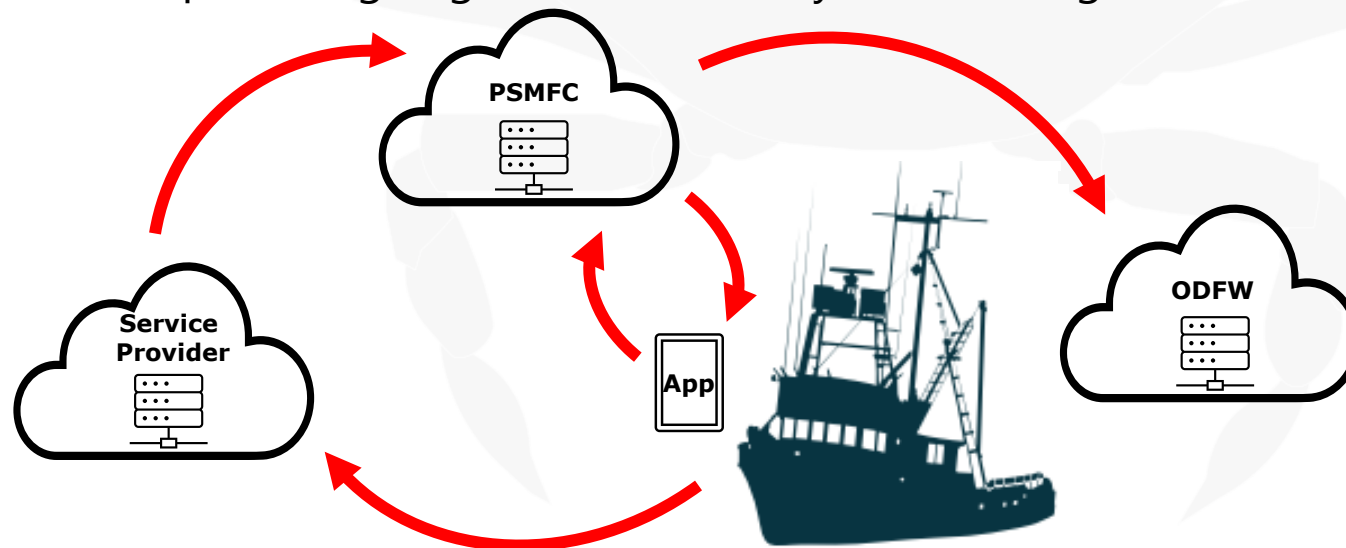


Viatrix: <https://boatcommand.com/>



LIME: <https://www.archipelago.ca/>

- **Proposed EM system:** Unit that records vessel position at 1-minute intervals and a hydraulic sensor that records pressure at 10-second intervals to identify when a vessel is fishing
 - Bulk purchase of units or reimbursement program to offset industry cost
 - Vendor subscription required: \$199 - \$365/season
- **Electronic logbook application**
 - ODFW pilot program: 20 captains over 3+ seasons
 - Pot counts, catch per string, log or note recovery of derelict gear





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Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGP)

Controlled test of pop-up and longline gear in Oregon

- Alone or in combination
- Collect data to evaluate full authorization in designated times and areas
- Consider enforcement issues, gear conflicts

Timeline

- Rulemaking August 2026
- Issue permits spring 2027

ODCAC feedback request

- Incentives to participate
- Information and data to collect
- Eligibility criteria
- Number of permits
- Time and area for testing
- Gear configurations





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Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGP)

Pop-up gear basics

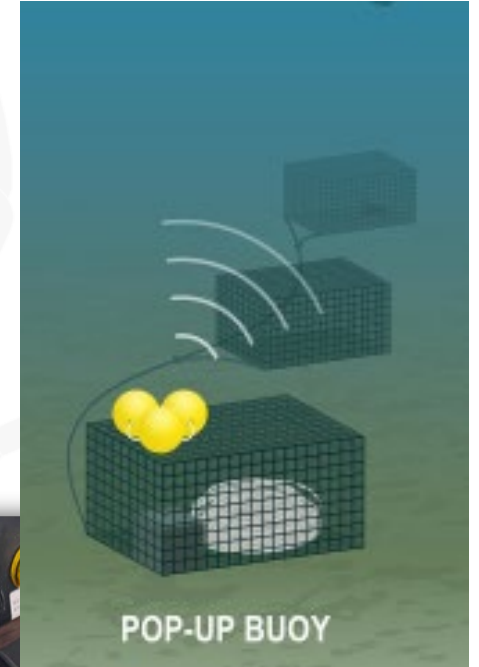
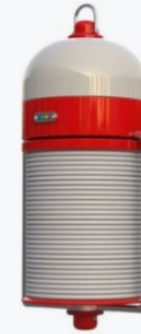
- Acoustic or timed release
- Acoustic release typically combined with longlining
- Virtual gear marking

Cost

- Timed release systems
 - Less expensive, potential for single pot use (~\$250-\$600 ea.)
- Acoustic "on-demand" systems
 - Deck box (one per boat) ~\$2,000-\$16,000
 - Line containment "sled" (one or two per string) ~\$950-\$9,500

Training requirements

- NMFS level 1 disentanglement training
- Gear use and location tracking, manufacturer or third party



*Image courtesy
of Oceana*

Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGP)

Potential incentives

- Access areas closed for entanglement risk
- Restore reduced pot limits
- Access gear at no or reduced cost (gear library)

Information and data to collect

- Efficiency
- Reliability
- Gear movement
- Gear conflict
- How to track and manage
- Enforceability

Gear configurations

- Number of pots, strings, or vertical lines
- Sinking, floating, or neutral groundline

Eligibility criteria

- No civil/criminal violations of fishery laws for last x years
- No convictions for crab or pot theft for last x years
- No violation of EFGP terms and conditions

Number of permits

- Consider need for data from different vessel sizes, areas (ports), gear types

Times and areas to test

- Avoid gear conflicts
- Test in realistic conditions



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A large, faint, light blue silhouette of a crab is centered in the background of the slide.

Public Comment