State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director

October 30, 2026

ATTACHMENT TO NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Season Delay of the California Dungeness Crab Commercial Fishery and Temporary Recreational Crab Trap Prohibition

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has taken final action under the Fish and Game Code and Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations with respect to the above-referenced project. On October 30, 2026, the Director of the Department signed a declaration delaying the season opening of the California commercial Dungeness crab fishery between the California/Oregon border and Point Conception (34° 27' N. latitude), as well as temporarily prohibiting the use of recreational crab traps between the California/Oregon border and Point Conception.

For the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Pub. Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.), the Department approved the project relying on the Class 7 categorical exemption for "Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources" and the Class 8 categorical exemption for "Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment" contained in CEQA Guideline Sections 15307 and 15308, Title 14, CCR, respectively.

Categorical Exemptions to Protect Natural Resources and the Environment

In compliance with CEQA, the Department approved the project relying on the categorical exemptions contained in CEQA Guidelines of Title 14, CCR: Section 15307 (Action by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources) and Section 15308 (Action by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment). The exemptions apply to agency actions to protect natural resources and the environment, respectively.

The proposed project will delay the season opener for the commercial Dungeness crab fishery and temporarily prohibit the use of recreational crab traps in response to marine life entanglement risk. Lines and buoys of Dungeness crab traps pose a marine life entanglement risk, especially for whales and sea turtles migrating through California waters. The delay and trap prohibition will have the overall effect of reducing the entanglement risk by preventing traps from being set in areas of the marine environment where whales and sea turtles are present, and thereby is the proper subject of CEQA's Class 7 and 8 categorical exemptions.