

Exhibit B

**Public Correspondence Received as of
July 24, 2026**

Exhibit B. Attachment 5. Public Correspondence

#	# of Commentors	Comment Summary	Staff Response to Comment
1.	1	The crab fleet supports protecting whales but needs realistic and affordable measures that provide a measurable benefit. EM should be phased in with appropriate funding support, clear guidance, and adequate time. Collaboration is necessary between ODFW and the crab industry to test new gear. Minor modifications to surface gear allowances should be vetted with the fleet. Continued and expanded outreach is needed.	Staff agree that entanglement risk reduction measures need to be realistic, affordable, and effective. ODFW has been working with the fleet for several years to prepare for EM requirements, including testing and obtaining funding to reimburse most, if not all, of the initial purchase costs. Staff agree that collaboration with industry is essential for successful experimental fishing gear testing. The proposed minor modification to surface gear regulations is to align with what the fleet is already using on the water and what has been vetted with industry.
2.	1	Does not oppose an EM requirement in the crab fishery, but requests the implementation date be moved to February 1 [2027] or, at a minimum, should incorporate a 30-day period before implementation during which individuals may request an extension. Supports amendment to clarify that a vessel that experiences an EM failure while fishing may complete its current trip. Should provide dedicated technical support including a dedicated full-time employee and 24/7 hotline to assist with EM-related issues. Ascertain existing logbook requirements are redundant and requests they be eliminated. The Commission should establish a mechanism for fishery participants to request financial assistance. Does not oppose EFGPs in principle but is concerned the proposed rule is too vague and affords too much discretion. Requests the proposed rule be stayed and that the department develop a comprehensive experimental fishery plan. Requests more rigorous application screening and supports the establishment of a review committee comprised of representative permittees from each major port.	Staff have done considerable work to prepare for and streamline EM implementation (e.g., testing, database development and preparation). In response to public comment, the implementation date for EM has been moved from December 1, 2026 to February 1, 2027 to ensure fishery participants have adequate time to meet requirements. The proposed EM rules include a mechanism for a vessel owner/operator to request an EM exemption permit if there is an interruption in EM system function. While staff capacity is not available for 24/7 technical support, contact information (phone and email) will be provided and monitored by ODFW staff during business hours, with an option to leave a message for a return call after hours. Service providers also provide some technical support. Additionally, the proposed rule only requires notification (not resolution) of a system failure within 24 hours. Logbooks are a valuable source of information beyond what is provided by EM (e.g., string-specific catch, bait use, pot loss, derelict pot recovery), which is used by managers to address a variety of issues including evaluating and addressing whale entanglement risk. Logbooks provide string-specific CPUE – catch relative to effort, which EM cannot provide. Information on seasonal shifts in CPUE and effort in time and space allows scenario-based analyses for a more thorough evaluation of fishery impacts from potential adaptive management actions (e.g., area- or depth-based closures), if warranted, to reduce entanglement risk. It can also be

			beneficial for marine spatial planning (e.g., wind energy facility or marine protected area siting) and sustainability certification. Staff recognizes the cost imposed on fishery participants by EM rules. To offset these impacts, the department has secured funding to reimburse most, if not all, of the initial purchase costs. The proposed EFGP rules set sideboards to structure EFGP issuance, but it will be at the discretion of the agency to establish standards and procedures that fall within these sideboards. Staff are working to balance the need for a more structured EFGP process with maintaining flexibility to adapt procedures during the initial phase of testing, as needed, without additional rulemaking. A review committee creates an unnecessary bureaucratic hurdle that would delay issuance of EFGPs and data collection. Instead, staff have proposed criteria for EFGP qualification and will maintain discretion to screen applications and make issuance determinations.
3.	1	EM adds another layer of monitoring for vessels already subject to extensive oversight. If adopted, mandatory EM implementation should be delayed until the 2027-28 season. Commission should ensure the funding distribution process is fully established and equipment supply is adequate prior to implementation. Vessels also need practical support and reasonable procedures for dealing with equipment failures. If a voluntary EFGP program is established, it should also establish clear standards, transparent procedures, and appropriate safeguards.	Staff have done considerable work to prepare for and streamline EM implementation (e.g., testing, database development and preparation). In response to public comment, the implementation date for EM has been moved from December 1, 2026 to February 1, 2027 to ensure fishery participants have adequate time to meet requirements. Staff are working to develop the funding distribution process and are prepared to have reimbursements available with adequate time to meet the proposed implementation date. Staff have also worked with vendors to verify an adequate supply of equipment. The proposed EM rules include a mechanism for a vessel owner/operator to request an EM exemption permit if there is an interruption in EM system function. The proposed EFGP rules set sideboards to structure EFGP issuance, but it will be at the discretion of the agency to establish standards and procedures that fall within these sideboards. Staff are working to balance the need for a more structured EFGP process with maintaining flexibility to adapt procedures during the initial phase of testing, as needed.
4.	4	EM is an unnecessary burden. One commenter spoke specifically to the additional burden of EM on smaller vessels or vessels operating under unique ocean conditions (e.g., Pacific City). One	Staff agree that unnecessary costs should be avoided. EM provides many benefits, including providing critical information to assess co-occurrence between whales and

		commenter added that they strongly oppose Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission involvement in EM due to concerns over potential loss of federal funding. They are also concerned about ODFW funding being insufficient and that EM will just be used against the fishery.	crab gear and consider more adaptive management alternatives for the fishery to respond effectively to changing ocean conditions and shifts in conservation needs. It will also help to strengthen crab traceability regulations, track fishery reference points closer to real-time, and improve enforcement (e.g., fair start provisions, closed areas, pot theft, crab theft). There are EM units available which meet proposed rule specifications and are designed for exposed conditions on small open vessels, and vendors offer warranties. The proposed EM rules also include a mechanism for a vessel owner/operator to request an EM exemption permit if there is an interruption in EM system function. Staff have no response to comments related to agency funding contingencies.
5.	1	Does not support proposed regulations or future pop-up lines. The cost to the fishing community is extraordinary and overall impact of crabbing on whale populations is not clear. Does support existing entanglement risk reduction measures.	Staff agree that maintenance of existing measures that reduce entanglement risk is important. The proposed EFGP rules add structure to the pathway for voluntarily testing pop-up and other gear types, but are not proposing any non-experimental pop-up gear requirement or allowance at this time. Staff recognize the impacts of cumulative measures to address whale entanglements in the crab fishery, and are working to balance maintenance of a robust crab fishery with the conservation of protected whale species off Oregon.
6.	1	Concerned about the cumulative impacts to industry and coastal communities of current and future entanglement risk reduction regulations. Whale populations are growing. Measures should be based on common sense and given time to see if they are effective.	Staff recognize the cumulative impacts on industry of existing and proposed entanglement risk reduction measures. While the West Coast humpback whale population is growing overall, this is not the case for all segments of the population. The endangered Central America distinct population segment that occurs off Oregon is likely stable but not increasing. Existing and proposed management measures have been developed based on the best available science, with input from industry and a broad range of other stakeholders. Staff agree that management measures need to be given time to see if they're effective and are not proposing modifications to existing entanglement risk reduction measures at this time.
7.	8	Oregon's management system is failing to reduce whale entanglements. Supports adoption of the proposed EM and EFGP rules. Encourages the department to establish clear performance criteria to allow for further gear authorization.	Staff recognize that while key risk reduction measures have successfully reduced late-season effort and entanglement risk in the crab fishery, this has occurred during a period when the total number of entanglements

		Requests the department draft additional entanglement risk reduction rules (a 25% main-season pot limit reduction, late-season measures no later than April 1, prohibit commercial crabbing outside 30 fathoms during the late-season, authorize pop-up gear in times and areas otherwise closed for the purpose of reducing entanglement risk).	involving Oregon crab gear has increased. This is likely the result of several factors including a growing coastwide humpback whale population, changing ocean conditions that increase overlap between whales and crab gear, and better entanglement reporting and documentation. Staff agree that the proposed EM and EFGP rules warrant adoption. Alternative gear performance will be assessed based on its effectiveness, efficiency, reliability, manageability, enforceability, and safety. Staff will continue to define and refine criteria based on data and insights provided by initial testing. The remaining comments relate to proposals not under consideration at this time. Concurrently, the department is working with NOAA Fisheries to obtain an incidental take permit, a process in which NOAA will assess the adequacy of the department's existing and proposed measures to ensure they are minimizing and mitigating the impacts of incidental take (i.e., entanglement) to the maximum extent practicable. If, through that process, there is a determination that additional actions are needed, the department will address at that time.
8.	580	In favor of strengthening regulations in the crab fishery to prevent whale entanglements. One commenter added that the proposed rules are a step in the right direction but that additional measures are needed in the future, including requirements to use more advanced fishing techniques that reduce entanglement risk. One letter, co-signed by 571 Oregon residents, additionally asked the Commission to initiate rulemaking proceedings to limit the amount of fishing gear in the water during peak whale concentrations, implement management actions to swiftly respond to confirmed entanglements, and advance solutions like pop-up fishing gear.	Staff agree that effective and practicable measures are needed to reduce entanglement risk and occurrence. Through its proposed CP, the department will conduct ongoing evaluation of entanglement risk and management measure effectiveness. A comprehensive adaptive management framework will be used in the longer term to add to or adjust measures, if warranted, to ensure successful conservation outcomes. The remaining comments relate to proposals not under consideration at this time. Concurrently, the department is working with NOAA Fisheries to obtain an incidental take permit, a process in which NOAA will assess the adequacy of the department's existing and proposed measures to ensure they are minimizing and mitigating the impacts of incidental take (i.e., entanglement) to the maximum extent practicable. If, through that process, there is a determination that additional actions are needed, the department will address at that time.
9.	11	Supports adoption of proposed rules. EM will provide improved data for enforcement and management. EFGPs for pop-up and longline	Staff agree that the proposed rules warrant adoption. Data from gear testing will be evaluated as soon as it is available. The time

		gear testing will reduce entanglement risk. Requests an established time period for evaluating the gear. Requests the Commission have the department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report. One commenter added that the proposed measures should be considered the beginning, but that additional operational measures and a longer-term strategy to meaningfully reduce entanglement risk are needed. They also encourage ODFW to continue improving public transparency.	period for evaluation and consideration of authorization will depend on participation levels and what is learned from EFGP testing and research, but staff anticipate a minimum of two years of testing will be needed to collect data. Through its proposed CP, the department will conduct ongoing evaluation of entanglement risk and management measure effectiveness. A comprehensive adaptive management framework will be used in the longer term to add to or adjust measures, if warranted, to ensure successful conservation outcomes. Due to the unpredictable nature of entanglements and variability in how they are documented and assessed, entanglement information is often not immediately available to share with the public following an event. However, staff strive for public transparency around this issue and management efforts to address it.
10.	6	Supports accelerating transition to on-demand/ropeless gear to reduce entanglements.	Staff agree that on-demand or pop-up gear has the potential to significantly reduce vertical lines, but there are information gaps and outstanding questions related to use, management and enforcement of this gear. Additionally, pop-up gear has not been tested off Oregon to date and it's critically important that gear performance and safety is tested across different vessel sizes and under local conditions before widespread use is considered. Currently, pop-up gear is very expensive and would require fishery participants to invest in new gear, along with lost time and revenue associated with reduced efficiency or retrieving and re-deploying gear. An accelerated transition to pop-up gear would also result in undue economic hardship.
11.	8	Supports experimental testing of pop-up gear in the Oregon crab fishery starting in 2027. Hopes that as many fishermen as possible can participate in initial testing, there is affordable and easy access to gear, and a clear pathway for commercial fishing of pop-up gear, if proven on the water. EM will improve management but would significantly benefit from the inclusion of video monitoring. Would like the department to do more to reduce entanglement risk, particularly considering and focusing on risk reduction during the main season (specifically a main season pot limit reduction, and adjusting late-season measures to start April 1 and include a 30-fathom depth restriction). Supports continued support	Staff agree that on-demand or pop-up gear has the potential to significantly reduce vertical lines, but have concerns about staff capacity to manage EFGPs, particularly in the first year of testing. Staff aim to issue the maximum amount of EFGPs that the agency can effectively manage in each year of testing. Data from gear testing will be evaluated as soon as it is available. The time period for evaluation and consideration of authorization will depend on participation levels and what is learned from EFGP testing and research, but staff anticipate a minimum of two years of testing will be needed to collect data. The inclusion of video monitoring in EM rules

		and refinement of derelict gear recovery programs, and timely communication of whale sightings.	would significantly increase the cost to fishery participants and the department. At this time, staff have determined that the cost of video monitoring outweighs the benefit provided by the additional data. The remaining comments relate to proposals not under consideration at this time. Concurrently, the department is working with NOAA Fisheries to obtain an incidental take permit, a process in which NOAA will assess the adequacy of the department's existing and proposed measures to ensure they are minimizing and mitigating the impacts of incidental take (i.e., entanglement) to the maximum extent practicable. If, through that process, there is a determination that additional actions are needed, the department will address at that time.
12.	1	Comments were not germane to the topic	No staff response to comments not germane to the topic.

Concerning: Over-regulation of Commercial Crab Fishermen on the West Coast due to whale entanglement, specifically Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

I am a 73 year old resident of Charleston, Oregon, a fishing village on the coast of Coos County, Oregon. I decided to write to NOAA as the lead agency in the Marine Mammal Protection Act. This act, while important in the protection of a magnificent creature, whales, is being used as a tool to place regulations on west coast commercial crabbers that make no common sense what-so-ever. Crabbing is already a tough life weathering winter storms and hard work to provide seafood to the people. I have had two husbands, and many friends names engraved on the Fishing Memorial here.

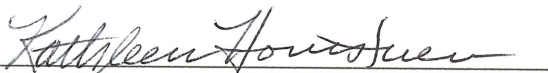
In Oregon, we had several humpback whale entanglements in the last year, and even though it was sad, it did not effect the species as a whole. Studies confirm that most whale populations are growing since whaling was stopped world-wide. I am not the only one who worries that overpopulation of one species over others leads to starvation and disease. Case in point: the California Sea Lion, that now is so overpopulated they are moving North and decimating the Salmon population, in the quest for more food.

My concerns, are the regulations being implemented now, and planned in the future, will put the multi-million dollar crab industry out of business in Oregon. The crab fishery is a very sustainable fishery, there are strict size limits and only males can be caught. But it seems the crabbers themselves are not sustainable.

Four environmental groups have written a petition to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) threatening them with suet if not adopted. This petition includes items that are not fiscally possible for the fishermen to stay in business. They advocate that "pop-up crab pots" must be used and they are very expensive and not even proven to work here in or stormy waters. How can those be mandated when no one has even tried them anywhere but in central California?

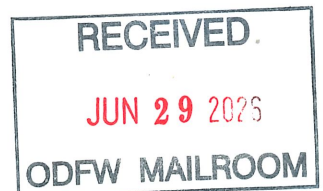
The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife placed line restrictions on the crabbers this year that cost them thousands of dollars. Fishermen were told they reviewed fiscal impacts, but were those impacts added to the impacts over the past 5 years of regulations placed on them? Before they even studied if those regulations would improve anything, they want to place new regulations that would seal the fate of the smaller vessels to bankruptcy. If the environmental petition is adopted, it will reduce pots 40% by April 1! Who can survive with a 40% reduction in income?! This will not only effect the crabbers. What will be the fiscal impacts to the Port, the seafood processors, retailers, the county with decreased taxes, and the families here as well?

When I wrote to NOAA, and others, I was not advocating to abolish the mammal protection act, but to add some common sense addendum to it. Over-population of one species over others can be just as catastrophic as not protecting them when it leads to starvation and disease, whether it is wildlife or people. When I see the multi-generation fishermen so angry and so defeated, it breaks my heart. I ask ODFW please: do not cave in to the environmental extremists this time. Use common sense and give things time to see if a difference can be made.



Kathleen Hornstuen
90046 Cape Arago Hwy
Coos Bay, OR 97420

June 23, 2026



BUELL Adam M * ODFW

From: ODFW Commission * ODFW
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2026 3:27 PM
To: BUELL Adam M * ODFW
Subject: FW: Dungeness crab fishery electronic monitoring

From: Craig Good <cragdweller@live.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2026 12:54 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW <odfw.commission@odfw.oregon.gov>
Subject: Dungeness crab fishery electronic monitoring

You don't often get email from cragdweller@live.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Commission members,

I am writing to oppose the implementation of electronic monitoring, currently known as vessel monitoring system (VMS) in other West Coast fisheries.

Some related history first. ODFW initiated a "voluntary" commercial crab logbook program in 2006. The crab fleet was told that the program would be strictly voluntary and was needed to understand the footprint of the crab fishery on the Oregon coast. A couple years later, the program became mandatory. For many years, the data obtained through the mandatory program was used for nothing. In fact, logbook data wasn't even entered into a database, the paper logs sat in file boxes. During the same period, an aggressive enforcement campaign was developed, and many crab fishers were issued citations for non-compliance. So a program that was "essential" for understanding the crab fishery and the fishery's relationship with other marine life and interaction with any future MPAs became a program used strictly to bust fishermen. Later, when ODFW actually started a crab log database, they subsampled the paper logs and only entered a fraction of the data gathered, meanwhile still citing fishers for any missed logbook entries. It took 15+ years for ODFW to actually enter all of the gathered logbook data (maybe they still haven't). ODFW required crab fishers to fill out logs under penalty of law while not practicing due diligence for their responsibilities to the program. What was gained from the logbook program? A footprint of the crab fishery on the Oregon coast. The same footprint that the fishery has had for 70 years. The same footprint it will have in the future, assuming ODFW doesn't kill the fishery first. I have no reason to believe that ODFW will be any different with a new VMS requirement.

ODFW proposes that the VMS data from this proposed rule will go through Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, a federal agency. I strongly oppose further federal involvement in this state fishery. What happens when PSMFC loses their funding?

The primary potential benefit of VMS would be the elimination of the cumbersome paper logbook program, yet this is not being proposed. The other possible benefits to the fleet that are mentioned in ODFW's proposed rule are gear and crab theft. Since ODFW will likely not have sufficient funding to even monitor the footprint of the fishery with VMS, I am skeptical that any effort will be focused on fishermen/fishermen interactions that could benefit the fleet.

Which leads to the question: how is the state going to pay for all this? ODFW's efficiency is dismal. There is the constant call for a larger budget, more programs. Yet we see examples of agency waste everywhere we look. Why would Oregon throw more money at a program that essentially adds no greater understanding of the fishery?

A commercial crab fishery VMS requirement will end up being used against fishermen in an enforcement role and will not benefit the fishery.

Thanks,
Craig Good
F/V Maverick
Brookings, Oregon

From: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
To: [BUJELL Adam M * ODFW](#)
Subject: FW: Whale Entanglements
Date: Wednesday, July 22, 2026 11:47:13 AM

From: Laurie Deus <lauriedeus@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2026 10:46 AM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW <ODFW.Commission@odfw.oregon.gov>
Subject: Whale Entanglements

You don't often get email from lauriedeus@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
Dr. Debbie Colbert, Director
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97302

RE: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery and Experimental Fishing Gear Permit Regulations

Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert,

I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These proposed rules are important in reducing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery.

I support a rule implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program for the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. A requirement for vessel tracking will report vessel location and gear sensors to identify crab pot hauling activity. This will provide improved data for fishery and whale overlaps, and aid in enforcement and management.

I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing an EFGP program for authorization of pop-up and longline gear testing. This gear type will reduce the number of vertical lines in the water, reducing risk of entanglement of endangered and threatened whales and leatherback sea turtles. I request an established time period for evaluating the gear.

Entanglement is the primary threat to whales globally, as well as locally. It impedes the recovery of threatened and endangered whales. Roughly 75% of all reported entanglements are ultimately fatal, and only one in five are ever observed. Despite the current management measures, entanglements in Oregon gear are increasing. I ask the Commission to have the Department

provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report.

Sincerely,
Laurie Deus

Karie Silva

jeanettemarrie.93@gmail.com

July 24, 2026

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission

4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE

Salem, OR 97302

RE: Proposed Permanent Rulemaking – Oregon Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery

Dear Chair and Members of the Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these written comments. My name is Karie Silva. My husband, Jon, and I own and operate the 67-foot commercial fishing vessel *Jeanette Marrie*, homeported in Charleston, Oregon. Collectively, we have worked in Oregon's commercial fishing industry for 44 years. While Dungeness crab is an important part of our business, we also participate in the shrimp, groundfish, and Pacific whiting fisheries.

Purpose of These Comments

These comments focus on the practical implementation of the proposed rules and their potential effects on Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery. While I recognize the Department's objectives of improving management and supporting conservation efforts, my comments identify areas where additional clarification or revisions would improve the rule and reduce unintended consequences for vessel owners.

Electronic Monitoring

Commercial crab vessels on the Oregon coast already operate under multiple monitoring and reporting requirements, including federal vessel monitoring systems, federal reporting requirements, and Oregon logbooks documenting fishing locations and harvest information. Although the Department's objectives for a state electronic monitoring program may differ from existing federal systems, the Commission should recognize that this proposal would add another mandatory layer of technology, reporting, and compliance for vessels already subject to extensive oversight.

If electronic monitoring is adopted, implementation must include a realistic transition period and a clearly defined installation window before compliance becomes mandatory. Vessel owners will need sufficient time to obtain approved equipment, schedule installation, test the system, and resolve any technical issues before the season begins. Although ODFW

previously identified the 2026–2027 crab season as the anticipated implementation timeframe for an electronic monitoring requirement, I recommend delaying mandatory implementation until the 2027–2028 Oregon Dungeness crab season. Providing an additional season would allow adequate time for equipment availability, installation, testing, training, and resolution of technical issues while minimizing unnecessary disruptions to the fleet.

Speaking from experience, whenever a new mandatory technology requirement affects an entire fleet, delays in manufacturing, shipping, scheduling, and installation are inevitable. Those realities should be anticipated within the rule rather than becoming barriers to participating in the fishery. The Commission should recognize that implementing a statewide electronic monitoring requirement will create a significant and immediate demand for approved monitoring equipment and installation services, resulting in delays that are beyond the control of individual vessel owners and operators.

Vessel owners who have made a good-faith effort to comply by ordering approved equipment, scheduling installation, or being placed on a documented waiting list with an approved equipment provider or installer should not be prohibited from participating in the fishery while awaiting installation through no fault of their own.

If grant funding is intended to facilitate compliance, the Commission should ensure that the funding distribution process is fully established and communicated to vessel owners before the requirement becomes mandatory. Otherwise, implementation may depend more on a vessel owner's financial ability to absorb upfront costs than on their willingness to comply with the rule.

Prior to implementing these requirements, the Commission should ensure that an adequate supply of approved equipment is available statewide, along with sufficient installation and technical support services to meet the needs of the fleet.

Regulations should not require compliance before compliance is reasonably achievable.

The Commission should refrain from adopting implementation requirements that prevent otherwise compliant fishermen from participating in the fishery due to circumstances beyond their control, including limited equipment availability, installation capacity, and technical support.

The proposed rules should also recognize that equipment failures may occur after a vessel has already departed and begun fishing. When failures occur through no fault of the vessel owner or operator, the Department should establish practical procedures for reporting the failure, documenting corrective actions, and allowing vessels to safely complete fishing operations under clearly established Department procedures. Vessel owners and operators should then be required to return the vessel to compliance as soon as reasonably practicable. Unexpected equipment failures should not automatically result in unnecessary disruptions to fishing operations or loss of fishing opportunity when vessel owners or operators have otherwise made a good-faith effort to comply with the rule.

Successful implementation will also depend on vessel owners and operators understanding how to properly install, operate, and maintain the electronic monitoring system. The Department should provide clear written guidance, training opportunities, and readily available technical assistance before implementation so vessel owners and operators can become familiar with system operation, reporting requirements, and troubleshooting procedures. Providing this support in advance will improve compliance and reduce avoidable technical issues during the initial implementation period.

With adequate planning, clear implementation timelines, and practical support for vessel owners and operators, the Department can achieve the objectives of electronic monitoring while minimizing unnecessary disruptions to Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fleet.

Experimental Fishing Gear Permit (EFGP)

If the Department establishes a voluntary Experimental Fishing Gear Permit program, it should also establish clear standards, transparent procedures, and appropriate safeguards. Because these permits have the potential to affect both participating and non-participating fishermen, the rule would benefit from additional clarification regarding how deployment locations will be selected and managed throughout the season, as well as whether geographic limitations or other operational safeguards will be used to minimize conflicts with traditional commercial fishing operations. This is particularly important where experimental gear may not be readily visible to other fishermen, as reduced gear visibility may increase operational uncertainty and the potential for gear conflicts.

The proposal establishes a voluntary Experimental Fishing Gear Permit program but provides limited information regarding how permits will be administered. While the Department is authorized to establish permit conditions, it does not clearly describe the criteria that will be used to evaluate applications, determine the number of permits to be issued and the criteria for participant selection. Additional clarification regarding the permit application and selection process would improve transparency, promote consistency, and provide greater certainty for both applicants and the broader commercial fishing fleet.

The rule also requires the use of a virtual gear marking system for experimental gear that is not marked with a surface buoy. While it identifies the general purpose of the system, it does not explain how the system will function in practice or how participating and non-participating fishermen will access the information needed to safely operate around experimental gear. Additional clarification regarding equipment requirements, system accessibility, operational procedures, how the location of experimental gear will be communicated to other fishermen, and contingency plans in the event of equipment or communication failures would improve transparency, promote safe and orderly fishing operations, and provide greater certainty for all fishermen.

As the Department develops this voluntary program, providing greater clarity regarding permit administration, operational requirements, and communication procedures would

strengthen implementation and help ensure experimental projects can be conducted safely, consistently, and with minimal disruption to existing fishing operations.

Evaluation Criteria

The proposed rule does not explain how experimental projects will be evaluated or what criteria will be used to determine whether an experimental project is successful. The success of an experimental project should not be evaluated solely on catch or harvest results. Rather, the evaluation should consider whether the experimental gear functions reliably under actual fishing conditions, including successful deployment and retrieval, equipment reliability, communication systems, the ability of other fishermen to locate and avoid experimental gear, and overall operational performance. Clearly defined evaluation criteria would help ensure that future management decisions are based on consistent and meaningful results.

The proposed rule would also benefit from clarification regarding how participation in the Experimental Fishing Gear Permit program will interact with a participant's existing commercial crab permit, including whether participants may alternate between experimental and conventional fishing methods during the same season or whether participation is limited to the approved experimental project.

Because experimental projects may involve only a limited number of participants operating under specific conditions, the proposed rule would benefit from additional clarification regarding how the Department will determine whether the results are representative and appropriate to inform future management decisions affecting the broader commercial fishery. Clearly defined objectives, consistent evaluation criteria, and a transparent evaluation process would help ensure that future regulatory decisions are based on reliable and meaningful results.

Interaction with Existing Regulations

The proposed rule would benefit from additional clarification regarding how Experimental Fishing Gear Permit activities will interact with existing commercial Dungeness crab regulations. While permit conditions may authorize specific experimental fishing methods, the proposal does not clearly explain which existing gear requirements remain applicable during an approved project or how any temporary exceptions will be administered. Clarifying the relationship between permit conditions and existing regulations would promote consistent implementation, improve enforcement, and provide greater certainty for both participating and non-participating fishermen.

The proposal would also benefit from additional clarification regarding how information obtained through experimental projects may be considered in future rulemaking. If experimental results are later used to support broader regulatory changes, clearly defined evaluation criteria and continued stakeholder participation would help ensure that future decisions are based on reliable information and informed public input.

The proposed Experimental Fishing Gear Permit program has the potential to provide valuable information regarding emerging fishing technologies and management approaches. If the Department moves forward with this voluntary program, additional clarification regarding permit administration, operational requirements, evaluation criteria, and the interaction with existing regulations would improve transparency, promote safe and consistent implementation, and help ensure that future management decisions are supported by reliable and meaningful results.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments on the proposed permanent rulemaking for Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery. I appreciate the Department's efforts to improve fishery management and recognize the value of evaluating new technologies and management approaches when they are supported by clear objectives, practical implementation, and meaningful evaluation.

My comments are intended to encourage additional clarification in several areas of the proposed rule, including implementation, permit administration, evaluation criteria, and operational guidance. Providing greater clarity before these requirements become permanent would improve consistency, reduce uncertainty, and help promote safe and effective implementation throughout the fleet.

Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery has a long history of adapting to new regulations, conservation measures, and changing conditions. I respectfully encourage the Department and Commission to ensure that any permanent rule is supported by clear guidance, practical implementation, and evaluation processes that are transparent, measurable, and based on reliable information. Doing so will help strengthen confidence in the rulemaking process and support the long-term success of both the fishery and the resource it depends upon. It will also strengthen trust and demonstrate the Commission's commitment to working collaboratively with Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fleet as these regulations continue to evolve.

Thank you for your consideration. I appreciate the Commission's willingness to consider input from those who work on the water every day, and I respectfully submit these comments for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Karie Silva

June 23, 2026

Via Email

Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, OR 97302
odfw.commission@odfw.oregon.gov

Re: Comment of Oregon Coast Crab Association Regarding Proposed Rulemaking Affecting the Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery.

Dear Chair Wahl and Commissioners:

I represent Oregon Coast Crab Association (“OCCA”), an Oregon non-profit corporation whose membership includes more than 150 Oregon Dungeness crab permit holders, seafood processors, vessel representatives, and hired captains active in Oregon’s commercial Dungeness crab fishery. OCCA respectfully submits this comment regarding the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking filed by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (the “Department”) dated June 22, 2026, which proposes changes to commercial Dungeness crab fishery regulation.

I. Introduction.

Oregon’s state-managed Dungeness crab fishery is among the best managed and most sustainable fisheries in the world. OCCA is proud to represent the men and women who have helped build that success, and whose commitment to the difficult and dangerous work of commercial fishing sustains their families, their communities, and Oregon’s rich cultural heritage.

OCCA likewise appreciates this Commission’s crucial role in sustaining the fishery’s success for this generation and those that follow. For decades, Oregon’s fishing families have worked together as trusted partners with this Commission and the Department to protect the fishery’s long-term health. With the continuing development of modern technologies that

affect the Dungeness crab fishery, now, more than ever, it is imperative to continue and strengthen the tradition of collaboration between regulators and the fishery's most immediate stakeholders. In that spirit, OCCA offers the following comments on the proposed rules.

II. Comments on Proposed Rules.

A. Amendments to OAR 635-005-0446.

The Department proposes amending OAR 635-005-0446 to require that by December 1, 2026, all commercial crab vessels implement an electronic monitoring system ("EM") that records where the vessel is located, and where each individual crab pot is pulled. EM is currently required in California and Washington's state-managed commercial Dungeness crab fisheries and many, though not all, OCCA members have experience with these systems.

OCCA does not oppose mandating the use of EM in Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fleet. We are concerned, however, that the proposed implementation deadline—which coincides with the presumptive opening date of the 2026-2027 Dungeness crab season—does not allow all vessels sufficient time to prepare and, absent appropriate safeguards, could cause significant economic hardship, particularly to smaller vessel operators. Likewise, the proposed rule change overlooks an opportunity to reduce regulatory burden by eliminating existing logbook requirements that are redundant of EM data recording. Accordingly, OCCA requests that the Commission consider the following recommendations regarding the rule's proposed amendment:

(1) Extended Implementation Deadline.

A December 1, 2026, implementation deadline would provide permittees less than four months to conform to this new requirement. Particularly given the shortage of qualified electricians to perform what is a complex installation process,¹ this timeline may not be feasible. Because the Dungeness crab fishery is a derby fishery in which early season trips are by far the most productive, even a slight delay in meeting the proposed deadline could be economically catastrophic. OCCA therefore requests that the implementation deadline be moved to February 1 to allow a reasonable time to achieve compliance. In the alternative, the proposed rule should at minimum incorporate a 30-day period before the implementation

¹ Installation of EM systems is a specialized process that exceeds the technical capabilities of most vessel owners and crews.

deadline during which individual permittees may request an extension provided that they can demonstrate good faith efforts to achieve compliance.

(2) Exigency Accommodation.

We know from experience in other states and fisheries that mandatory EM rollout does not always go exactly to plan. Newly installed systems may suffer from undiscovered installation errors or other issues that affect performance. Where the loss of even a single fishing trip carries outsized economic consequences, it is critical that an unanticipated EM malfunction does not break a trip. Our understanding from the Oregon State Police (“OSP”) is that, as written, the proposed rule would require just that. Accordingly, the proposed rule should be amended to clarify that a vessel that experiences an EM failure while fishing may complete its current trip. We understand that Washington offers a similar process to avoid breaking trips in such scenarios. Oregon should do the same.

(3) Technical Support.

To further help smooth the EM rollout, the rule should also provide for dedicated technical support including a dedicated full-time employee and a 24/7 hotline to assist with EM-related issues. EM rollout is a complex process, and the availability of dedicated and immediately available technical support is critical to ensure that the program functions as intended and does not unnecessarily disrupt fishing effort.

(4) Elimination of Logbook Requirements.

Existing logbook requirements are redundant of EM tracked data under the proposed rule. This redundancy would create increased regulatory burden with no corresponding benefit. Washington has eliminated logbook requirements for vessels operating with a fully functioning EM system. Oregon should do the same.

(5) Financial Assistance.

Purchase of an EM system and operational subscription are expensive. In recent years, permittees have repeatedly borne the financial brunt of regulatory changes. While some operations can afford these changes, others, primarily small boat operations with limited resources, cannot. The Commission should establish a mechanism for fishery participants for whom compliance would impose a substantial economic burden to request financial assistance.

Financial assistance is critical to ensure that new EM requirements do not contribute to attrition and reduce equity and diversity within the fleet.

In sum, while OCCA does not oppose EM implementation, the proposed rule should be modified in order to allow permittees a reasonable amount of time to come into compliance, to ensure that the proposed new system functions efficiently, and to prevent unintended economic loss due to technical malfunction that is all but certain to occur, particularly during the transition period.

B. Amendments to OAR 635-006-0020.

The Department's proposed amendments to OAR 635-006-0020 are intended to provide a more structured program associated with the issuance of experimental fishing gear permits ("EFGP") for the use of long line and so-called "pop-up" crab gear. As with the implementation of mandatory EM, OCCA does not oppose in principle the creation of an experimental fishery or the clarification of EFGP issuance requirements. However, given the very significant safety and economic implications associated with the introduction of experimental gear that has not previously been tested in Oregon waters, it is imperative that any authorized experimental gear use be held to the highest standards of transparency and scientific integrity. OCCA is concerned that the proposed rule as drafted is too vague and affords too much discretion to achieve that standard. Accordingly, OCCA offers the following comments and recommendations:

(1) Defining the Experimental Fishery.

Experimental pop-up gear use in other fisheries, including California's commercial Dungeness crab fishery, has been the subject of highly concerning misinformation propagated by special interest groups. These groups purport that the use of this gear is safe and economically viable based on cherry-picked data that is not representative of general fishing conditions, and without adequately measuring their claims against objectively defined success and failure metrics. OCCA is deeply concerned that issuing EFGPs without clearly defined guidelines as to what the proposed experimental fishery is testing and how success or failure is measured will create conditions ripe for misrepresentations that could influence future regulatory decisions in ways that put fishers' lives and livelihoods at risk.

The proposed rule does not speak at all to the purpose or scope of the experimental fishery. It contains no mechanism to provide for transparent dissemination of the data collected. And it contains no metrics whatsoever to assess the success or failure of the EFGPs'

use. Indeed, it is not even clear from the proposed rule where and when experimental gear would be permitted. Each of these omissions presents major concerns.

The proposed rule, as written, is too vague and affords the Department too much discretion. As stated above, OCCA does not oppose the creation of an experimental fishery. However, the issuance of EFGPs should not occur unless and until the contours of the proposed experimental fishery are properly established. As a practical matter, this may not be feasible during the 2026-2027 season. OCCA therefore recommends that the proposed rule be stayed, and that the Commission instruct the Department to develop a comprehensive experimental fishery plan, pursuant to which EFGPs may issue.

(2) Rigorous Application Screening.

The proposed rule states simply that “[t]he Department may deny or revoke an EFGP if the applicant, vessel operator, or the holder of a limited entry permit for the target species has been charged with or convicted of any commercial fishery offense within the last five years or has violated the terms and conditions of any past or present EFGP.” This is insufficient. If the Commission proceeds with implementation of the proposed rule, the Department should at minimum be *required* to deny or revoke an EFGP if the applicant, operator, or holder is or has been convicted of a commercial fishery offense at any time. If a crime is charged, the EFGP should be suspended or the application stayed pending resolution of the charge. Additionally, OCCA supports the establishment of a committee comprised of representative permittees from each major Port to assist the Department in reviewing applications and making recommendations.

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III. **CONCLUSION.**

OCCA appreciates the opportunity to offer this public comment. While OCCA does not oppose in principle the implementation of EM requirements or establishment of an experimental fishery, the proposed rules as drafted are insufficient to protect the interests of commercial Dungeness crab permittees. Many of the above-discussed issues were raised by OCCA members during public meetings with Department staff that preceded the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking but are not reflected in the proposed rules. Accordingly, OCCA respectfully asks that the Commission consider and adopt the recommendations stated above.

Sincerely,

/s/ Eric J. Brickenstein

Eric J. Brickenstein



July 24, 2024

Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97302

Dr. Debbie Colbert, Director
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97302

RE: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery and Experimental Fishing Gear Permit Regulations

Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert,

Entanglements in commercial fishing gear, including in the Oregon Dungeness crab fishery, are a primary threat to the recovery of critically endangered leatherback sea turtles, threatened and endangered humpback whales, endangered blue whales and endangered fin whales. Gray whales and North Pacific right whales are also at risk. Oregon's management system is failing to reduce whale entanglements. Since risk reduction measures were first implemented in 2021, numbers and rates of whale entanglements in the Oregon crab fishery have only increased.¹ We support adoption of the proposed rules to implement a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring (EM) program and to establish additional criteria for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). These proposed rules will enhance crab fishery management and allow testing of on-demand (pop-up) gear that can reduce entanglements while maintaining fishing opportunities.

In its draft Conservation Plan submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS),² the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is seeking an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) to cover the confirmed take of 61 humpback whales, 3 blue whales and 3 fin whales over a 15-year period. The request to take up to 67 whales in the Oregon crab fishery is excessive and

¹ This includes 11 humpback whales, one fin whale and one minke whale (non-ESA listed) entangled in the Oregon commercial Dungeness crab fishery from 2021 to 2025. This is an average of 2.6 whales/ year compared to 0.875 whales/ year during the prior 8-year baseline period.

² ODFW (May 2026). *Draft Conservation Plan for Oregon's Ocean Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery*. Draft for NOAA Review. Available: https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/shellfish/commercial/crab/docs/2026/ODFW_Letter_CP_for_NMFS_review_June_2026.pdf.

would likely violate the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) if NMFS were to authorize this level of take. The Central America Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of humpback whales is listed as endangered under the ESA and is showing little to no signs of recovery.³ The DPS is also designated as the Central America/Southern Mexico—CA-OR-WA stock under the MMPA; cumulatively, deaths and serious injuries in West Coast fisheries already exceed the stock’s potential biological removal (PBR) limit.⁴ What’s worse is that current and proposed take levels only represent confirmed takes, when preliminary NMFS estimates project that only one in five entanglements are detected.⁵

The Oregon Endangered Species Act lists gray whales as endangered, and thus the Department must ensure that its management measures also protect them even though they are not listed on the federal ESA. Already in 2026, 11 gray whales have stranded in Oregon according to NMFS data.⁶ One hundred and fifty gray whales have stranded in the Pacific Northwest in 2026. It is imperative that the Department reduce threats to gray whales while they face multiple dangers including entanglement, ship strikes, and starvation from a changing Arctic.

As conservation organizations dedicated to healthy marine ecosystems and the protection of marine wildlife, we urge the Commission to do more to address the ongoing (and increasing) entanglement crisis. For example, implementing a pot limit reduction during the main season would reduce entanglement risk during the period when most recent whale entanglements have occurred. The Commission should direct the Department to prepare a stronger set of risk reduction rules that are based on the best available science and fully meet the requirements of the ESA and MMPA.

I. Electronic monitoring will improve data collection, enforcement and adaptive management

³ NMFS. *Stock Assessment Process & Humpback Whale Population Biology*. Presentation to the West Coast Take Reduction Team. (Dec. 10, 2025). Available: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2025-12/WCTRT-Virtual-Meeting-3.pdf>. Population size and trends for U.S. West Coast Stocks are described on slide 24.

⁴ NMFS. *Humpback Whale (Megaptera novaeangliae kuzira) Central America / Southern Mexico – California-Oregon-Washington Stock*. Stock Assessment Report. (Revised May 30, 2023). Available: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2023-08/Humpback-Whale-CASMEX-2022.pdf>. Total annual mortality and serious injuries (M/SI) from commercial fisheries for the Central America stock is 8.1 whales annually, more than twice the PBR level of 3.5 whales per year.

⁵ Moore and Greenman 2025. *Integrating multiple information types to improve estimates of large whale entanglement mortality and serious injury*. Presentation at the Marine Mammal Commission Meeting, September 2025. Available: https://www.mmc.gov/wp-content/uploads/3_Moore-humpback-entanglement-estimation-for-MMC-Sept-2025.pdf.

⁶ Cossette, S. *West Coast gray whale strandings reach triple digits for 2026*, The Oregonian/Oregon Live (Jul. 16, 2026). Available: <https://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/2026/07/west-coast-gray-whale-strandings-reach-triple-digits-for-2026.html>.

We support the proposed rules establishing a fleet-wide EM program for the commercial Dungeness crab fishery beginning with the 2026-27 season. The proposed EM program requires every vessel to use a monitoring system that records vessel location at least once per minute and hydraulic sensors to record pot hauling activity. Similar systems are already in place in Washington and California. We foresee significant benefits from this approach, including improved monitoring of closed areas, and the generation of more robust data to better inform future adaptive management of the fishery.

II. Experimental Fishing Gear Permits to test pop-up and longline gear will create a pathway for the coexistence of fishing and whales

We support the proposed updates to the Department's EFGP rules. These updates are intended to facilitate the testing of alternative gear types that have the potential to mitigate entanglement risk by reducing or eliminating persistent vertical lines in the water column. Specifically, the Department states in its staff summary that the updates would provide "a more structured program with additional guidelines before issuing EFGPs for pop-up or crab longline gear."⁷ We support these rules, subject to our understanding from the Department that it anticipates beginning to accept and approve pop-up and longline experimental fishing gear permit applications in the spring of 2027.

Our organizations support the testing and ultimate authorization of pop-up gear in the Oregon commercial crab fishery. Pop-up fishing gear is a crucial way to prevent whale entanglements while maintaining fishing opportunities, particularly at times when areas are closed to conventional crab traps. Pop-up gear stores the rope and buoy with the trap on the seafloor until a release mechanism is triggered that allows a flotation device to surface on demand when fishermen are ready to retrieve their catch. Except for a short period while the trap is being retrieved, there is no vertical rope in the water column, thus significantly reducing entanglement risk. Multiple years of successful pop-up gear testing in the California Dungeness crab fishery⁸ led to the California Fish and Game Commission formally approving Sub Sea Sonics and Guardian Ropeless Systems pop-up gear for use in California's spring Dungeness crab fishery, during times and in areas closed to conventional gear due to entanglement risk.⁹

⁷ ODFW Staff Summary. Available: https://www.dfw.state.or.us/OARs/perm/Aug2026_Dungeness_Crab_Exhibit_Staff_Summary.pdf.

⁸ Sub Sea Sonics Ropeless Guardian 2025 Popup Fishing Testing Results. Available: https://www.subseasonics.com/_files/ugd/edbdafe8f1fc979b457415d9fcafb30639a3e67.pdf; Sub Sea Sonics Ropeless Guardian 2024 Popup Fishing Testing Results. Available: https://www.subseasonics.com/_files/ugd/edbdafe5de21f367466486bb821b89629efd26d.pdf.

⁹ CDFW (Mar. 13, 2026). Sub Sea Sonics and Guardian Ropeless Systems Alternative Gear Conditional Authorization. Available: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=240082&inline>.

As the Department proceeds with developing its experimental fishing gear permit for testing pop-up gear, we ask that the Department encourage broad participation and innovation, while placing reasonable conditions on the permits such as requirements for virtual gear marking, back-up retrieval (e.g., grappling), and non-floating groundline. We suggest the Department allow strings of up to 25 traps under the permit, which is consistent with the number currently approved for commercial use in California. Furthermore, we encourage the Commission and Department to establish clear criteria for the performance of pop-up testing that would allow for future gear authorization, including detectability, retrievability, ability to identify, benefit to whales, and enforceability. California established these in regulation,¹⁰ which could be a helpful starting point. Having clear goal posts is important for setting expectations for fishermen and other investors that seek to accomplish test results that enable gear authorization.

III. Additional entanglement risk reduction measures are needed

Given increasing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial Dungeness crab fishery, we request the Commission direct the Department to develop new and stronger rules to reduce whale entanglement risk. This includes aligning late-season risk reduction measures with the best available science showing that peak co-occurrence between the crab fishery and humpback whales occurs earlier in the spring,¹¹ and aligning closures with the critical habitat designations for humpback whales.¹² And since most recent confirmed entanglements in Oregon crab gear have occurred in gear set during the current main season (December 1 to April 30), the Department must do more to reduce entanglement risk during this period.

Specifically, we request the Commission direct the Department to draft rules that:

- Implement a *main season* pot limit reduction by 25 percent to reduce entanglement risk during the period when most recent entanglements have occurred. The Department should also analyze a range of pot limit reduction alternatives to ensure the limit that is set maximizes risk reduction based on the best available scientific information. Late-season pot limit reductions have proven that setting and tending fewer pots maintains catch levels while reducing entanglement risk and likely lowering rates of gear loss;
- Implement mandatory *late season* risk reduction measures no later than April 1 to better align management measures with humpback whale habitat use off the Oregon coast. The Department should also analyze entanglement risk across a range of months (January-

¹⁰ Cal Code Regs. Tit. 14, Section 132.8 (h) Risk Assessment Mitigation Program: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery, Alternative Gear.

¹¹ E.g., Derville, S., Buell, T. V., Corbett, K. C., Hayslip, C., and Torres, L. G. (2023). Exposure of whales to entanglement risk in Dungeness crab fishing gear in Oregon, USA, reveals distinctive spatio-temporal and climatic patterns. *Biological Conservation*, 281: 1- 10. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2023.109989>; and forthcoming scientific work being undertaken by the Oregon State University.

¹² 86 FR 21,082 (Apr. 21, 2021). Available: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/04/21/2021-08175/angered-and-threatened-wildlife-and-plants-designating-critical-habitat-for-the-central-america>.

May) to ensure that the start date of late season measures reflect the best available scientific information on times of peak entanglement risk to whales;

- Prohibit commercial crabbing in areas deeper than 30 fathoms during the *late season*, to closely align with the nearshore depth limit for humpback whale critical habitat;¹³ and
- Authorize pop-up gear in times and areas otherwise closed for the purpose of reducing entanglement risk to allow for increased crabbing opportunities.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important conservation issue.

Sincerely,

Ben Enticknap
Fishery Campaign Director
Oceana

Francine Kershaw, PhD
Senior Scientist
Natural Resources Defense Council

Dan Silver
Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League

Catherine Kilduff
Senior Attorney
Center for Biological Diversity

Joy Primrose
Director, ACS National Board of Directors
ACS Oregon Chapter President
American Cetacean Society

Kevin Campion
Founder
Save the North Pacific Right Whale

Kurt Lieber
President
Ocean Defenders Alliance

Brian Posewitz
Director
Humane Voters Oregon

¹³ *Id.*; The nearshore boundary of designated humpback whale critical habitat off the Oregon coast is 28 fathoms.

Submitted via ODFW.Commission@odfw.oregon.gov

July 24, 2026

Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97302

Dr. Debbie Colbert, Director
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, Oregon 97302

RE: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery and Experimental Fishing Gear Permit Regulations

Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert,

Whale entanglements in Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery pose significant threats to threatened and endangered whale and sea turtle populations. This is an ongoing issue that will not be resolved without a concerted effort by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to chart a path toward a meaningful reduction in entanglement risk. The current rules have failed to prevent Oregon's fisheries from entangling protected whales.

The Center for Biological Diversity submits this comment letter on behalf of 571 Oregon residents (see supplemental attachment) who have expressed their support for regulations that adequately and effectively protect Oregon's marine wildlife from serious injury and death. They have asked the Commission to initiate rulemaking proceedings to limit the amount of fishing gear in the water during peak whale concentrations, implement management actions to swiftly respond to confirmed entanglements, and advance common-sense solutions like pop-up fishing gear.

Thank you for recognizing their voices calling for more stringent regulations to protect whales and sea turtles from commercial fishing gear.

Sincerely,

Ben Grundy
Oceans Campaigner
Center for Biological Diversity

TO: Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
FROM: Center for Biological Diversity (571 supporters)
RE: Protect whales and sea turtles in Oregon

First Name	Last Name	City	State/Prov	Zip/Postal
Theodore	Bayer	Bend	OR	97703
james	thompson	Portland	OR	97210
Paul	Howard	Corvallis	OR	97333
Gerard	Ridella	Portland	OR	97215
Patricia	Bowman	Portland	OR	97229
Babs	Alvernaz	Junction City	OR	97448
Rhett	Lawrence	Portland	OR	97217
Peter	Brewer	Bend	OR	97703
Karen	Fletcher	Portland	OR	97206
Lydia	Doleman	Talent	OR	97540
Beth	Flake	Hood River	OR	97031
Barbara	Taylor	North Bend	OR	97459
Krista	Reynolds	West Linn	OR	97068
Therese	Campbell	Eugene	OR	97401
Gret	Rowe	Bend	OR	97703
Michael	Wherley	Eugene	OR	97402
Martha	Stevens	Wallowa	OR	97885
Juliette	Dunn	Portland	OR	97201
Gay	Kramer-Dodd	Eugene	OR	97404
Linore	Blackstone	Portland	OR	97213
Lana	Graff	Port Orford	OR	97465
Roberta	Badger-Cain	Portland	OR	97206
Janet	Sleath	Bend	OR	97703
Jean	Dodier	Portland	OR	97211
Melanie	Schimpf	Portland	OR	97206
Heather	Morijah	Halsey	OR	97348
Rose	Estes	Waldport	OR	97394
Elissa	Rashkin	Salem	OR	97301
Sue	Kelso-Haines	Hood River	OR	97031
Elizabeth	Waldron	Corvallis	OR	97333
Karen	Beyers	La Pine	OR	97739
Stephen	Omo	Portland	OR	97224
Rozlyn	Reynolds	South Beach	OR	97366
Wanda	Meck	Eugene	OR	97401
Barbara	Rumer	Bend	OR	97703
David	Edwards	Eugene	OR	97404
Dianne	Ensign	Portland	OR	97219
David and Judith	Berg	Eugene	OR	97405
Angela	Cloutier	Corvallis	OR	97330

Diane	Venberg	Portland	OR	97213
Jennifer	Davis	Portland	OR	97202
Kyle	Gullickson	Portland	OR	97209
Erika	Litle	Portland	OR	97220
Karen	Bain	Silverton	OR	97381
Michele	Penner	Bend	OR	97701
Jane	Burch-Pesses	Hillsboro	OR	97123
Ann	Wichmann	Falls City	OR	97344
C	Rudolph	Tillamook	OR	97141
Carolyn	Giles	Portland	OR	97205
Lynn	Dennenberg	San Diego	CA	92103
Ciry	Null	Chiloquin	OR	97624
Andrew	Simrin	Eugene	OR	97404
maxine	sheets-johnstone	Yachats	OR	97498
Alexandra	Davison	Ashland	OR	97520
Scott	Penzarella	Sisters	OR	97759
Chuck	Gehling	Hood River	OR	97031
Blaine	Vogt	Corvallis	OR	97330
Teresa	DeLorenzo	Astoria	OR	97103
Isabelle	Rhodes-Flanary	Fairview	OR	97024
Colleen	Whalen	Coos Bay	OR	97420
Veronica	Hinkes	Carlton	OR	97111
Stacy	Moranville	Salem	OR	97317
Matthew	Barmann	Hood River	OR	97031
Kathleen	Ruiz	Seaside	OR	97138
Alison	Pitale	Beaverton	OR	97003
Tracy	Richards	Clackamas	OR	97015
Vincent	Alvarez	Portland	OR	97222
Linda	Hendrix	Bend	OR	97702
Donna	Sharp	Veneta	OR	97487
Craig	Emerick	Corvallis	OR	97330
Jane	Jones	Milton Freewater	OR	97862
Donna	Grubbs	The Dalles	OR	97058
William	Lynn	Oregon City	OR	97045
Rebecca	Picton	Corvallis	OR	97330
D	Stirpe	Portland	OR	97214
Czora	Pagsoligan	Gresham	OR	97080
Corinne	Sherton	Salem	OR	97306
Denise	Ortega	Brookings	OR	97415
Katie	Gwynn	Portland	OR	97212
Jaylen	Schmitt	Portland	OR	97211
Emily	Platt	Portland	OR	97202
Gayle	Agee	Willamina	OR	97396
Alain	Gauthier	Portland	OR	97211

Laurie	Fisher	Portland	OR	97224
Brett	Baumann	Lake Oswego	OR	97034
Mary	Callison	Bend	OR	97701
April	Atwood	Portland	OR	97202
David	Labby	Portland	OR	97211
Gary	Bell	Oregon City	OR	97045
Katherine	Bettis	Portland	OR	97222
karen	horton	Independence	OR	97351
John	Herberg	Eugene	OR	97405
Samantha	Peterson	Astoria	OR	97103
Carla	Earl	Redmond	OR	97756
Pavla	Zakova-Laney	Albany	OR	97322
Esther	Friedman	Salem	OR	97302
Frank	Rouse	Colton	OR	97017
Julie	Redman	Eugene	OR	97401
Beth	Levin	Portland	OR	97213
Donna	Harris	Bend	OR	97707
Debbie	Kreuser	Beaverton	OR	97007
Patricia	Aker	Portland	OR	97223
Leslie	Harper	North Bend	OR	97459
Amber	Star	Grants Pass	OR	97527
Blaine	Ackley	Hillsboro	OR	97124
SUSAN	DICKMAN	Happy Valley	OR	97086
Robert	Thornhill	Clackamas	OR	97015
Satya	Vayu	Portland	OR	97215
Katie	Haldeman	Bend	OR	97701
Eileene	Gillson	Sherwood	OR	97140
Katherine	Smith	Grants Pass	OR	97527
s	Hansen	Bend	OR	97703
Sky	Yeager	Philomath	OR	97370
Elan	Morin	Springfield	OR	97477
Virginia	Thurman	Mcminnville	OR	97128
Julie	Richards	Clackamas	OR	97015
Mary	Thiel	Portland	OR	97266
Casey	Neill	Portland	OR	97212
becky	stephenson	Bend	OR	97703
Nina	French	Portland	OR	97220
Nancy	Haas	Bend	OR	97703
Donnella	Wills	Sherwood	OR	97140
Susan G	Rives-Denight	Pendleton	OR	97801
Benton	Elliott	Eugene	OR	97401
Linda	Carlson	Veneta	OR	97487
Bob	Hannigan	Corvallis	OR	97330
Sally	Keller	Eugene	OR	97405

Robert	Gibson	Ashland	OR	97520
robert	albee	Williams	OR	97544
Stephen	Gerould	Portland	OR	97239
Teresa	Schmidt	Eugene	OR	97405
Rachel	Cairns	Halfway	OR	97834
Nora	Polk	Portland	OR	97206
Tamara	Wecker	Portland	OR	97223
Jim	Wells	Medford	OR	97501
Lisa	Graham	Madras	OR	97741
ROBERT	PLATA	Salem	OR	97302
Neil	Friedman	Westfir	OR	97492
Alex	Prentiss	Beaverton	OR	97007
G	Whiting	Joseph	OR	97846
Mira	Wiegmann	Portland	OR	97225
Jim	May	North Bend	OR	97459
David	Klingensmith	Eugene	OR	97401
Jessalynn	Jones	Ashland	OR	97520
Nancy	Marshall	Portland	OR	97213
Lee	Zucker	Eugene	OR	97403
michele	dickson	Portland	OR	97223
Kristy	Giles	Clackamas	OR	97015
Allison	Koeper	Portland	OR	97229
Paul	Simon	Beaverton	OR	97007
Julie	Sherman	Portland	OR	97217
Sara	Pritt	Eugene	OR	97401
Richard	McCombs	Toledo	OR	97391
Trace	Sexton	Eugene	OR	97405
Shelley	Baker-Gard	Portland	OR	97202
Jennifer	McDaid	Lostine	OR	97857
melanie	feder	Philomath	OR	97370
Larry	Morningstar	Talent	OR	97540
Lynn	Cross	Bend	OR	97701
Jacqueline	Glyde	Portland	OR	97220
Sarah	Welte	Beaverton	OR	97007
Eva	Tomlinson	Portland	OR	97219
Anna	Cowen	Oregon City	OR	97045
Margaret	Stephens	Salem	OR	97301
John	Tangney	Happy Valley	OR	97086
RANDALL	GICKER	Blue River	OR	97413
Matt	Laubach	Eugene	OR	97405
Luanne	Mierow	Beavercreek	OR	97004
Laury	Benson	Bend	OR	97703
Linda	Donnelly	Salem	OR	97301
David	Cross	Portland	OR	97219

Kathleen	Roche	Bend	OR	97701
Sue	Lundquist	Ashland	OR	97520
Becky	Johnson	La Pine	OR	97739
Monique	Williams	West Linn	OR	97068
Marilyn	Costamagna	Medford	OR	97504
Kelly	Hibbert	Roseburg	OR	97470
Victoria	Eells	Gold Beach	OR	97444
Hadley	de Terre	Jacksonville	OR	97530
David	Flaskerud	Sandy	OR	97055
Tracina	Stewart	Portland	OR	97211
Laur	Strickland	Portland	OR	97225
Kendre	Hone	Monmouth	OR	97361
Sherry	Monie	Damascus	OR	97089
Michael and Karen	Burmester	Happy Valley	OR	97086
Rick	Severson	Lake Oswego	OR	97035
Marion	Hadden	Jacksonville	OR	97530
Cathie	Batavia	Portland	OR	97229
Janette	Wells	Bend	OR	97702
Katherine	McKnight	Portland	OR	97211
Sheila	Dooley	Mosier	OR	97040
Sandy	Kuhns	Corvallis	OR	97333
Carla	Williams	Cottage Grove	OR	97424
Cynthia	Chrystal	Bend	OR	97702
Sally	Maish	Roseburg	OR	97471
Margaret	Quentin	Portland	OR	97213
Grant	Fujii	Portland	OR	97203
Carla	Marting	West Linn	OR	97068
Brent	Rocks	Portland	OR	97201
Susan	Harris	Portland	OR	97213
J	Diaz	Albany	OR	97321
Tung	Vu	Portland	OR	97230
Bryce	Hutchinson	Rogue River	OR	97537
Kirstin	Litchfield	Gladstone	OR	97027
alice	west	Portland	OR	97215
Jennifer	Abernathy	La Pine	OR	97739
Kate	Busby	Portland	OR	97206
Cristy	Murray	Oregon City	OR	97045
Elizabeth	Mitchell	Eugene	OR	97404
Marie	Wakefield	Newport	OR	97365
Michelle	Bienick	Grants Pass	OR	97527
Susan	Wechsler	Corvallis	OR	97330
Sandra	Joos	Portland	OR	97239
Dvora	Robinson	Portland	OR	97206
Lora	Meisner	Salem	OR	97306

Anna	Mirocha	Tucson	AZ	85701
craig	tyrka	Elmira	OR	97437
Michelle	Casey	Portland	OR	97211
Debra	Rehn	Portland	OR	97202
Martha	Lawler	La Pine	OR	97739
Patsy	Shuler	Eugene	OR	97401
Gitanjali	Hursh	Portland	OR	97206
Anna	Wessinger	Bend	OR	97707
Paige	Geschrey	Portland	OR	97225
Roberta	Leach	Eugene	OR	97408
Anne	Vincent	Jacksonville	OR	97530
Robert	Phillips	Medford	OR	97501
M E	ORourke	Depoe Bay	OR	97341
Stéphanie	Rossenu	Beaverton	OR	97005
MariBeth	Doran	Salem	OR	97302
Alice	Lentz	Baker City	OR	97814
Judy	Kemp	Lorane	OR	97451
Carl	Tegethoff	Siletz	OR	97380
Marina	Soto	Portland	OR	97202
Suzanna	Davis	Medford	OR	97504
Debra	Culwell	Gresham	OR	97030
Michael	Sauber	Mcminnville	OR	97128
Patty	O'Blisk	Portland	OR	97221
Julia	Yoder	Oakridge	OR	97463
Alicia	Mehlis	Bend	OR	97703
Isabel	Ortiz	Portland	OR	97229
Scott	Manzano	Silverton	OR	97381
La	Dory	Eugene	OR	97402
Charlie	Graham	Hillsboro	OR	97124
Rachel	Lamson	Portland	OR	97239
Steph	Spencer	Bend	OR	97703
Mose	Oppenheimer	Portland	OR	97214
Dennis	Hoerner	Eugene	OR	97403
James	Strickler	Portland	OR	97203
Cheryl	Warren	Eugene	OR	97405
Judith	Mercer	Roseburg	OR	97471
David	Kelley	Gresham	OR	97080
Kimm	Carter	Eugene	OR	97402
Thomas	Otten	Portland	OR	97239
Peg	Reagan	Gold Beach	OR	97444
Elisabeth	Cat	Hebo	OR	97122
Sandra	Pocholec	Veneta	OR	97487
Sheila	Martin	Astoria	OR	97103
Niall	Carroll	Astoria	OR	97103

maria	Nazzaro	Portland	OR	97211
Kathy	Jones	Portland	OR	97206
Heather	Marsh	Lake Oswego	OR	97035
Elizabeth	Menetrey	Astoria	OR	97103
Wanda L.	Nelsen	Ashland	OR	97520
Tammy	Causey	Jefferson	OR	97352
Merrill	A	Portland	OR	97232
John	Easterday	Portland	OR	97229
Mary Beth	Davenport	Florence	OR	97439
Lin	Marie	Newport	OR	97365
David	Jaffe	Portland	OR	97225
Jennifer	Will	Bend	OR	97701
Richard	Crawford	Bend	OR	97707
janna	piper	Portland	OR	97293
Denny	Duncan	Lincoln City	OR	97367
Jeri	Iversen	Astoria	OR	97103
Joan	Worthy	Oregon City	OR	97045
MARJORIE E	PETERSON	Medford	OR	97501
Meaghan	Doherty	Bend	OR	97703
Valerie	Adell	Portland	OR	97213
Dorothy	Louis	Albany	OR	97322
Kristin	Smith	Portland	OR	97209
Elizabeth	Edwards	Cloverdale	OR	97112
Carey	McIntyre	Portland	OR	97203
Marjorie	Ackerman	Newport	OR	97365
Lara	Martinez-Plachta	Portland	OR	97213
Sandra	Schomberg	Corvallis	OR	97330
Sean	Leslie	Bend	OR	97703
Nikki	Breitbarth	Portland	OR	97223
Michael	Hoover	Beaverton	OR	97008
Andrea	Giolli	West Linn	OR	97068
Aviram	Sofir	Hillsboro	OR	97124
Jonah	F.	Portland	OR	97215
Stephen a	Johnson	Portland	OR	97225
Ned	Knight	Newberg	OR	97132
Sunny	Tabino	Summerville	OR	97876
robert	smith	Clackamas	OR	97015
Linda	Runyan	Salem	OR	97302
THOMAS	COONEY	Tualatin	OR	97062
Jana	Kincaid	Eugene	OR	97402
Michael	Renfrow	Portland	OR	97213
Linda	Grove	Clackamas	OR	97015
Robert	Bresky	Oregon City	OR	97045
Linda	Knox	Bend	OR	97702

Danielle	Stutheit	Newport	OR	97365
Dianne	Miller	Imnaha	OR	97842
joe	Frascone	Dallas	OR	97338
Karen	Hooper	Portland	OR	97216
Mary	Elias	Mcminnville	OR	97128
Randy	Smith	Portland	OR	97212
Scott	Kacek	Portland	OR	97216
Adrian	Bergeron	Halfway	OR	97834
Phyllis	Jaszkowiak	Marylhurst	OR	97036
Cherine	Bauer	Eugene	OR	97404
Firelin	Jones	Eugene	OR	97405
Alexander	Reeder	Prineville	OR	97754
Rebecca	Tilden	Aumsville	OR	97325
Helen	Jones	Ashland	OR	97520
Craig	Cline	Salem	OR	97302
denine	heinemann	Portland	OR	97217
Lise	Hull	Bandon	OR	97411
Janet	Voss	Portland	OR	97201
Linda	Bolduan	Lake Oswego	OR	97034
Jud	Schlacter	Eugene	OR	97440
Jeanie	Lemens	Pendleton	OR	97801
Ryan	Beam	Portland	OR	97211
Steve	Sheehy	Klamath Falls	OR	97603
Michael	Calhoon	Oregon City	OR	97045
Nancy	Carl	Mcminnville	OR	97128
Mary	Buckley	Portland	OR	97211
Laurel	Temple	Portland	OR	97225
Evelyn	Pietrowski-Ciullo	Salem	OR	97301
Pam	Rensch	Saint Helens	OR	97051
Laura	McCaskill	Bend	OR	97703
Nikki	Dennis	Portland	OR	97201
Joshua	Horner	Happy Valley	OR	97086
Kyle	Haines	Hood River	OR	97031
Carolyn	Blackman	Portland	OR	97216
Christopher	Cooper	Portland	OR	97214
Leigh	Starcevich	Corvallis	OR	97330
Philip	Johnston	Ashland	OR	97520
Claudia	Hasenhuttl	Gold Beach	OR	97444
Leland	Peterman	Scio	OR	97374
Rebecca	Savage	Portland	OR	97206
Jan	Slavid	Beaverton	OR	97008
Mary Elizabeth	Braun	Corvallis	OR	97330
Jessica	Stainbrook	Eugene	OR	97405
Dave	Ruud	Portland	OR	97231

Donna	Bonetti	North Bend	OR	97459
Douglas	Maccomb	Saint Helens	OR	97051
Suzanne	Fernstrom	Eugene	OR	97402
Damian	Latona	Astoria	OR	97103
Shireen	Press	Portland	OR	97218
CHRIS	LATT	Portland	OR	97224
Dana	Bleckinger	Yachats	OR	97498
Theresa	Day	Portland	OR	97222
Karen	Lamson	The Dalles	OR	97058
Anne	Corbett	Gresham	OR	97080
Judith	Lienhard	Portland	OR	97225
Shane	Fritz	Stayton	OR	97383
Richard	Curtis	Gresham	OR	97080
cheryl	lewis	Forest Grove	OR	97116
Linda	Medeiros	Medford	OR	97504
John	Barger	Portland	OR	97206
Robin	Katzenstein	Albany	OR	97322
Beth	Marshall	Central Point	OR	97502
margaret	covert	Portland	OR	97219
Gwen	Stone	Myrtle Creek	OR	97457
Joanne M	James	Portland	OR	97212
Shanti	Maffey	Eugene	OR	97403
Barbara	Methvin	Portland	OR	97225
Lucile	McKenzie	Eugene	OR	97405
Patricia	Pomeroy	Irrigon	OR	97844
Matt	Crawford	Los Angeles	CA	90046
Laura	Colby	Dexter	OR	97431
Karen	Sjogren	Salem	OR	97304
Jo	Jeffries	Malin	OR	97632
Judy	Knudson	Waldport	OR	97394
Michael	Ryan	Portland	OR	97205
larry	narlock	Grants Pass	OR	97526
Mary Lee	Lassett-Egbert	Klamath Falls	OR	97601
C L	Thomas	Portland	OR	97209
Heather	Dale	Wilsonville	OR	97070
Janice	VrMeer	Ashland	OR	97520
Sue	Leonetti	Veneta	OR	97487
Erin	McDonald	Portland	OR	97216
Rachel	Secrest	Beaverton	OR	97007
Glen	Comuntzis	Portland	OR	97223
Russell	Axelrod	West Linn	OR	97068
Thomas	Sanford	Portland	OR	97230
Mary	Thompson	Portland	OR	97219
Bonnie	Cross	Gresham	OR	97080

Veena	Singwi	Eugene	OR	97404
E	Sherry	Salem	OR	97304
Sarah	Finne	Portland	OR	97211
Cameron	Backus	Newberg	OR	97132
Jill	Marks	Newport	OR	97365
PAMELA	YATES	Gresham	OR	97030
Sandra	Jilton Rogers	Medford	OR	97504
Lyle	Lyle	Portland	OR	97266
Molly	M	Happy Valley	OR	97086
Cynthia	Hicks	Portland	OR	97227
Debra	Smith	Portland	OR	97267
James	Hauge	Salem	OR	97302
Lois	Lederman	South Beach	OR	97366
Alexis	Petrohilos	Eugene	OR	97403
JoEllen	Mayer	Beaverton	OR	97005
John	Brinkley	Eugene	OR	97405
Katelyn	Acevedo Perez	Grants Pass	OR	97527
Alan	Lawrence	Portland	OR	97217
Shira	Fogel	Clackamas	OR	97015
Janet	Zancanella	Albany	OR	97322
Mariela	Wilkes	Mount Angel	OR	97362
Dale	Holzschuh	Portland	OR	97214
Hillary	Tiefer	Portland	OR	97219
Jamie	Shields	Rainier	OR	97048
Patricia Christine	White	Beaverton	OR	97007
Elizabeth	Sheppard	Portland	OR	97202
Sandra	Dixon	Portland	OR	97203
Kathryn	Fox	Salem	OR	97317
Julie	VandenBerg	Phoenix	OR	97535
Allison	Everitt	Salem	OR	97301
Diane	George	Hillsboro	OR	97124
Dana	Brenner	Florence	OR	97439
Abigail	Jiran	Hood River	OR	97031
Cierra	Buer	Powell Butte	OR	97753
James	Rankin	Corvallis	OR	97330
alexa	pengelly	Portland	OR	97213
Annita	Bowman	Ontario	OR	97914
Dana	Petre-Miller	Salem	OR	97303
Diane	D	Sweet Home	OR	97386
Sue	Blair	Hillsboro	OR	97123
Linda	Skonberg	Sutherlin	OR	97479
Sherry	Haswarey	Portland	OR	97229
Barbara	Shor	Ashland	OR	97520
David	Kollen	Brookings	OR	97415

Rosemarie	Gerstner	Jacksonville	OR	97530
Satomi	Honda	Beaverton	OR	97008
Michael	Flaningam	Depoe Bay	OR	97341
philip	kavan	Portland	OR	97214
Joel	Kay	Portland	OR	97222
Margot	Monti	Portland	OR	97223
Jenny	Spring	Portland	OR	97210
Judy	Wilcox	Troutdale	OR	97060
Joan	Kalvelage	Ashland	OR	97520
Leone.	Lewis	Salem	OR	97303
Pamela	Collord	Portland	OR	97267
R	h	Gladstone	OR	97027
Jeanne	Eddy	Myrtle Creek	OR	97457
Samantha	Hathaway	Wilsonville	OR	97070
John	Dowd	Eugene	OR	97405
Sandy	Miller	Portland	OR	97215
Joan	Steelhammer	Bend	OR	97708
Ruth	Schellbach	Salem	OR	97302
Crystal	Conklin	Portland	OR	97266
Elizabeth	Victor	Grants Pass	OR	97527
diane	hestich	Hillsboro	OR	97123
Jennifer	Loomis	Portland	OR	97266
Jamie	Blute	Hines	OR	97738
Monica	Kenney	Butte	MT	59701
Tanya	Gilula	Portland	OR	97222
Kim	Wick	Buxton	OR	97109
Jacqueline	Jenkins	Salem	OR	97303
Cindy	Enlow	Albany	OR	97321
Heidi	Hartman	Bend	OR	97701
Donna	Thelander	Portland	OR	97222
Heidi	Hart-Zorin	Portland	OR	97214
Kathy	Robinson	Gladstone	OR	97027
Douglas	BEALL	Camp Sherman	OR	97730
Rebecca	Parker	Bend	OR	97701
John	Bartels	Portland	OR	97266
Fern	Walker	Portland	OR	97230
Jennifer	Finley	Bend	OR	97703
Wally	Sykes	Joseph	OR	97846
Paul	Borcherding	La Grande	OR	97850
Nancy	Lyles	Grants Pass	OR	97526
Ann	Hollyfield	Waldport	OR	97394
Becky	Rose	Beaverton	OR	97005
Anthony	Albert	Corvallis	OR	97330
Lory	Utz	Roseburg	OR	97470

Stacy	Alaimo	Eugene	OR	97404
Ellen	Pfander	Creswell	OR	97426
Lisa	Adams	Salem	OR	97302
Karen	Wecker	Salem	OR	97306
Elizabeth	Darby	Portland	OR	97209
Julie	Longanecker	Gold Hill	OR	97525
Annie	Thorp	Salem	OR	97317
Amy	Hunter	Portland	OR	97212
Marc	Anderson	Tualatin	OR	97062
Linda	Hansen	Portland	OR	97218
Laura V	Schaap	Cottage Grove	OR	97424
Mick	Alderman	Astoria	OR	97103
Robin	Esterkin	Portland	OR	97219
Robb	Sturtcman	Portland	OR	97209
Audrey	Collins	Chiloquin	OR	97624
Susan	Langston	Portland	OR	97212
Angela	Fazzari	Portland	OR	97213
Julie	Harris	Beaverton	OR	97078
LeAnn	Magee	Portland	OR	97223
Barbara	Council	Ashland	OR	97520
WYATT	GIBSON	Chiloquin	OR	97624
Andrew	Scott	Bend	OR	97709
Holly	Zapf	Portland	OR	97232
Helia	Rasti	Portland	OR	97219
Dreamy	Sea	Portland	OR	97211
Steve	Prince	Eugene	OR	97405
Kristina	Abromaitis	Central Point	OR	97502
Laura	Hanks	Portland	OR	97222
Matthew	Higgins	Encinitas	CA	92024
D.	Deloff	Beaverton	OR	97078
stuart	phillips	Port Townsend	WA	98368
Melanie	Birch	Corvallis	OR	97333
Geena	Levoe	Portland	OR	97229
Scott	Kennedy	Salem	OR	97303
Karon	Johnson	Bend	OR	97702
JAY	RICHARDS	Bend	OR	97701
Margo	Slaughter	Eugene	OR	97401
Christine	Poklemba	Portland	OR	97202
Bruce	Pellegrini	Canby	OR	97013
Patrick	Bak	Talent	OR	97540
Julia	barbee	Portland	OR	97216
Tom	Beatty	Eugene	OR	97408
Sharon	Herber	Portland	OR	97213
Austin	Sumpter	Canby	OR	97013

BIANETTH	VALDEZ	Portland	OR	97205
Wendy	Little	Gladstone	OR	97027
Robin	Ricker	Mcminnville	OR	97128
Stephanie	Strakbein	Redmond	OR	97756
Arianrhod	Conrad-Antoville	Portland	OR	97206
Juanita	Garnow	Portland	OR	97223
Margo	Huntsman	Klamath Falls	OR	97603
Serena	Chakravorty	Happy Valley	OR	97086
Gina	Norman	Portland	OR	97213
Patricia	Browning	Ashland	OR	97520
Marguerite	Eliasson	South Beach	OR	97366
Dylan	Beck	Portland	OR	97227
Laura	Coleman Waite	Portland	OR	97211
Sean	Willis	Portland	OR	97217
Gayle	Cerri	Bend	OR	97703
Valerie	Snyder	Forest Grove	OR	97116
David	Carnese	Portland	OR	97202
Kati	Wilson	Corvallis	OR	97333
Maureen	O'Neal	Portland	OR	97223
Joan	Davis	Portland	OR	97230
Teresa	Sem	Portland	OR	97229
Rolf	Friis	Happy Valley	OR	97086
Steve	Hocker	Lincoln City	OR	97367
Jan	Stone	Beaverton	OR	97007
Linda	Neely	Bend	OR	97702
Stefanie	Landman	Forest Grove	OR	97116
Tanya	Maxwell	Florence	OR	97439
Pamela	Vasquez	Salem	OR	97305
Caroline	Miller	Portland	OR	97232
Michael	Carter	Portland	OR	97206
Scott	Maclowry	Bend	OR	97703
Richard	Cummins	Walterville	OR	97489
Gisela	Ryter	Bend	OR	97701
Eric	Ross	Sweet Home	OR	97386
john	hathaway	Redmond	OR	97756
Gena	Strom	Eagle Point	OR	97524
Sara	Grusing	Portland	OR	97266
Michael	Barton	West Linn	OR	97068
Thomas	Zumbroich	Salem	OR	97301
L Penny	Guinther	Lincoln City	OR	97367
Rebecca	Kimsey	Sublimity	OR	97385
Karen	Deora	Portland	OR	97212
Wendy	Larson	Portland	OR	97219
tosh	myers	Deer Island	OR	97054

dana	robinson	Portland	OR	97206
Juanita	Rinas	Eugene	OR	97402
Judy	Tannehill	Salem	OR	97304
Inge	King	Corvallis	OR	97330

From: [ODFW Commission * ODFW](#)
To: [BUJELL Adam M * ODFW](#)
Subject: FW: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery Regulations
Date: Friday, July 24, 2026 3:46:45 PM

From: dina athanassie <dathanassie@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 23, 2026 3:25 PM
To: ODFW Commission * ODFW <ODFW.Commission@odfw.oregon.gov>
Subject: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery Regulations

You don't often get email from dathanassie@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission,

I respectfully urge you to support updates to Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery that reduce whale entanglement risks through the adoption and expansion of on-demand (ropeless) fishing technologies.

Whales are an essential part of our marine ecosystems, and preventing avoidable entanglements should be a shared responsibility. Traditional vertical buoy lines create a significant hazard for migrating whales and other marine wildlife, but new technologies provide a practical path forward by reducing these risks while allowing fishermen to continue their important work.

I recognize the vital role the Dungeness crab fishery plays in Oregon's coastal communities and believe conservation and a thriving fishing industry can—and should—coexist. Supporting innovative solutions like on-demand gear allows us to protect vulnerable marine species while respecting the livelihoods and traditions of those who depend on the fishery.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to science-based, responsible wildlife and fisheries management.

Sincerely,

Dina Athanassie
dathanassie@yahoo.com

July 24, 2026

Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, OR 97302

Subject: Recommendation in Support of Practical Whale Entanglement Reduction Measures in Oregon's Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery

Dear Chair Wahl and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissioners,

We are writing as Oregon commercial Dungeness crab fishermen and environmental organizations who care deeply about the future of the Dungeness crab fishery and the health of our ocean. We believe that the profitable harvest of Dungeness crab can continue in parallel to taking additional practical steps to reduce the risk of whale entanglements.

We support the experimental testing of pop-up gear in the Oregon commercial Dungeness crab fishery starting in 2027. This technology could provide an additional tool to maintain economic opportunity for fishers during times when fishing may be limited to protect whales. Ocean conditions off Oregon are different than off central California where pop-up gear is already being used. It is important that pop-up gear is tested in Oregon waters to assess its effectiveness and safety. We hope that the Department of Fish and Wildlife provides as many fishermen as possible with the opportunity to take part in the initial testing process, as well as affordable and easy access to the technology, both of which would support the Commission's mandate to promote and protect equity in access to, and benefit from, the resource. Creating a clear pathway for the commercial fishing of pop-up gear, if proven on the water, would also be helpful. Electronic vessel monitoring will help enhance our understanding of risk to whales and improve overall management of the fishery, but would significantly benefit from the inclusion of video monitoring such as the systems used by the western Washington tribal fisheries and British Columbia commercial crab fisheries. This will also benefit in eliminating issues of piracy and gear tampering, and would be invaluable in the control of pot limits in a potential future longline fishery, whether by pop up or traditional methods.

The number of entanglements in Oregon gear remains too high and the status quo poses unnecessary risk to whales and to the fishery. We would like the Commission to ask the Department to do more to reduce this risk, particularly considering and focusing on risk reduction measures during the main fishing season when all known entanglements where gear has been attributed to the Oregon Dungeness Crab Fishery have been identified as

originating from the early season, not the late. Given these data, the Department's planned response of further restricting late season fishing if triggers are met are unlikely to be effective in mitigating entanglements. Evidence from other fisheries, and from the five-year evaluation of the Oregon crab fishery, suggest that a pot limit reduction would reduce whale entanglement risk without reducing overall crab catch. A reduced pot limit during the main season could still allow for a highly productive fishery and provide greater opportunity to responsibly tend active gear. A reduced pot limit in Oregon would result in a more orderly, safe, and profitable fishery as a whole, in addition to helping mitigate whale entanglements. Additionally, moving late-season risk reduction measures up to April 1 and updating the depth restriction to 30 fathoms to reflect the science on when whales are most likely to be present off Oregon's coast remain sensible proposals. Continued support and tuning of the derelict gear recovery program to allow for earlier removal of derelict gear, and timely communication about where whales are being seen, which would help fishermen make informed decisions when setting gear, would all be meaningful measures to help mitigate ongoing entanglement risk and give us the tools to be better stewards of our resource.

Reducing risk to whales now will help protect the fishery from potentially more restrictive measures in the future. The people who fish these waters every season have practical knowledge that can help shape rules that are effective and workable. We hope ODFW continues to work directly with fishermen as any management measures are reviewed and adjusted.

We appreciate the Commission's ongoing efforts to address whale entanglement risk and hope that you will support our request to pursue additional solutions that protect marine life and ultimately benefit the people and coastal communities that depend on this fishery.

Thank you for your time and for considering these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Perry Bordeaux – Tiburon Fisheries, LLC – FV Cap Elza, FV Rajani Jade

Russel Diede – FV Casino

Lester Cherry – Cherry Fisheries – FV Stormy C, FV Four winds

Levi Cherry – FV Ascension

Kenny Bushnell – FV Evening Star

Francine Kershaw, PhD – Natural Resource Defense Council

Joy Primrose – American Cetacean Society

Ben Enticknap - Oceana

July 20, 2026

ODFW Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, OR 97302

Exhibit B: Opposition to Mandatory VMS Requirements for Oregon Dungeness Crab Fleet

From: Ray Monroe, 35185 4th Street, Pacific City, OR, 97135

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to respectfully express my opposition to the mandatory Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) requirements proposed for Oregon's Dungeness crab fishery. While I understand the intent to strengthen monitoring and compliance, these requirements place an undue financial and operational burden on small, family-run operations without delivering proportional benefits.

My commitment to responsible and equitable fishery management is well established. I authored the 26-foot-and-under amendment to HB 3094, which restricted vessels in that class from transferring licenses to vessels over 26 feet in length. This amendment was designed to preserve opportunities for younger participants and new entrants to access the crab fishery, ensuring the long-term vitality of our coastal communities.

The Oregon Dungeness crab fleet already operates under strict seasonal, gear, and reporting regulations, with a strong record of compliance and stewardship. Imposing VMS on small vessels, many of which operate on narrow margins, risks pushing out the very participants we have worked to protect. The costs and technical demands of VMS are especially burdensome for smaller boats, and the benefits in this context are questionable given the fishery's existing oversight measures.

Additionally, the unique conditions faced by surf launched vessels in Pacific City make VMS requirements even more impractical. Going through the surf every day means our boats are routinely hit by 6-to-10-foot waves, and at times are completely underwater. Electronics on these vessels are replaced often due to constant exposure to harsh conditions, and space on small dories is already at a premium. Adding another piece of equipment, one that is both costly and vulnerable to damage, creates an unreasonable burden that does not align with the realities of our fishery.

It is also important to note that our 22-foot vessels crab nearly exclusively inside the 30-fathom line. These boats operate close to shore, in a well monitored and heavily trafficked area where enforcement presence is already strong. The limited range and nearshore nature of our fishery further reduces any practical justification for imposing VMS on these small boats.

I urge you to consider alternative approaches such as a voluntary tracking program, or seasonal exemptions that maintain compliance without undermining access for the next generation of fishermen.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I remain committed to working collaboratively toward policies that protect both our marine resources and the livelihoods that depend on them.

Sincerely,



Ray Monroe

35185 4th Street

Pacific City, OR 97135

503-801-4744

doryfreshfish@embarqmail.com



ID	Completion time	Name2	Affiliation or type of stakeholder (Ex. general public, state government...)	Comments
1	6/25/26 13:42:16	Stephen Borg	General Public	Re evaluate commercial crabbing in smaller bays that have limited recreational opportunities. There is an ongoing problem in smaller bays, like Alsea Bay in which they have been allowing a commercial crabbing season during the peak season. The commercial fisherman are rude to recreational crabbers and can take up a large area of the bay when each vessel can have, I believe 15 traps. I have observed these commercials when they pull a trap and not once seen a crab get measured. Also, I thought they were supposed to use specific traps, the type that pull up. The ones I have observed are just like the ones they use in the ocean. Never have I seen any of these guys get checked. I know there is a shortage of officers and funds to keep an eye on these fisheries, so why allow it? The recreational crabbers support much more to our local economy's and to the state in license fees.
2	6/25/26 14:27:22	Crystal Adams	Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission	I am writing on behalf of the Oregon Dungeness crab fleet and the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission. Our fleet is committed to maintaining safe, sustainable fishery and supporting practical, science based measures to reduce whale entanglement risk. At the same time, fishermen must be able to comply with any new requirements while operating safely and economically in a challenging marine environment. Regarding the proposed commercial Dungeness crab rules, including electronic vessel monitoring, hydraulic pressure tracking requirements, and additional criteria for experimental gear permits, the fleet has the following perspectives: •We support a clear, consistent framework for whale entanglement risk reduction, but any new requirements must be workable for small, primarily family owned operations and not simply add cost and complexity without measurable benefit. •Electronic monitoring and hydraulic tracking, if required, should be phased in with appropriate funding support, clear guidance, and adequate time for training and troubleshooting. Many vessels operate with limited connectivity, older electronics, and very basic hydraulic systems; additional equipment and monitoring requirements can be expensive, technically challenging, and may introduce new points of failure on vessels that already operate in difficult conditions. •Any hydraulic tracking requirement should be narrowly tailored to the specific information needed for management and risk reduction, with strong consideration given to data privacy, system reliability, and the practical ability of crews to maintain and operate such equipment at sea. •When considering criteria and guidelines for experimental gear permits, it is critical that ODFW continue to work directly with industry so new gear types are tested under real world conditions and adjusted as we learn what is practical on the water. The fleet is willing to be a partner in innovation, but needs a transparent, predictable process that does not jeopardize safety or livelihoods. •Any "minor" modifications to surface gear allowances should be thoroughly vetted with the fleet, as even small changes can have significant implications for safety, efficiency, and entanglement risk management. On process and outreach, we appreciate that ODFW has already conducted port to port meetings and engagement efforts, which many in the fleet found efficient and helpful. However, because fishermen are at sea for much of their time, they are not always able to stay current on evolving proposals and timelines. To ensure meaningful participation, we encourage continued and expanded outreach—through additional port meetings, remote options, and clear, timely summaries of proposed changes—so that those most directly affected have a fair opportunity to understand and comment before rules are finalized. In summary, the fleet's position is: •We support protecting whales and other marine resources. •We need regulations—including any electronic monitoring and hydraulic tracking requirements—that are realistic, affordable, and tailored to the realities of a fleet with multiple different business model all boat sizes, community based fishery. •We ask that ODFW and the Commission work closely with industry to refine these requirements, ensure adequate implementation timelines and financial/technical support, and continue robust outreach so fleet input is genuinely incorporated. Thank you for your consideration of these comments and for your ongoing engagement with Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fleet. Respectfully submitted, Crystal Adams Executive Director, Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission
3	6/25/26 20:16:04	Patrick Roelle	General Public	I do not participate in the Oregon crab fishery. I have been a captain aboard a 500 pot permit fisher in previous years. I am now a captain owner of a commercial fishing vessel with the home port of Winchester Bay. 54 foot FV James Lee with salmon permit and albacore landings. My comment specific to this new proposed rule is to inform you of the already overwhelming costs associated with commercial fishing. We are hanging by a thread here. The newly implemented rules with regard to moving the crab gear inside of the 40 fathom line is being very well met. The crabbers have all their gear inside of 40 fathoms wherever possible if at all possible. I know this because I am crossing in and out of ports of Charleston, Winchester Bay, and Newport during the April, May and June commercial salmon troll fishery. I feel strongly able to troll outside of 40 fathoms and will not run across crab gear. Please allow the currently and newly added rules to keep gear inside of 40 fathoms in the springtime whenever you notify the fishers to do so. The ADDED costs associated with VMS requirements are a un needed burden. I cannot possibly imagine any other need to implement these new rules other than to regulate that 40 fathom line. There are plenty of current oversight measures already in place at this time.
4	6/27/26 19:31:17	Lawrence Demmert	Vessel/permit holder	Ems seems unnecessary in this fishery. Just adding to the burden of the fishermen.
5	6/28/26 11:43:58	June Mohler Mitman	general public	I am writing in support of strengthening regulations to modify crabbing gear in order to prevent whale entanglement. Whale populations are under a tremendous amount of stress due to human impacts. It is our responsibility to do our best to reduce mortality in areas where we can have a positive impact, as soon as possible. I believe that Oregon crabbers and ODFW can work together to find smart solutions which will protect whales and not put crabbers out of business. I do not accept excuses by some in the commercial crabbing business, who prefer to continue to do nothing to reduce entanglement mortality and injury, because it will cost too much to modify their gear. Please stop stalling, and get to work on fixing this problem.
6	7/20/26 9:39:57	Ray Monroe	Pacific City Dory Fleet	July 20, 2026 ODFW Commission 4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE Salem, OR 97302 Exhibit B: Opposition to Mandatory VMS Requirements for Oregon Dungeness Crab Fleet From: Ray Monroe, 35185 4th Street, Pacific City, OR, 97135 Dear Commissioners, I am writing to respectfully express my opposition to the mandatory Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) requirements proposed for Oregon's Dungeness crab fishery. While I understand the intent to strengthen monitoring and compliance, these requirements place an undue financial and operational burden on small, family-run operations without delivering proportional benefits. My commitment to responsible and equitable fishery management is well established. I authored the 26-foot-and-under amendment to HB 3094, which restricted vessels in that class from transferring licenses to vessels over 26 feet in length. This amendment was designed to preserve opportunities for younger participants and new entrants to access the crab fishery, ensuring the long-term vitality of our coastal communities. The Oregon Dungeness crab fleet already operates under strict seasonal, gear, and reporting regulations, with a strong record of compliance and stewardship. Imposing VMS on small vessels, many of which operate on narrow margins, risks pushing out the very participants we have worked to protect. The costs and technical demands of VMS are especially burdensome for smaller boats, and the benefits in this context are questionable given the fishery's existing oversight measures. Additionally, the unique conditions faced by surf launched vessels in Pacific City make VMS requirements even more impractical. Going through the surf every day means our boats are routinely hit by 6-to-10-foot waves, and at times are completely underwater. Electronics on these vessels are replaced often due to constant exposure to harsh conditions, and space on small dories is already at a premium. Adding another piece of equipment, one that is both costly and vulnerable to damage, creates an unreasonable burden that does not align with the realities of our fishery. It is also important to note that our 22-foot vessels crab nearly exclusively inside the 30-fathom line. These boats operate close to shore, in a well monitored and heavily trafficked area where enforcement presence is already strong. The limited range and nearshore nature of our fishery further reduces any practical justification for imposing VMS on these small boats. I urge you to consider alternative approaches such as a voluntary tracking program, or seasonal exemptions that maintain compliance without undermining access for the next generation of fishermen. Thank you for your time and consideration. I remain committed to working collaboratively toward policies that protect both our marine resources and the livelihoods that depend on them. Sincerely, Ray Monroe

7	7/21/26 22:34:16	SUSAN BIRGE	Coastal resident	Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Dr. Debbie Colbert, Director Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE Salem, Oregon 97302 RE: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery and Experimental Fishing Gear Permit Regulations Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert, I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These proposed rules are important in reducing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. I support a rule implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program for the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. A requirement for vessel tracking will report vessel location and gear sensors to identify crab pot hauling activity. This will provide improved data for fishery and whale overlaps, and aid in enforcement and management. I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing an EFGP program for authorization of pop-up and longline gear testing. This gear type will reduce the number of vertical lines in the water, reducing risk of entanglement of endangered and threatened whales and leatherback sea turtles. I request an established time period for evaluating the gear. Entanglement is the primary threat to whales globally, as well as locally. It impedes the recovery of threatened and endangered whales. Roughly 75% of all reported entanglements are ultimately fatal, and only one in five are ever observed. Despite the current management measures, entanglements in Oregon gear are increasing. I ask the Commission to have the Department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report. Sincerely, Susan Birge, Seal Rock Oregon
8	7/22/26 5:53:54	Rebecca Hooper	General public	I do not support the current recommendation for regulation or future pop up lines. The effect of crabbing gear on whale populations has not been shown as having an overall impact on whale populations. The effect of climate change is the only meaningful science supporting declines in whale populations. However that is too large of varied for one state agency to address. Creating regulations to appease a noisy and emotionally charged group of individuals is not a solution. And should not result in an extraordinary cost effect on the fishing community. I do support existing regulation on temporal and spacial regulations for crabbing season in relation to migratory pathways of whales. I believe this regulation has been the most effective and continues to have the greatest impact on whale populations in regards to the crabbing industry. I am not affiliated with the crabbing fleet. Just an Oregon citizen that tries to see all sides, logically. Thank you for considering my opinion.
9	7/22/26 6:09:04	Crystal Roy	Concerned citizen	Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert, I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These proposed rules are important in reducing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. I support a rule implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program for the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. A requirement for vessel tracking will report vessel location and gear sensors to identify crab pot hauling activity. This will provide improved data for fishery and whale overlaps, and aid in enforcement and management. I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing an EFGP program for authorization of pop-up and longline gear testing. This gear type will reduce the number of vertical lines in the water, reducing risk of entanglement of endangered and threatened whales and leatherback sea turtles. I request an established time period for evaluating the gear. Entanglement is the primary threat to whales globally, as well as locally. It impedes the recovery of threatened and endangered whales. Roughly 75% of all reported entanglements are ultimately fatal, and only one in five are ever observed. Despite the current management measures, entanglements in Oregon gear are increasing. I ask the Commission to have the Department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report. Thank you. Sincerely,
10	7/22/26 11:44:17	Joseph P. Gaby	General Public	RE: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery and Experimental Fishing Gear Permit Regulations Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert, I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These proposed rules are important in reducing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. I support a rule implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program for the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. A requirement for vessel tracking will report vessel location and gear sensors to identify crab pot hauling activity. This will provide improved data for fishery and whale overlaps, and aid in enforcement and management. I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing an EFGP program for authorization of pop-up and longline gear testing. This gear type will reduce the number of vertical lines in the water, reducing risk of entanglement of endangered and threatened whales and leatherback sea turtles. I request an established time period for evaluating the gear. Entanglement is the primary threat to whales globally, as well as locally. It impedes the recovery of threatened and endangered whales. Roughly 75% of all reported entanglements are ultimately fatal, and only one in five are ever observed. Despite the current management measures, entanglements in Oregon gear are increasing. I ask the Commission to have the Department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report. Respectively, Joseph P. Gaby
11	7/22/26 11:50:18	Brent Lerwill	general public	Whales need to be protected and preserved.
12	7/22/26 12:11:33	Laurel Hanley	whale lover	Please do everything in your power to reduce and eliminate whale entanglements in crab fishing gear. We need to be able to trace whose gear is causing entanglements, and hold them accountable.

13	7/22/26 13:32:21	Mike Flaningam	general public (Oregon coast resident)	I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These proposed rules are important in reducing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. I support a rule implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program for the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. A requirement for vessel tracking will report vessel location and gear sensors to identify crab pot hauling activity. This will provide improved data for fishery and whale overlaps, and aid in enforcement and management. I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing an EFGP program for authorization of pop-up and longline gear testing. This gear type will reduce the number of vertical lines in the water, reducing risk of entanglement of endangered and threatened whales and leatherback sea turtles. I request an established time period for evaluating the gear. Entanglement is the primary threat to whales globally, as well as locally. It impedes the recovery of threatened and endangered whales. Roughly 75% of all reported entanglements are ultimately fatal, and only one in five are ever observed. Despite the current management measures, entanglements in Oregon gear are increasing. I ask the Commission to have the Department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report.
14	7/22/26 20:23:44	Eugene Griffith	Coastal Resident	Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert, I am writing as an southern coastal Oregon resident in support of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's proposed rules to reduce whale entanglements in the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. I support implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program. Requiring vessel tracking and gear sensors to detect crab pot hauling will improve data on interactions between fishing activity and whale presence, strengthening both management and enforcement. I also support establishing clear criteria for Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Testing pop-up and longline gear offers a practical path to reducing vertical lines in the water, which can lower entanglement risk for whales and leatherback sea turtles. A defined evaluation timeline should be included to ensure effective review of these efforts. Entanglement remains a major threat to whale populations and continues to impede recovery of protected species. Most entanglements are fatal, and many go unobserved. Despite current measures, entanglements linked to Oregon gear are increasing. I urge the Commission to direct the Department to consider additional management actions following the five-year evaluation period. Thank you for your consideration.
15	7/22/26 21:22:01	Chris Shank	general public	I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits. Entanglement is the primary threat to whales locally in Oregon. I ask the Commission to have the Department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report.
16	7/23/26 8:42:56	Trish Marie	General public	Please indist that crab fishermen use crab traps that cannot entangle whales. Whales are in crisis, as are so many of our ocean mammals, and fishing gear entanglement is one of the leading causes of whale suffering and death. We know how to prevent entanglement and crab fishermen (all fishermen) should use whale-safe gear. They claim to be conservationists; insist they prove it by using whale-safe fishing methods. Thank you.
17	7/23/26 9:03:39	Angie Schierman	American cetacean society	Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Dr. Debbie Colbert, Director Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE Salem, Oregon 97302 RE: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery and Experimental Fishing Gear Permit Regulations Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert, I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These proposed rules are important in reducing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. I support a rule implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program for the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. A requirement for vessel tracking will report vessel location and gear sensors to identify crab pot hauling activity. This will provide improved data for fishery and whale overlaps, and aid in enforcement and management. I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing an EFGP program for authorization of pop-up and longline gear testing. This gear type will reduce the number of vertical lines in the water, reducing risk of entanglement of endangered and threatened whales and leatherback sea turtles. I request an established time period for evaluating the gear. Entanglement is the primary threat to whales globally, as well as locally. It impedes the recovery of threatened and endangered whales. Roughly 75% of all reported entanglements are ultimately fatal, and only one in five are ever observed. Despite the current management measures, entanglements in Oregon gear are increasing. I ask the Commission to have the Department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report. Sincerely, Angie Schierman
18	7/23/26 10:03:29	Thomas J. Capel	ACS Oregon Chapter	Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Dr. Debbie Colbert, Director Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE Salem, Oregon 97302 RE: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery and Experimental Fishing Gear Permit Regulations Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert, I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These proposed rules are important in reducing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. I support a rule implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program for the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. A requirement for vessel tracking will report vessel location and gear sensors to identify crab pot hauling activity. This will provide improved data for fishery and whale overlaps, and aid in enforcement and management. I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing an EFGP program for authorization of pop-up and longline gear testing. This gear type will reduce the number of vertical lines in the water, reducing risk of entanglement of endangered and threatened whales and leatherback sea turtles. I request an established time period for evaluating the gear. Entanglement is the primary threat to whales globally, as well as locally. It impedes the recovery of threatened and endangered whales. Roughly 75% of all reported entanglements are ultimately fatal, and only one in five are ever observed. Despite the current management measures, entanglements in Oregon gear are increasing. I ask the Commission to have the Department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report. Sincerely, Thomas J. Capel

19	7/23/26 10:06:12	Lynda Capel	ACS Oregon Chapter	Ms. Mary Wahl, Chair Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Dr. Debbie Colbert, Director Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE Salem, Oregon 97302 RE: Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery and Experimental Fishing Gear Permit Regulations Dear Chair Wahl and Dr. Colbert, I am writing as an Oregonian to support the adoption of the proposed rules by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These proposed rules are important in reducing whale entanglements in the Oregon commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. I support a rule implementing a fleet-wide Electronic Monitoring program for the commercial ocean Dungeness crab fishery. A requirement for vessel tracking will report vessel location and gear sensors to identify crab pot hauling activity. This will provide improved data for fishery and whale overlaps, and aid in enforcement and management. I support rules to establish additional criteria and guidelines for approving issuance of Experimental Fishing Gear Permits (EFGPs). Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is developing an EFGP program for authorization of pop-up and longline gear testing. This gear type will reduce the number of vertical lines in the water, reducing risk of entanglement of endangered and threatened whales and leatherback sea turtles. I request an established time period for evaluating the gear. Entanglement is the primary threat to whales globally, as well as locally. It impedes the recovery of threatened and endangered whales. Roughly 75% of all reported entanglements are ultimately fatal, and only one in five are ever observed. Despite the current management measures, entanglements in Oregon gear are increasing. I ask the Commission to have the Department provide additional management measures following the five-year evaluation report. Sincerely, Lynda Capel
20	7/23/26 11:10:51	Z Allen	Publiv	These creatures deserve respect. We cannot keep raping our coasts and oceans for profit.
21	7/23/26 11:48:10	Mandy Culbertson	Oregon resident landowner	I encourage the Commission to continue strengthening measures that reduce the risk of whale entanglements while supporting the transition to a more sustainable commercial Dungeness fishery. Oregon's coastal waters are increasingly used by recovering whale populations, and management should continue to evolve alongside changing environmental conditions and new technology. The conservation plan includes important first steps, but they should be viewed as the beginning—not the end—of Oregon's response. Oregon is pursuing an Incidental Take Permit because everyone recognizes that whale entanglements are a foreseeable consequence of the fishery. If that's true, then the state should also commit to continuously reducing that risk as new technologies become available, not simply documenting it more effectively. Monitoring and experimental permits are valuable tools, but they should be paired with a clear commitment to implement proven solutions as the evidence supports them. I support the proposed electronic monitoring requirements. Better spatial data and more timely reporting will improve accountability, strengthen enforcement, and allow ODFW to make more responsive management decisions as whale distributions change. However, the value of this investment depends how those data are used to inform timely management decisions when whales and fishing gear overlap, which the proposal insufficiently addresses as meaningful risk reduction to whales. I appreciate that ODFW is creating a pathway for experimental use of pop-up (on-demand) gear. This technology offers perhaps the greatest long-term opportunity to reduce whale entanglements by eliminating persistent vertical lines from the water column. Yet the proposal remains focused on authorizing limited testing rather than creating a pathway toward broader implementation. Given the demonstrated promise of on-demand gear for eliminating persistent vertical lines, I encourage the Commission to ensure that this experimental program is implemented expeditiously, that permit opportunities are sufficient to generate meaningful data, and that successful trials lead to a clear framework for expanded use within a limited period of time to actually start protecting whales in a meaningful fashion. The proposed rules also stop short of identifying any long-term strategy for transitioning the fishery toward these safer technologies as they mature. Oregon has an opportunity to become a leader in reducing whale entanglements while maintaining a productive crab fishery, and I encourage the Commission to view experimental permitting as the beginning of that transition rather than its endpoint by adopting a time-bound transition plan. Additionally, the proposed rules focus primarily on monitoring and experimental gear authorization but do not introduce additional operational measures to reduce entanglement risk during periods when whale presence is highest. I encourage ODFW to prioritize the use of seasonal management tools that can reduce risk to whales when they are most likely to be present on Oregon's coasts. Finally, I encourage ODFW to continue improving transparency around documented whale entanglements. Timely public reporting would build trust, inform future management decisions, and help demonstrate the effectiveness of conservation measures over time. My family and I recently spent the beginning of this month on the Oregon coast, where we were joined by extended family visiting from out of state. Collectively, our trip represented tens of thousands of dollars in tourism spending, and one of the highlights was seeing Oregon's whales in the wild. Living whales are not only an irreplaceable part of Oregon's natural heritage; they're also an important economic asset for coastal communities' tourism. Thank you for considering these comments.
22	7/23/26 14:07:14	Thad Dickinson	General Public	Dear Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission: I support efforts to modernize Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery by accelerating the transition to on-demand (ropeless) fishing gear as a means of reducing whale entanglements. This innovative technology enables fishermen to continue harvesting crab while eliminating the vertical lines in the water column that can entangle migrating whales and other marine wildlife. Adopting on-demand fishing systems offers a practical solution that supports both a productive fishery and stronger protections for vulnerable marine species. Oregon has an opportunity to lead the way in advancing fishing practices that safeguard marine ecosystems while promoting the transition to a more sustainable and resilient fishing industry. Thank you for your consideration.
23	7/23/26 14:39:32	Barb Mezg	Gen public	Restrict time/length/number/locations of crab traps to try to reduce or eliminate and marine animal entanglement or entrapment in lines
24	7/23/26 16:36:35	April West	General public	I support updating Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery to reduce whale entanglements by accelerating the transition to on-demand (ropeless) fishing gear. This technology allows fishermen to continue harvesting crab while eliminating the vertical lines that entangle migrating whales. Oregon should lead in adopting fishing practices that protect both marine wildlife and drive the transition to sustainable fisheries. Thank you for considering my comment.
25	7/23/26 17:43:09	Roy Wang	general public	I support updating Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery to reduce whale entanglements by accelerating the transition to on-demand (ropeless) fishing gear. This technology allows fishermen to continue harvesting crab while eliminating the vertical lines that entangle migrating whales. Oregon should continue to be a leader in the transition to sustainable fisheries; adopting fishing practices such as this one will protect marine wildlife while keeping our fisheries healthy both for the ecosystem and industry. Thank you for considering my comment.
26	7/23/26 20:46:24	Melissa Turnbull	General public	I support updating the OR Dungeness Crab fishing regulations to help avoid whale entanglements
27	7/23/26 21:01:04	Jacqueline Gamble	General public	I support updating Oregon's commercial Dungeness crab fishery to reduce whale entanglements by accelerating the transition to on-demand (ropeless) fishing gear. This technology allows fishermen to continue harvesting crab while eliminating the vertical lines that entangle migrating whales. Oregon should lead in adopting fishing practices that protect both marine wildlife and drive the transition to sustainable fisheries. Thank you for considering my comment.
28	7/23/26 21:25:55	Karen Conradi	General public	Please reduce risk of whale entanglement by requiring on-demand ropeless fishing gear. This will eliminate the vertical buoy lines that cause the entanglement
29	7/23/26 22:05:22	Brian Posewitz	Humane Voters Oregon	Humane Voters Oregon is concerned about the number of whale deaths caused by entanglement in crab fishing gear. Stronger risk-reduction measures are necessary. The proposed rules are a step in the right direction. We also hope to see additional risk reduction measures in the future, including requirements to use more advanced fishing techniques that reduce entanglement risks. Thank you for considering our comments.