

STAFF SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 14-15, 2022

9B. DEPARTMENT MARINE REGION**Today's Item****Information** ☒**Action** ☐

DFW will highlight marine items of note since the last FGC meeting.

- I. Public discussion on action taken to close recreational razor clam fishery in Del Norte County due to domoic acid.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions (N/A)**Background**

DFW's Marine Region will provide a verbal update on items of interest since the last FGC meeting.

- I. This item will include a public discussion on recent action taken by DFW Director Bonham on Nov 3, 2022 to close the recreational razor clam fishery in Del Norte County following a recommendation from state health agencies; those agencies determined that consumption of razor clams in the area poses significant threat of domoic acid exposure. Today's public discussion satisfies the requirements of subsection (a)(2) of Section 5523 (see Exhibit 1 for more information).

An additional DFW news release of interest is provided as Exhibit 2.

Significant Public Comments (N/A)**Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. [DFW news release: Razor Clam Fishery Closes In Del Norte County Due to Public Health Hazard, dated Nov 3, 2022](#)
2. [DFW news release: CDFW Continues Partial Recreational Crab Trap Restriction and Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery Delay to Protect Whales from Entanglement and Due to Low Crab Quality, dated Nov 21, 2022](#)

Motion (N/A)

Razor Clam Fishery Closes In Del Norte County Due To Public Health Hazard

November 3, 2022



The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Director Charlton H. Bonham has [closed the recreational razor clam fishery in Del Norte County \(PDF\)](#) following a [recommendation from state health agencies \(PDF\)](#) determining that consumption of razor clams in the area poses a significant threat for domoic acid exposure.

Pseudo-nitzschia, a naturally occurring single-celled, marine alga, produces the potent neurotoxin domoic acid under certain ocean conditions. Bivalve shellfish, like clams and mussels, accumulate the toxin without being harmed. In fact, razor clams are known to bioaccumulate domoic acid, meaning it may not clear their system until long after a bloom has abated.

Sampling of razor clams from Crescent Beach in Crescent City in late October found clams exceeding the current federal action level for domoic acid of greater than or equal to 20 parts per million.

Domoic acid poisoning in humans may occur within minutes to hours after consumption of affected seafood and can result in signs and symptoms ranging from vomiting and diarrhea to permanent loss of short-term memory (Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning), coma or death. There is

no way to prepare clams for consumption that will remove the toxin – cooking and freezing have no effect.

CDFW will continue to work with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment to collect, monitor and analyze razor clams to determine when the recreational clam fishery in Del Norte County can be reopened safely.

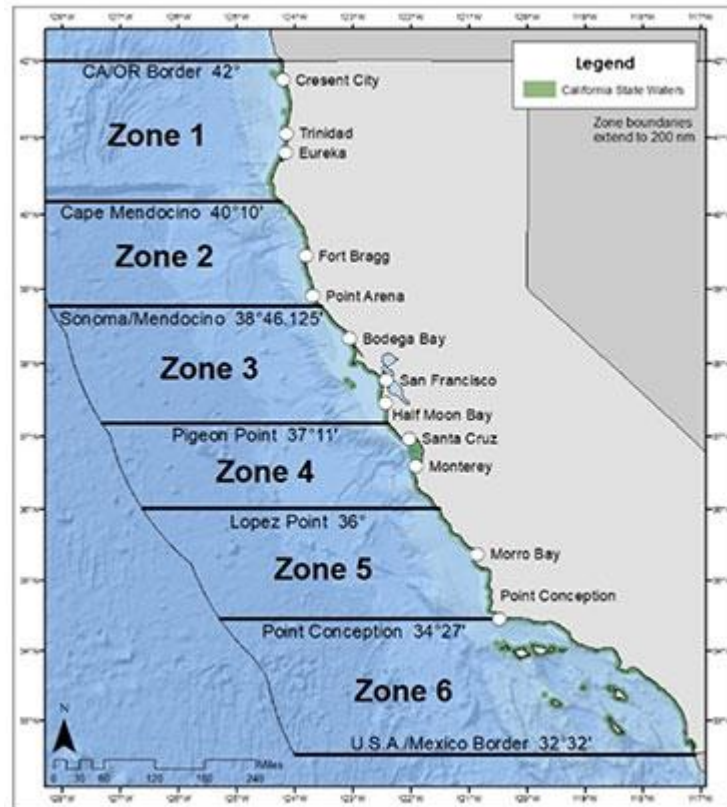
For more information on any fishery closure or health advisories, please visit: www.wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Ocean/Health-Advisories

To get the latest information on current fishing season closures related to domoic acid, please call CDFW's **Domoic Acid Fishery Closure Information Line** at (831) 649-2883.

For the latest consumption warnings, please call **CDPH's Biotoxin information Line** at (510) 412-4643 or toll-free at (800) 553-4133.

CDFW Continues Partial Recreational Crab Trap Restriction And Commercial Dungeness Crab Fishery Delay To Protect Whales From Entanglement And Due To Low Crab Quality

November 21, 2022



The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is continuing the temporary recreational crab trap restriction in Fishing Zones 3, 4, 5 and 6 due to presence of humpback whales and the potential for entanglement from trap gear. However, the recreational crab trap restriction for Fishing Zones 1 and 2 will be lifted on Nov. 28, 2022 at 9 a.m. CDFW reminds recreational crabbers that take of Dungeness crab by other methods, including hoop nets and crab snares, is allowed during a temporary trap restriction.

The commercial Dungeness crab fishery in Fishing Zones 3-6 will also remain delayed due to presence of high numbers of humpback whales and the potential for entanglement with lines and traps in this fishery.

CDFW anticipates the next risk assessment will take place on or before Dec. 7, 2022, at which time CDFW Director Charlton H. Bonham will re-evaluate the temporary recreational crab trap restriction and commercial fishery delay in Fishing Zones 3-6. That risk assessment is

expected to inform the potential for a commercial fishery opener and modification of the recreational trap restriction in Fishing Zones 3-6 on Dec. 16, 2022.

“We appreciate the discussions with the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group regarding risk of entanglement,” said Director Bonham. “Ultimately, we must rely on the best available science and make management decisions based on the Risk Assessment Mitigation Program (RAMP) regulations. CDFW remains committed to providing fishing opportunity when risk of entanglement is low, which is consistent with our management approach since implementation of RAMP.”

In addition, pursuant to Fish and Game Code 8672.2, Director Bonham has also delayed the northern California commercial Dungeness crab season due to [poor crab meat quality test results](#) for Mendocino, Humboldt and Del Norte counties (Fishing Zones 1 and 2). The commercial Dungeness crab fishery in this area is delayed until 12:01 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 16, 2022 pending another round of meat quality testing. If results indicate good quality, the fishery will open and be preceded by a 64-hour gear setting period that will begin at 8:01 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022.

For more information related to the risk assessment process, please visit [CDFW's Whale Safe Fisheries page](#) or more information on the Dungeness crab fishery, please visit wildlife.ca.gov/crab.