Fixed Gear Guide:
California, Oregon, and Washington
Commercial Fisheries
Trap/pot, gillnet, and longline/set line
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**Introduction**

Information included in this document was collected from a variety of sources, including: federal, state, and tribal fishery managers, current laws and regulations, interviews with fishermen, and published literature. The photos and diagrams are intended to show representative fishing gear used by each commercial fishery, but some variation is expected.

**Maps**

The maps included in this document show the potential fishing area utilized by each commercial fishery. The fishing areas for each fishery, shown in blue, were created using bathymetry lines as boundaries to delineate the common fishing depths. The fishing areas were then restricted to water adjacent to ports where fish were landed in the years 2004-2008. The major assumption is that the fish landed into a port were caught in the common depth range of the ocean waters adjacent to the port for the individual fishery.

**Definitions**

*Anchor:* heavy metal object used to weigh down fishing gear.

*Buoy:* used for marking the end of a float line and for flotation. Mostly made of plastic.

*Destructive device/Escape panel:* a link of material on a trap that degrades over a set period of time, leaving an escape panel, rendering the trap inoperable, should the trap be lost at sea. The link material is often cotton twine or magnesium.

*Drift gillnet:* any gillnet that drifts freely in the water, unattached to the ocean floor, though one end may also be tied off to a vessel which also drifts.

*Escape port/ring:* an opening, separate from the destructive device, that allows undersized fish or crustaceans to escape a trap/pot.

*Endorsement:* authorization given to a documented vessel to engage in commercial fishing activities.

*Fathom:* a measurement of depth. There are six feet in one fathom. (See p. 46)

*Float:* used primarily for flotation, but can be used as a surface marker. Placed along the top of a gillnet to keep it upright in the water column. Mostly made of PVC plastic.

*Float line:* the line attaching a trap, net, or ground line to the surface buoy.

*Gillnet:* a type of net where the mesh size is designed to allow the head of the fish to enter, but not the body. The fish is prevented from escaping due to the anatomy of its gills. Can be set with an anchor or drift freely.

*Ground line:* leaded (lead line) or sinking line used in setting strings of traps or bottom set longlines, often weighted at each end and attached to a float line or used along the bottom of a gillnet.

*Line:* cord used for fishing with variable material and thickness.

*Longline:* a fishing line with hooks attached at regular intervals, set in the ocean for a period of time and then retrieved. Can fish along the ocean bottom or in the water column.

*Longline snap:* stainless metal clip for attaching a fishing hook or trap to a longline.

*Marker buoy:* buoy used for flotation and identification. They are marked with owner identification and are often colored with a specific pattern to aid in identification at sea.

*Monofilament:* single strand of extruded polymer with varying strength and color depending on the need of the user.

*Multifilament:* multiple strands of extruded polymer braided or twisted together.

*Set gillnet:* any gillnet used to take fish that is anchored to the bottom on each end and is not free to drift with the tide or current.

*Set line:* anchored longline laid on or just above the ocean floor.

*String (of traps):* a term used to describe multiple traps attached to a single ground line.

*Trap/pot:* a portable, enclosed device with one or more entrances designed to catch crustaceans or fish with one or more lines attached to a surface float.

*Twine:* string made from light weight fibers such as cotton. Synthetic fibers are also used.
Gear Configuration Basics

**Single trap with one or more buoys**

- **Buoy**
- **Float line**
- **Varying amount of line**
- **Trap**

**Fisheries:**
- California near-shore live fish
- Dungeness crab
- Sablefish caught with trap (open access)
- Spiny lobster

**Traps attached to a common ground line (string)**

- **Buoy**
- **Float line**
- **Ground line**
- **Anchor**
- **Traps**

**Sablefish trap configuration**

**Fisheries:**
- Coonstripe shrimp
- Hagfish
- Rock crab
- Sablefish caught with traps (open access and limited entry)
- Spot Prawn
**Gear Configuration Basics**

**Bottom set longline**

Fisheries:
- Pacific Halibut
- Sablefish

![Diagram of Bottom set longline](image)

**Set gillnet**

Fisheries:
- California Halibut/White Seabass

![Diagram of Set gillnet](image)
Buoys and Floats

**Bullet Buoys**
Varying sizes (diameter x length): 5"x11", 6"x14", 7"x15" or 8"x15"
- Provides flotation to trap float line
- Can be used as marker buoy or trailer buoy
- **Fisheries:** California nearshore live fish, coonstripe shrimp, Dungeness crab, rock crab, and spiny lobster

**Small Round Floats**
Varying sizes (diameter x length): 2" x 3" or 3" x 4 3/4"
- Used mainly to supplement flotation of endline of a longline and along the float line of a gillnet
- **Fisheries:** Dungeness crab, rock crab, spiny lobster, and small mesh gillnet

**High Flyer with Float and Flag**
- Pole is made from aluminum or Calcutta cane, radar reflector is diamond shaped, made of aluminum, and placed at top of the pole
- Pole weighted with lead (30lbs) on bottom, so it remains upright in the water
- Attached, as a marker, to terminal end of a string of traps, longline, or gillnet
- Required in Washington and Oregon on all longlines and trap gear ([OAR 635-004-0035, WAC 220-44-030](#))
- **Fisheries:** California halibut/white seabass set gillnet, coonstripe shrimp, hagfish, large and small mesh drift gillnet, sablefish, and spot prawn
Buoys and Floats

Poly Ball (Polyform)
Size range (diameter x length):
- Round: 11" x 15" to 39" x 54"
- Oblong: 8.6" x 19" to 15.5" x 37"
- Used as flotation of endline and for marking terminal end of strings of traps. Also as flotation for top of drift gillnet.
- Color: orange is most common, but a wide variety exists
- Fisheries: California halibut/white seabass set gillnet, coonstripe shrimp, hagfish, large and small mesh drift gillnet, rock crab, sablefish longline, and spot prawn

Special Buoy Marking Requirements

<table>
<thead>
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<th>California</th>
<th>Oregon &amp; Washington</th>
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<tr>
<td>FGC § 9006</td>
<td>OAR 635-005-0055, WAC 220-52-040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buoy Marking</td>
<td>Buoy Tags for Dungeness Traps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License number + “B”</td>
<td>Implemented as part of a trap limit system. Tag is attached to the first buoy from the trap. (See pictures below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License number + “Z”</td>
<td>For more information see the Dungeness crab fishery reference, page 22.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License number + “P”</td>
<td>Lobster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sablefish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Finfish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lobster</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Washington Indian tribes: Buoys branded with 2 digit number unique for each tribe followed by fishermen’s unique ID number
Trap Key

1
1a. Trap made of mainly metal .............................................................. 2
1b. Trap made of mainly plastic.............................................................. 7

2
2a. Round frame...................................................................................... 3
2b. Rectangular frame............................................................................. 5

3
3a. Outer rings equal diameter, approximately three foot ring diameter:

**Dungeness Crab**
p. 22

3b. Outer rings not equal diameter, tapered shaped............................... 4

4
4a. 0.5 inch cord mesh, bottom ring diameter ≥ 3 feet:

**Coonstripe Shrimp** p. 20

4b. 0.8 - 1.5 inch cord mesh, bottom ring diameter ≥ 3 feet:

**Spot Prawn** p. 32

4c. ≥2 inch cord mesh, bottom ring diameter ≥ 6 feet, trap height between 28 and 32 inches:

**Sablefish**
p. 28
Trap Key

5
5a. Frame top/bottom equal size......................................................... 6
5b. Frame top/bottom not equal (trapezoid):

Sablefish
p. 28

6
6a. 2”x4” wire mesh, rectangular escape port:

Spiny Lobster
p. 30

6b. 1”x1” wire mesh, cone shaped entry port, no escape ring:

Spot Prawn
p. 32

6c. 2”x2” wire mesh, rigid metal ring on entry funnel:

Nearshore Live Fish
p. 18

Rigid metal ring on entry funnel
Highlighted for emphasis
Trap Key

6d. 1"x1", 2"x2" or 2"x4" wire mesh, 2 escape rings on top half of trap:

**Rock Crab**

p. 26

---

6e. 2"x2" nylon mesh, approximately five feet tall:

**Sablefish**

p. 28

---

7

7a. Trap is plastic and oval shaped.................................................................9

7b. Trap is a plastic bucket, barrel, or tube.....................................................8

---

8

8a. Five gallon bucket with 1 or 2 funnel(s) on top lid :

**Hagfish**

p. 24
8b. Fifty five gallon barrel with funnels on side and top:

**Hagfish**

p. 24

8c. Cylindrical tube with a funnel at each end:

**Hagfish**

(Korean Trap)

p. 24

9

9a. Plastic trap, oval shaped with round escape rings on top half of trap:

**Dungeness Crab** p. 22

or **Rock Crab** p. 26

9b. Plastic trap, oval shaped with no escape rings on top half of trap:

**Spot Prawn**

p. 32
Net Key

How to measure mesh: Stretch a square of net by two knots so that the other two knots meet in the middle. Measure, in inches, inside the knots while keeping the mesh stretched. If the meshes do not meet, the mesh is damaged.

1
1a. Net mesh made of twine.................................................................................. 2
1b. Net mesh made of monofilament..................................................................... 3

2
2a. Mesh size greater than 14 inches, commonly 18 inches, green, black or brown in twine color ..............................Large mesh drift gillnet (p. 15)
2b. Mesh size greater than 3.5 inches and less than 14 inches, green, black or brown in twine color, no anchors ............Small mesh drift gillnet (p. 15)

3
3a. Mesh size greater than 6 inches, anchors attached, float line marked with fishermen’s ID.....California halibut/white seabass set gillnet (p.14)
3b. Mesh size greater than 3.5 inches and less than 14 inches, no anchors, monofilament can be pink, blue, or green....Small mesh drift gillnet (p. 15)
Gillnets

California halibut/white seabass set gillnet—stretched mesh size $\geq 8.5$ inches for California halibut or $\geq 6$ inches for white seabass

- Net constructed from monofilament line
  - Common monofilament line color: pink, blue, green, clear
- Can be set anytime during a 24 hour period
- Depth of water ranges from 10-50 fathoms with most between 10-35 fathoms
- No more than 9,000 feet of gillnet may be fished in combination for California halibut and angel shark (FGC § 8625c)
- Net will be anchored to bottom and have less floats than drift gillnets
- California gear marking requirements:
  - Buoys (polyball) must be marked with fisherman’s ID
  - Float line must be marked with fisherman’s ID at least every 270 feet (FGC § 8601.5b)
Gillnets

Yellowtail, barracuda, and white seabass small mesh drift gill-net—stretched mesh size between 3.5 inches and 14 inches

- Net constructed from twine or monofilament line
  - See common colors listed in other descriptions
- Nets only set at night
- Drift gillnets are up to 6,000 feet long and are set below the surface (see drift gill-net diagram)
- The mesh size depends on target species:
  - Yellowtail and barracuda: ≥ 3.5 inches
  - White seabass: ≥ 6 inches

Thresher shark/swordfish large mesh drift gillnet—stretched mesh size ≥ 14 inches

- Net constructed from twine
- Most common twine color: green, black, and brown
- Nets attached to boat and only set during the night
- Gillnet can be up to 6,000 feet in float line length (FGC § 8573 b)
- Stretched mesh size usually 18 to 22 inches
Three main types of line used in commercial fishing
1. Poly-line
2. Nylon
3. Lead line

**Poly-line**
Polypropylene
- Can be brightly colored, yellow is standard
- Synthetic fiber line
- Floats and does not absorb water
- Not UV stable
- Used for individual traps, strings of traps

Polysteel™, Blue Steel™
- Brightly colored, blue is common
- Floats but is slightly heavier than polypropylene
- High strength
- UV stable
- Used for individual traps and long-lines

Polyester
- Usually white in color
- Soft fiber
- Negatively buoyant
- Can be mixed with polypropylene to create neutral or negative buoyancy (i.e., Esterpro™ & Ice Blue™)

Hydropro™ Neutral Buoyancy
- Orange colored
- Polysteel™ fibers mixed with polyester
- Originally designed for use by crab and lobster fishermen on the east coast to reduce right whale entanglements; available on west coast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common line diameter</th>
<th>Lighter traps &amp; longline</th>
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<tr>
<td>5/16&quot;</td>
<td>3/8&quot;</td>
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<td>7/16&quot;</td>
<td>1/2&quot;</td>
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Strings of heavy traps
**Line**

**Nylon**
- Usually white
- Synthetic fiber line, high stretch capability
- Absorbs water
- Used for anchoring or mooring
- UV stable
- Used for strings of trap (as the ground line) and longline
- Negatively buoyant

**Lead line**
- Bright and multi-colored
- Poly-line with a lead core
- Heavier weight and less flexible when compared to poly- or nylon line
- Used for bottom longline or gillnet
- Negatively buoyant, can be classified as “sinking line”

**Other line types**

**Nylon twine**
- Color: brown, green, tan, or white
- Multifilament, three twisted strands
- Used as mesh in drift gillnets

**Monofilament**
- Color: many colors, including clear
- Single strand of material
- Used as mesh in gillnets

**Cotton twine (untreated)**
- Color: white
- Degrades over time
- Used on traps for destructive device
California Nearshore Live Fish

**Line**
- Material: Poly-line
- Width: 5/16\textsuperscript{th} inch
- Color: Various colors

**Buoys**
- Bullet buoy with clear identification of owner
- License number + “B” (FGC § 9006)

**Trap Description**
- 2" x 2" mesh
- Finfish traps between Point Arguello and Point Montera shall have a rigid metal ring not greater than 5 inches in diameter affixed to opening of funnel (CCR § 180.4, Title 14)
- Destructive device required by law (FGC § 9003)

**Configuration**
- Single trap with one or more buoys

**Special Considerations**
- California nearshore trap permit allows for the commercial take of: black-and-yellow rockfish, gopher rockfish, kelp rockfish, California scorpionfish, greenlings, China rockfish, grass rockfish, California sheephead, and cabezon
- Can not leave gear to fish out overnight, trap door can be left open (FGC § 9001.7d)
- Deeper nearshore permit available but not included on map

**Trap limit**
- No more than 50 traps may be used in state waters along the mainland shore (FGC § 9001.7h)
California Nearshore Live Fish

Fishery distribution
Common depths fished: 0-20 fm

Geographic Range of Effort
- Entire coastline of California, up to five miles offshore
- Main ports include Morro Bay, Los Angeles and San Diego

General Fishing Season/Structure

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# Coonstripe Shrimp

## Line
- Material: Nylon and poly-blend common
- Width: 5/16\textsuperscript{th} or 3/8\textsuperscript{th} inch
- Color: white nylon or multicolored poly-blend

## Buoys
- Bullet buoy or polyball with clear identification of owner
- Pole, flag, light, radar reflector are also required in Oregon.

## Trap Description
- Tapered circular traps (Ladner Traps)
- ½ inch square cord mesh over a steel frame
- 39 inches in diameter by 16 inches tall
- Entry funnel = 3 inch diameter
- Destructive device required by law (FGC § 9003)

## Configuration
- Set of 10 to 15 traps connected to a long line
- Weighted at both ends and marked with a bullet buoy or polyball

## Marking Requirements
- California: Buoy needs to be marked with license number (FGC §9006)
- Oregon: Marked at each terminal end with a pole and a flag, light, radar reflector, and a buoy showing clear identification of the owner or operator (OAR 635-004-0035)

## Trap limit
- No limit, fishermen use 500 traps or less
Coonstripe Shrimp

Geographic Range of Effort
- Concentrated around Crescent City, California
- Some recent effort in southern Oregon, Brookings

General Fishing Season/Structure

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<th>Jan.</th>
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<td>California</td>
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<td>Oregon</td>
<td>(OAR 635-005-0205)</td>
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Dungeness Crab

Line
Material: Poly-blend, poly, or nylon
Width: 5/16th, 3/8th, or 7/16th inch
Color: Various colors

Buys
Bullet buoy with clear identification of owner
Trap tags required in Oregon and Washington

Trap Description
- Mainly circular steel frame, wrapped in rubber (some use plastic Fathoms Plus traps)
- 3 to 3.5 feet diameter is the most common
- Stainless steel wire mesh, 2”x 2”
- Traps weigh 60 to 120 pounds
- Two rigid circular escape rings greater than 4.5 inches inside diameter on the top or side of the trap, required in all three states
- Destructive device required by law in all three states; common material is untreated cotton twine or other natural fiber (FGC § 9003, OAR 635-005-0055, WAC 220-52-035)

Configurations
- CA/OR/WA: Single trap fished per line with one or more buoys attached

Gear Marking Requirements
- California: Buoy marked with license number (FGC § 9006)
- Oregon: Trap tag, buoy tag, and buoy marked with identification of vessel or owner (ORS §509.415, OAR 635-005-0055)
- Washington: Trap tag, buoy tag, and buoy marked with vessel identification or license number plus phone number; buoy colors unique to a license (WAC 220-52-040)
- Washington Indian tribes: Buoys branded with two digit number unique for each tribe followed by fishermen’s unique ID number

Trap limits
- California: No limit*
- Oregon: 200, 300, or 500 per permit
- Washington: 300 or 500 per permit

* As of 2013, a 7-tier trap limit system will be implemented, ranging from 175 to 500 traps per permit. Buoy tags will also be required, similar to Oregon and Washington
**Dungeness Crab**

**Fishery distribution**
- Common depths fished:
  - California: 10-40 fm
  - Oregon: 5-50 fm
  - Washington: 5-60 fm

**Geographic Range of Effort**
- Entire coastline, north of Point Conception, California

**General Fishing Season/Structure**

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Hagfish

**Line**
Material: Nylon, poly-blend and nylon blend
Width: 5/16\(^{th}\) or 3/8\(^{th}\) inch
Color: Various colors

**Buoys**
Large polyballs with clear identification of owner, pole, flag, light, and radar reflector

**Trap Description**

**California**
- 5 gallon buckets
- Korean cylindrical trap: molded plastic cylinder, not to extend 24 inches long and 6 inches in diameter (FGC § 9000.5)
- Destructive device required by law (FGC § 9003)

**Oregon**
- 5 gallon buckets
- 55 gallon plastic drums
- Destructive device required by law, must be biodegradable to create escape panel (OAR 635-004-0035)

**Washington**
- 55 gallon plastic drums
- Destructive device required by law, constructed of cotton twine, must leave at least 9.5 square inch opening (WAC 220-88E-030)

**Configuration**
- Strings of 10 to 20 traps, 20 drums per string is common
- Float line attached to ground line, weighted at both ends, traps attached to ground line at regular intervals
- Some use longline snaps to attach traps, some tie the trap to the line, depending on effort

**Trap limits**
- California: 200 bucket or 500 Korean cylindrical traps aboard vessel or in water (FGC § 9001.6b)
- Oregon: 200 per fishermen (OAR 635-004-0068)
- Washington: 100 per permit (WAC 220-88E-030)
Hagfish

Fishery distribution
Common depths fished: 50-125 fm

Geographic Range of Effort
- Entire coastline, concentrations in coastal Washington, Oregon and northern California
- Highest landings in the Coos Bay, Oregon region

General Fishing Season/Structure

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(No specific regulations)
Rock Crab

**Line**
Material: Poly-blend or nylon line  
Width: 5/16" or 3/8" inch  
Color: Various colors

**Buoys**
Bullet buoy or polyballs marked with license number; some fishermen use double bullet buoys for added floatation

**Trap Description**
- Common trap dimensions: 24" x 24" x 12"  
- Mesh: 1" x 1" 2" x 2", 2" x 4" wire mesh  
- Most traps have entry funnel on the top made of 6" diameter PVC pipe, some have entry funnels on side made of wire mesh  
- Must have at least one ring for escapement (3 ¼" diameter), two rings required if using less than 1 7/8 x 3 7/8 inch wire mesh (FGC § 9011)  
- Destructive device required by law (FGC § 9003)  
- Some use plastic Fathoms Plus traps

**Configuration**
- Most fish single traps with a single buoy  
- Some fish 5 to 25 traps connected to a common ground line

**Trap limit**
- No limit, 200 traps is common

Wire mesh trap with entry funnels and escape rings on top  
Fathoms Plus brand plastic traps are sometimes used
Rock Crab

**Geographic Range of Effort**
- Entire California coastline, including offshore islands
- Main port is Santa Barbara, with lower effort in Morro Bay, Los Angeles, and San Diego, and very little effort above Morro Bay

**Fishery distribution**
Common depths fished: 10-35 fm

**General Fishing Season/Structure**

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Sablefish Trap

**Line**
Material: Nylon, poly-blend, and nylon blend
Width: 5/16\textsuperscript{th} or 3/8\textsuperscript{th} inch
Color: Various colors

**Buoys**
Large polyball with clear identification of owner, pole, flag, light, and radar reflector
California: License number + “B” (FGC § 9006)

**Trap Description**
- Rectangular, conical, and trapezoidal traps
- 2"x 2" nylon mesh opening
- Conical shaped pots have collapsible bottoms
- Common sizes are 36" and 72" diameter
- Common height is between 28" to 32"
- California trap size limit: 96" diameter or less (FGC § 9001.8)
- Destructive device required by law on all traps: must leave 8 inch diameter opening (FGC § 9003, OAR 635-004-0035, WAC 220-44-030)

**Configuration**
- Open access fishery: One to four traps attached to float line, large polyball and pole, some use stings of traps
- Limited access fishery: Strings of traps, weighted at each end, 20 to 50 pots per line

**Trap limit**
- No limit, fisherman use 500 traps or less

**Management**
- Managed by the Pacific Fishery Management Council
- There are two ways to fish for sablefish: with a limited entry permit or open access
- Both the limited entry and open access fisheries are bound by trip limits (with associated tiers), limited entry has higher trip limits
- Limited entry permits are endorsed by gear type
Sablefish Trap

Geographic Range of Effort
- Fishing depths vary for open access and limited entry permit,
- Main ports: Newport, Astoria, Coos Bay, and Fort Bragg

General Fishing Season/Structure

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Spiny Lobster

Line
Material: Poly-blend
Width: 3/8th inch
Color: All, yellow and blue common

Buoy
Bullet buoy with clear identification of owner
California: License number + “P” (FGC § 9006)

Trap Description
- Rectangular traps made of wire or plastic
- 2”x 4” inch wire mesh
- Dimensions vary from 28"x 36"x 14" tall to 36"x 48" x 20" tall
- Heavier wire used along base of the trap if fishing at shallow depths, 10 to 20 fathoms
- Rectangular escape port required by law: 2 3/8 x 11 1/2 inches parallel to floor (FGC § 9010)
- Destructive device required by law; magnesium clips that degrade over time placed on trap door (FGC § 9003)
- Two entry funnels from outside, one funnel internally leading to holding area and bait

Configuration
- Single trap per line attached to one or more bullet buoys or small round floats
- Some fishermen attach lead every 20 feet to sink the float line in order to reduce risk of the line being cut by boat propellers

Trap limit
- No limit, 150 traps is common

Bullet buoys and small floats used in combination
Lobster traps with blue and red poly-line and long bullet buoys
Lobster traps with blue poly-line and freshly marked bullet buoys
Spiny Lobster

Fishery distribution
Common depths fished: 0–40 fm

Geographic Range of Effort
- California only – Point Conception to U.S./Mexico border
- Main ports: Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and San Diego

General Fishing Season/Structure

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Spot Prawn

**Line**
- Material: Poly-blend or nylon
- Width: 5/16\(^{th}\) inch
- Color: All colors

**Buoys**
- Large polyball with clear identification of owner, pole, flag, light, and radar reflector

**Trap Description**
- Rectangular wire mesh traps most common in California; round cord mesh traps most common in Oregon and Washington
- 1"x 1" mesh size is common
- Fathom Plus plastic traps can be used
- Wire trap dimensions: 3'x 1.5'x 1' with two chambers
- Traps attached to ground line with a pot snap (p. 34)
- Washington: maximum dimensions: 153" bottom perimeter and max 24" height (WAC 220-88B-040)
- Oregon: fish traps (p. 10) and sablefish traps (p. 9, 11) may also be used
- Destruction device required by law; escape size:
  - California: 5" diameter (§ 180.2, Title 14)
  - Oregon: 8 "diameter (OAR 635-004-0035)
  - Washington: 3"x 5" (WAC 220-88B-040)

**Configuration**
- Strings of traps can be up to one mile long
- Traps set 100 to 400 feet apart
- One large heavy weight at the front end of the string of traps
- California: 10-50 traps/string, Oregon: 60-80 traps/string, Washington: 50-100 traps/string

**Trap limits**
- California: 300 or 500 per permit
- Oregon: currently no limit
- Washington: 500 per permit
Spot Prawn

**Fishery distribution**
Common depths fished:
California: 100-150 fm
Oregon: 80-140 fm
Washington: 70-120 fm

**Geographic Range of Effort**
- Pockets of fishing effort in southern California, southern Oregon, and Washington

**General Fishing Season/Structure**

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Sablefish Longline

**Line**
Material: Sinking leaded line, nylon, or some are using poly-blend
Width: 5/16th inch
Color: Dark with lead core or various colors

**Buoys**
Large polyball with clear identification of the owner and each terminal end marked with a pole, flag, light, and radar reflector

**Configuration**
- The ground line is set on the bottom with an anchor (25-50 pounds) at each end
- Ground line can be up to 1.5 nautical miles
- Hooks are attached to the ground line every 3 to 4 feet using either a snap or tied on using a “gangion” made of nylon or monofilament line (see photo to left and photo on p. 36)
- Circle hooks, size 7/0, are common

**Management**
- Managed by the Pacific Fishery Management Council
- There are two ways to fish for sablefish: with a limited entry permit or open access
- Limited entry permits are endorsed by gear type

Tubs of longline gear
Sablefish Longline

Fishery distribution
Common depths fished: 100-450 fm

Geographic Range of Effort
- Fishery operates along the entire coastline
- Main landings occur in Washington, Oregon and northern California

General Fishing Season/Structure

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Pacific Halibut Longline

**Line**
- Material: Sinking leaded line or nylon
- Width: 5/16th to 3/8th inch
- Color: dark with lead core

**Buoys**
- Large polyball with clear identification of the owner and each terminal end marked with a pole, flag, light, and radar reflector

**Configuration**
- The ground line is set on the bottom with an anchor (25-50 pounds) at each end
- Ground line can be 3 nautical miles or more
- Up to 800 hooks are used per line
- Circle hooks, size 16/0, are common
- Hooks are attached to the ground line using a “gangion” made of nylon or monofilament line; can be tied (see photo) or attached via snap (p.34)

**Management**
- Managed by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (Area 2A: CA, OR, WA)
- Directed commercial fishery is restricted to ten-hour periods; fishing period based on vessel size
Pacific Halibut Longline

**Fishery distribution**
Common depths fished: 30-150 fm

**Geographic Range of Effort**
- Directed commercial fishery operates along the coastlines of Oregon and Washington; restricted from fishing north of Point Chehalis, Washington
- Treaty Indian tribes fish north of Point Chehalis, Washington

**General Fishing Season/Structure**

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California Halibut/White Seabass Set Gill Net

**Net**
Mesh Size: depends on the target species, 8.5 to 12 inches for California halibut or 6 inches for white seabass (FGC §8625, §8623)
Color: monofilament is clear with slight pink, green, or blue coloration.

**Line**
Float line: Polypropylene
Lead line: leaded poly-line
Mesh: monofilament common, can use nylon

**Buoys**
Large polyball with clear identification of the owner and each terminal end marked with a pole, flag, light, and radar reflector

**Configuration**
- Multiple panels of netting are connected and set using anchors
- Sinkers, or additional weight, may be attached to the lead line (see diagram)
- No more than 9000 feet of gillnet may be fished in combination (FGC §8625c)

**Gear Marking**
- Marked at terminal ends with buoys displaying fisherman’s identification (FGC § 8601.5)
- Each panel of net shall be marked along the top (float line) with fisherman’s identification number at least every 270 feet (FGC § 8601.5)
California Halibut/White Seabass Set Gill Net

Fishery distribution
Common depths fished: 10-50 fm

Geographic Range
- Southern California only, concentrated between 10 and 35 fathoms
- Main landings: Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and San Diego
- Fishery restricted from fishing within 3 miles of mainland and 1 mile from off-shore islands (FGC § 8610.1-8610.3)

General Fishing Season/Structure

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Fishing Gear From Other Regions

**Alaska**
Traps unique to this area include large conical and rectangular crab traps. The rectangular traps can be retrofitted to fish for Pacific cod, as well. Fishermen in Alaska also fish for prawns and shrimp with conical traps.

- **Conical crab pot**
  Dimensions: 88" base diameter x 32" tall, 27.5" top opening

- **Crab or Pacific Cod**

- **Rectangular crab traps**
  Made from galvanized steel and are covered with polypropylene mesh
  Dimensions: 89” x 89” x 36”

**Gear marking:** All buoys need to be marked with Alaska Department of Fish and Game numbers. King crab traps are marked individually with a trap tags similar to the dungeness crab fisheries in Oregon and Washington.

**British Columbia, Canada**
British Columbia commercial fishermen use traps similar to California, Oregon, and Washington for their dungeness crab, rock crab, spot prawn, and sablefish fisheries.

**Gear marking:** Vessel identification is required on either a tag, float, or buoy which is affixed to the fishing gear.

**Baja California, Mexico**
Baja California has many artisanal fisheries, which use handmade nets and traps. These fisheries likely use a wide variety of line and buoy types. Buoys can include plastic bottles. The Marine Stewardship Council certified a community-based lobster fishery in southern Baja California that uses traps similar to the ones in southern California.
Whale Information

Gray Whale
Body coloration mottled gray; frequently with whale lice on head; no dorsal fin; bumps, ridges or knuckles on tail stock; heart-shaped blow; flukes raised high above surface before deep dives; up to 46 feet in length; migrates from Alaska to Baja California; most observable October to July.

Humpback Whale
Body coloration dark grayish with black and white patches on underside; long white/black flippers (nearly 1/3 of body length); head covered with knobs or nodules; two-step dorsal fin; single rounded bushy blow; flukes raised before deep dives; up to 52 feet in length; migrates from coastal Central America and Mexico to southern British Columbia; most observable in May through September; endangered.

Blue Whale
Body coloration mottled bluish gray; very small dorsal fin situated far on the back; flukes often raised before dives; tall columnar blow; largest living animal up to 85 feet in length; migrates from coastal Mexico and Costa Rica to Oregon; most observable from May through September; endangered.

Fin Whale
Body coloration is solid grey to black above and white below with a chevron pattern behind head often visible from above; long streamlined body; sharp, variably shaped dorsal fin; tall columnar blow; rarely raises flukes when diving; up to 79 feet in length; the second-largest species of whale; can be seen year-round, but typically seen during the summer and winter months; endangered.

Sperm Whale
Body coloration is dark gray-brown; somewhat bushy blow angles forward and left; low, thick dorsal fin; adult males can reach 60 feet in length (females typically more than 36 feet); triangular flukes lift high at start of dive; usually encountered offshore in deep water; found year-round in California waters; reaches peak abundance from April through mid-June and from the end of August through mid-November; endangered.

Information from the California Whale Watching Guidelines, Drawing courtesy of Monica DeAngelis
Reporting injured, entangled, stranded or ship struck whales

24/7 Hotline: (877) SOS-WHAL (767-9425)

Record the following information to help responders

- Species
- Nature of distress
- General condition of whale
- General or specific location (GPS)
- Date
- Time of last sighting
- Approximate size/age class
- Is the animal moving?
  - Speed & heading
  - Weather/seas (wind, swell, visibility)
- Your name, vessel name/call sign

Ocean users can play an important role in efforts to save whales in distress from pain, deformity, and death. Please report injured, entangled, and ship-struck whales to the 24/7 hotline (877) SOS-WHAL or hail the U.S. Coast Guard on VHF CH-16. Prompt reporting is the best way to help the distressed animal. Standing by until responders can arrive is also valuable. The information you provide is necessary to launch an appropriate response and may also help reduce incidents in the future.

Safety first! Rescue attempts can be dangerous for would-be rescuers and the animal. Do not assist distressed marine mammals without guidance from authorities. Stay a safe distance away—100 yards minimum. Don’t touch, feed, pursue, disturb, or otherwise approach marine mammals unless authorized to do so.

If possible, draw an approximation (similar to diagram above) of the entanglement indicating lines, objects, color, and distinguishing marks on the whale.

Please be aware that it is sometimes not possible or appropriate to respond to every entanglement or otherwise distressed marine mammal. Ship-struck animals may be monitored and assessed.
Photographing Whales in Distress

Prompt reporting is the best way to help the distressed whale. Photographing the nature of the distress is very important, but please stay at least 100 yards away from the whale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whale</th>
<th>Entanglement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dorsal area (back)</td>
<td>Buoy(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fins</td>
<td>Line(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluke (tail)</td>
<td>Netting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Attached trap</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fluke with line and buoy

Head with line

Dorsal area with line and buoys

Head area with netting

Buoys trailing behind whale

Pectoral fin wrap

Photos provided by Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies taken under NOAA permit 932-1489, under the authority of the U.S. Endangered Species and Marine Mammal Protection Acts
References


Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) for Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Division 006. Accessed February 14, 2011. Available at: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/OARs/06.pdf


Photo/Diagram credits

Page 5: Sablefish trap configuration: Monica DeAngelis, Hagfish gear configuration diagram: Massachusetts Division of Fisheries


Page 7: Radar reflector: Russ Vetter, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

Page 8: Trap configuration photo: ODFW, Anatomy of a dungeness crab trap; Oregon dungeness crab pot tags: DeAnna Erickson and Cyreis Schmitt, ODFW

Page 9: Dungeness crab trap diagram: CDFG; Coonstripe shrimp: Brooke McVeigh, CDFG; Sablefish conical trap diagram: NMFS-AFSC-35; Sablefish trapezoid trap: Ladner traps, black cod

Page 10: Spot prawn and finfish traps: Steve Escobar, commercial fisherman


Page 15: Small mesh drift gillnet drawing: Manny Aschemeyer. 2006. Fishing nets deployed. Marine Exchange of Southern California, Drift gillnet pinger diagram: 50 C.F.R. Figure 1 to Part 229

Page 16: Special thanks to Englund Marine for supplying samples of fishing line

Page 18: Finfish traps: Steve Escobar, commercial fisherman

Page 20: Coonstripe shrimp trap: Brooke McVeigh, CDFG; coonstripe shrimp: J. Bieraugel
References

Page 22: Configuration photos: ODFW, Anatomy of a dungeness crab trap; Dungeness crab trap drawing: CDFG
Page 24: Hagfish funnel: Susan Scott, Honolulu Star; Korean trap diagram: Yamaha Fishery Journal, 1984; 5 gallon bucket: Dan Lawson, NMFS; Gear configuration diagram: Massachusetts Division of Fisheries
Page 28: Conical and rectangular trap diagrams: ORESU-G-08-002; Trapezoid trap: Ladner traps, black cod; Gear configuration diagram: NMFS-AFSC-35
Page 32: Bottom photo: Steve Escobar, commercial fisherman
Page 34: Configuration diagram: ORESU-G-03-010
Page 38: Configuration diagram: Yamaha Fishery Journal, 1984
Page 42: Diagrams courtesy of Monica DeAngelis and the California Whale Watching Guide
Page 43: Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies taken under NOAA permit 932-1489, under the authority of the U.S. Endangered Species and Marine Mammal Protection Act

**Unless noted above, all photos were taken by Lauren Saez, NMFS

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Marine Mammal/Sea Turtle team at the NMFS Southwest Regional Office for their support and edits. Special thanks to Sheila Garber of Englund Marine & Industrial Supply, Marlene Bellman of the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program, Charles Villafana of the NMFS Southwest Observer Program, Jim Benante of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, John LaFargue of the Northwest Fisheries Science Center and the many California, Oregon, and Washington state fishery managers and representatives for their feedback on fishery information and gear configuration. We would also like to thank Craig D’Angelo and Adam Obaza for help with fishery data, and Mathew Dorsey and Jeanne MacNeil with GIS assistance.

Unit conversions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversion</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 millimetre (1 mm) = 0.039 inch</td>
<td>1 inch = 25.38 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 centimetre (1 cm) = 0.393 inch</td>
<td>1 inch = 2.54 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 metre (1 m) = 3.281 feet</td>
<td>1 foot = 0.305 m</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 metre (1 m) = 0.546 fathoms</td>
<td>1 fathom = 1.83 m</td>
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## Appendix—Scientific Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black-and-yellow rockfish</td>
<td><em>Sebastes chrysomelas</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue whale</td>
<td><em>Balaenoptera musculus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cabezon</td>
<td><em>Scorpaenichthys marmoratus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>California barracuda</td>
<td><em>Sphyraena angentae</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>California halibut</td>
<td><em>Paralichthys californicus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>California scorpionfish</td>
<td><em>Scorpaena guttata</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>California sheephead</td>
<td><em>Semicossyphus pulcher</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>California spiny lobster</td>
<td><em>Panulirus interruptus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>China rockfish</td>
<td><em>Sebastes nebulosus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coonstripe shrimp</td>
<td><em>Pandalus danae</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dungeness Crab</td>
<td><em>Cancer magister</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fin whale</td>
<td><em>Balaenoptera physalus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gopher rockfish</td>
<td><em>Sebastes carnatus</em></td>
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<td>Grass rockfish</td>
<td><em>Sebastes rastrelliger</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gray whale</td>
<td><em>Eschrichtius robustus</em></td>
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<td>Hagfish</td>
<td><em>Eptatretus stoutii</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Humpback whale</td>
<td><em>Megaptera novaengliae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelp Greenling</td>
<td><em>Hexagrammos decagrammus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelp rockfish</td>
<td><em>Sebastes atrovirens</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific angel shark</td>
<td><em>Squatina californica</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific halibut</td>
<td><em>Hippoglossus stenolepis</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rock Crab (yellow, brown, red)</td>
<td><em>Cancer angyoni, Cancer antennarius, Cancer productus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sablefish</td>
<td><em>Anoplopoma fimbria</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shortfin mako shark</td>
<td><em>Isurus oxyrinchus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sperm whale</td>
<td><em>Physeter macrocephalus</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spot prawn</td>
<td><em>Pandalus platyceros</em></td>
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<td>Swordfish</td>
<td><em>Xiphias gladius</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thresher shark</td>
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<td>White seabass</td>
<td><em>Atractoscion nobilis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowtail</td>
<td><em>Seriola lalandi</em></td>
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</table>
Contact Information
Protected Resources Division
Southwest Regional Office
National Marine Fisheries Service
501 West Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802-4213
Website: http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/psd/prd.htm
Phone: (562) 980-4000