

Commercial Hagfish Traps: Proposed Minimum Hole Diameter



Photo Credit:
College of Charleston

Fish and Game Commission Meeting

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Marine Region



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Presentation Overview

- Fishery background
- Current regulations
- Department trap study
- Proposed regulation

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Pacific Hagfish (*Eptatretus stoutii*)

- Ecologically important
- Relatively low productivity



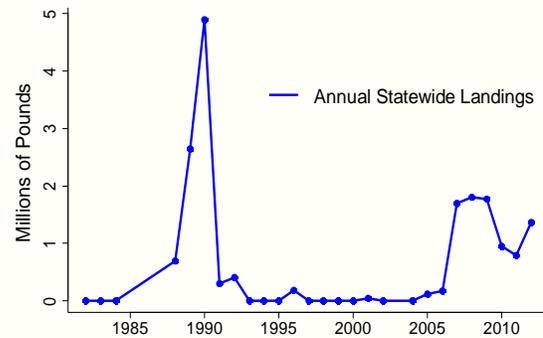
Photo Credit: University of Guelph



Photo Credit: NOAA Fisheries

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Commercial Fishery in CA



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Summary of Current Regulations

- General trap permit required
- Destruct device required
- 200 bucket traps or 500 Korean-style traps
- May only retain hagfish



Photo Credit: T. Tanaka, CDFW

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The Bucket Trap



Photo Credit: CDFW file photo

- Industry preferred method in California
- Hagfish enter through funnel or "cone" on lid
- Small hagfish escape through trap holes

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Effect of Hole Diameter on Catch Characteristics

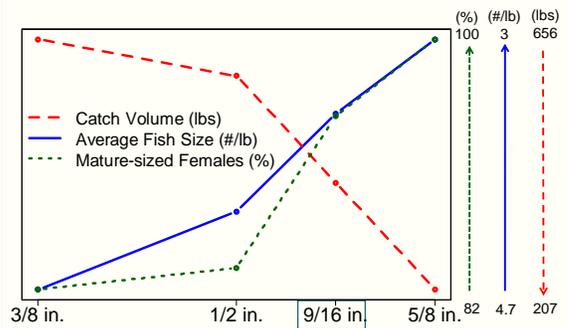
- Department-fisherman collaborative study
- Tested hagfish traps with four hole diameters
- Evaluated effects on:
 - Catch volume
 - Average size (market quality)
 - Immature fish retention



CDFW file photo

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Hole Size Study Results



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Proposed Regulation

- Department recommends a minimum hole diameter of 9/16 inch for any trap used in the fishery
- 9/16 inch provides conservation benefit without significant economic impact
- Serves as a precautionary measure

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Questions ♦ Thank You



CDFW file photo

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