

ENFORCEMENT CONSULTANTS REPORT ON FINAL CHANGES TO ROUTINE MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The Enforcement Consultants (EC) continue to support vessel marking Alternative 3, requiring all highly migratory species (HMS) charter boats to display their official number on the weather deck, visible from the air, for the following reasons.

- The numbers of foreign fishing vessels entering U.S. waters continues to rise. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration currently has three open cases under investigation where Mexican flagged vessels have been observed fishing in U.S. waters. The California charter boat group has reported increases in the number of Mexican vessels observed entering and fishing in U.S. waters.
- Preventing foreign vessels from taking U.S. resources, and in this case valuable HMS will be enhanced with the ability to distinguish between U.S. and foreign vessels from the air under Alternative 3 (from U.S. Coast Guard over-flights for example). This will allow at-sea enforcement to target suspect vessel incursions that lack visible official numbers. Without them, only helicopters can effectively be used. With official numbers on the weather deck C-130s can be used and more fisheries enforcement flights over a larger area can be accomplished.
- The EC understands that this currently is only a Southern California issue but the requirements would apply coastwide under the options provided. The Council may want to discuss limiting the rule to some area in Southern California. Currently Oregon and Washington have a very small HMS charter vessel fleet and no real need to over fly this fleet has been identified.

The EC supports bag limit Alternative 2 which would implement a statewide limit of 25 albacore per angler per day off California. This alternative creates a consistent albacore limit in and within all three western states. Maintaining a single consistent statewide limit keeps regulations simple for anglers and enforcement personnel.