

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON VESSEL MOVEMENT MONITORING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a report on vessel movement monitoring by Mr. Brett Wiedoff.

In general, the GAP agrees with the ranges of alternatives listed in the [vessel movement monitoring scoping document](#) for all four management measure topics. We appreciate Council staff working with the Enforcement Consultants (EC), doing much of the research and compiling the information.

The GAP does not propose dropping any of the proposed alternatives from consideration. We suggest adding one analysis under Management Measure 1, and rewording some for clarity.

Management Measure 1 – Monitoring for Continuous Transit

The GAP agrees with the range of alternatives and requests the clarification that in the No Action Alternative, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) currently has the ability to increase the ping rate for a vessel suspected of behavior not characteristic of their fishing method, whether trawl, non-trawl, etc.

We request an analysis under all the alternatives that would allow the possibility for a lower ping rate when a fisherman declares in a fishery other groundfish.

Management Measure 2 – Removal of Derelict Crab Pots from Rockfish Conservation Areas

The GAP agrees these alternatives should move forward, as derelict crab gear can cause significant gear entanglement problems for other sectors, such as the salmon troll fleet and the midwater and shrimp trawl fleets. The Council has received public comment on this issue in the past and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) felt it important enough to request consideration as well, in a [report to the Council in September 2014](#). Furthermore, the groundfish fleet wants to be good stewards of the ocean; removing derelict gear is a simple but effective way to help achieve that goal.

As noted in the ODFW report, “Efforts to remove derelict gear helps reduce gear conflicts and navigation hazards, facilitate good relations with other fisheries and ocean users, reduce chances of marine mammal entanglements, and reduce ghost fishing.”

Therefore, the GAP suggests clarification that adding a new declaration process to the existing declaration system should be made so a groundfish vessel can stop to retrieve a derelict crab pot in the Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA). State or Federal OLE can meet the boat at the dock to verify a crab pot was retrieved, if necessary.

Management Measure 3 – Fishery Declaration Enhancements (Gear Testing and Whiting Fishery Declaration Changes)

Though all the gear testing alternatives seem to cover all gear types, the GAP requests clarification that limited entry midwater vessels are included. This would ensure that vessels that may fish in Alaska but are homeported in Washington, Oregon or California have the opportunity to test new engines or equipment prior to leaving port to head north, whether a mid-water season is open or closed off the West Coast.

Management Measure 4 – Movement of IFQ Fishpot Gear Across Management Lines

The GAP has no recommended changes; the range of alternatives should be sufficient to move forward.

PFMC
04/14/15