

PRELIMINARY EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT APPROVAL

Exempted fishing permits (EFPs) provide a process for testing innovative fishing gears and strategies to substantiate methods for prosecuting sustainable and risk-averse fishing opportunities. Four EFP applications were submitted for Council consideration at this meeting, as listed in the following table.

Sponsor	Short Description	Agenda I.2 Attachment Number	Additional Set-Aside Requested
The Nature Conservancy	Testing selective harvest of lingcod with pot gear	Attachment 1	No
United Catcher Boats	Mothership processing of Pacific whiting south of 42° N. Lat.	Attachment 2	No
Pacific Whiting Conservation Cooperative	Catcher-processor processing of Pacific whiting south of 42° N. Lat.	Attachment 3	No
Scott Cook	Midwater hook & line rockfish fishing in the rockfish conservation area (RCA) off the Oregon coast	Attachment 4	Yes (see Table 6)

The EFP presented by Scott Cook includes a number of specifically identified areas for direction by the Council and/or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):

- “If desired by the Council, dead incidental catch of protected species can be retained for research and biological samples” (under “Disposition of Catch” on page 2).
- “...up to 120 fishing days in total for all vessels combined are requested...” (under “Total Duration of the EFP” on page 3).
- “If requested by the Council, a mainline can be attached below the 40 foot mark to function as a ‘control’ for the mainline attached above 40 feet” (bottom of page 5).
- “Harvest Caps: Based on feedback from the Council and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), each vessel will have either a daily harvest cap or a trip harvest cap for target species and yelloweye rockfish. If caps are attained based on catch accounting enumerated by the observer, fishing for the day or trip will cease” (top of page 10).
- “Depth recorders can be attached if desired” (under “Gear Configuration Data” on page 10)

Finally, a progress report on an EFP approved for 2015-2016, “Exempted Fishing Permit Testing Commercial Jig Fishing Gear Targeting Yellowtail Rockfish for 2015/2016 Groundfish Fisheries,” is provided in Attachment 5. The sponsors of this EFP are not requesting consideration for a new EFP in 2015-2016.

The Council should review these EFP applications, consider public and advisory body comments, and consider moving the 2017-2018 EFP applications forward for public review. Any recommended modifications to EFP applications will be communicated to the EFP sponsors and the public. The Council is scheduled to decide their final recommendations for 2017-2018 EFPs at the June 2016 meeting in Tacoma, Washington.

Council Action:

1. **Consider EFP applications for 2017-2018 and provide preliminary recommendations for public review.**
2. **Adopt yield set-asides to accommodate those EFPs recommended for public review.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.2, Attachment 1: Collaborative fishing to test pot gear for selective harvest of lingcod off of Washington and Oregon.
2. Agenda Item I.2, Attachment 2: EFP Proposal by United Catcher Boats.
3. Agenda Item I.2, Attachment 3: EFP Application for At-sea Processing of Pacific Whiting by Catcher-Processor (CP) Vessels South of 42 Degrees North Latitude.
4. Agenda Item I.2, Attachment 4: Commercial Midwater Hook & Line Rockfish Fishing in the RCA off the Oregon coast.
5. Agenda Item I.2, Attachment 5: Interim Report: Exempted Fishing Permit Testing Commercial Jig Fishing Gear Targeting Yellowtail Rockfish For 2015/2016 Groundfish Fisheries.

Agenda Order:

- I.2 Preliminary Exempted Fishing Permit Approval
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt Preliminary EFPs for Public Review

Jim Seger

PFMC
10/20/15