

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON AUTHORIZATION OF DEEP-SET BUOY GEAR AND FEDERAL PERMITTING

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) report included in the advanced briefing book on this agenda item is a summary of potential deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) authorization approaches. The HMSMT understands that its preliminary range of alternatives (ROA) may be refined or expanded based on Council guidance at the June 2017 meeting. With the extent of the considerations to be included under the ROA, the HMSMT included alternatives to best fit the potential need and purpose for DSBG authorization.

The HMSMT discussed a drift gillnet (DGN) permit trade-in program as an option under its limited entry DSBG permit alternative. Based on discussions at both the [NMFS listening session](#) and the HMSMT meeting in April, the HMSMT concluded that a DGN permit trade-in option would not fully address constituent objectives or concerns. DGN permit holders in attendance did not express interest in trading their DGN permit for a DSBG permit, especially when the DSBG fishery has yet to be proven economically sound and viable over the long term. Other constituents supported a trade-in option with the expressed goal of reducing bycatch. This goal would not be achieved by a permit trade-in alternative if active DGN fishermen are not interested in such an option. Further, trade-in of latent DGN permits would not reduce bycatch since latent permits have no bycatch.

Performance Criteria for Fishery Access in Areas with Limited EFP Activity

In areas north of Point Conception, little or no EFP activity has been conducted to date and it may take several years to obtain additional site-specific information. HMSMT discussion centered on ideas, such as performance criteria, that could be used to support successful implementation of a DSBG fishery in these areas while minimizing negative effects, if any, of fishing, and gaining information to potentially reduce or eliminate the need for application of performance criteria for future permit issuance. Should the Council wish to authorize DSBG prior to completion of EFP effort in these areas, the HMSMT suggests the following examples of performance criteria which could be used in an ROA for permitting vessels in areas with limited or no data available.

A permit may be issued to fish in such areas to an applicant who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- a) Level of prior participation in a DSBG exempted fishing permit (EFP)
- b) A specified initial number of fishing days must be observed (e.g., 10; comparable to an EFP)
- c) Participation in a workshop or other training on DSBG fishing practices

Potential Number of Permits under Limited Entry Criteria

In Agenda Item H.3.a, HMSMT Report, the HMSMT indicated that they did not have sufficient time to summarize the potential number of DSBG permits that would be authorized should the Council choose to use a specific criterion as a qualification for a future DSBG permit. The table below provides the number of DSBG permits for each criterion listed in the HMSMT report and

June 2017 [Pew](#) and [Oceana](#) public comment. The criteria numbers listed in Table 1 correspond to the order of permitting alternatives as specified in the HMSMT report.

Some fishermen may qualify under multiple criteria, but overlap between each was not calculated, except for the overlap as identified in the Oceana and Pew public comment permitting parameters. The Council may wish to direct the HMSMT to evaluate any combination of the criteria for the September meeting and/or request the HMSMT develop suggested alternatives based on Council and public input.

Table 1. Number of potential DSBG permits for each qualifying criterion.

Criterion Number	Limited Entry Criterion	Number of DSBG Permits
	Possession of DGN permit:	
1	2017-18 season	65
2	2016-17 season	70
3	Last 5 seasons (12-17)	89
4	Last 10 seasons (07-17)	105
	Active Use of DGN permit:	
5	2017-18 season	0
6	2016-17 season	20
7	Last 5 seasons (12-17)	25
8	Last 10 seasons (07-17)	52
	Possession of Harpoon permit:	
9	2017-18 season	37
10	2016-17 season	54
11	Last 5 seasons (12-17)	96
12	Last 10 seasons (07-17)	166
	Active Use of Harpoon permit:	
13	2017-18 season	0
14	2016-17 season	17
15	Last 5 seasons (12-17)	28
16	Last 10 seasons (07-17)	59
	EFPs (Number of Vessels):	
17	Issued by NMFS	12
18	All Submitted to Date	24
19	Active use of EFP	7
	DGN Control Date (6/23/2014):	
20	Prior	48
21	After	24
	June 2017 Public Comments:	
22	Oceana proposal ¹	up to 116
23	Pew proposal ²	up to 61

¹ Trade in DGN permit and/or swordfish landings w/ DGN, harpoon or EFP in last 5 years

² Made DGN landings in past 7 years plus 2 DSBG permits per DGN permit trade-in for fishermen active in last 5 years

Bottom Depth Restriction Option

In Agenda Item H.3.a, HMSMT Report, all alternatives for the geographic area in which the DSBG fishery may be authorized specify Federal waters, 3 - 200 nautical miles. In addition, the HMSMT included potential consideration of a depth restriction for the DSBG fishery to waters deeper than 150 fathoms. Four maps showing both the 3-mile and 150-fathom depth boundaries are presented below for the west coast and for each state.

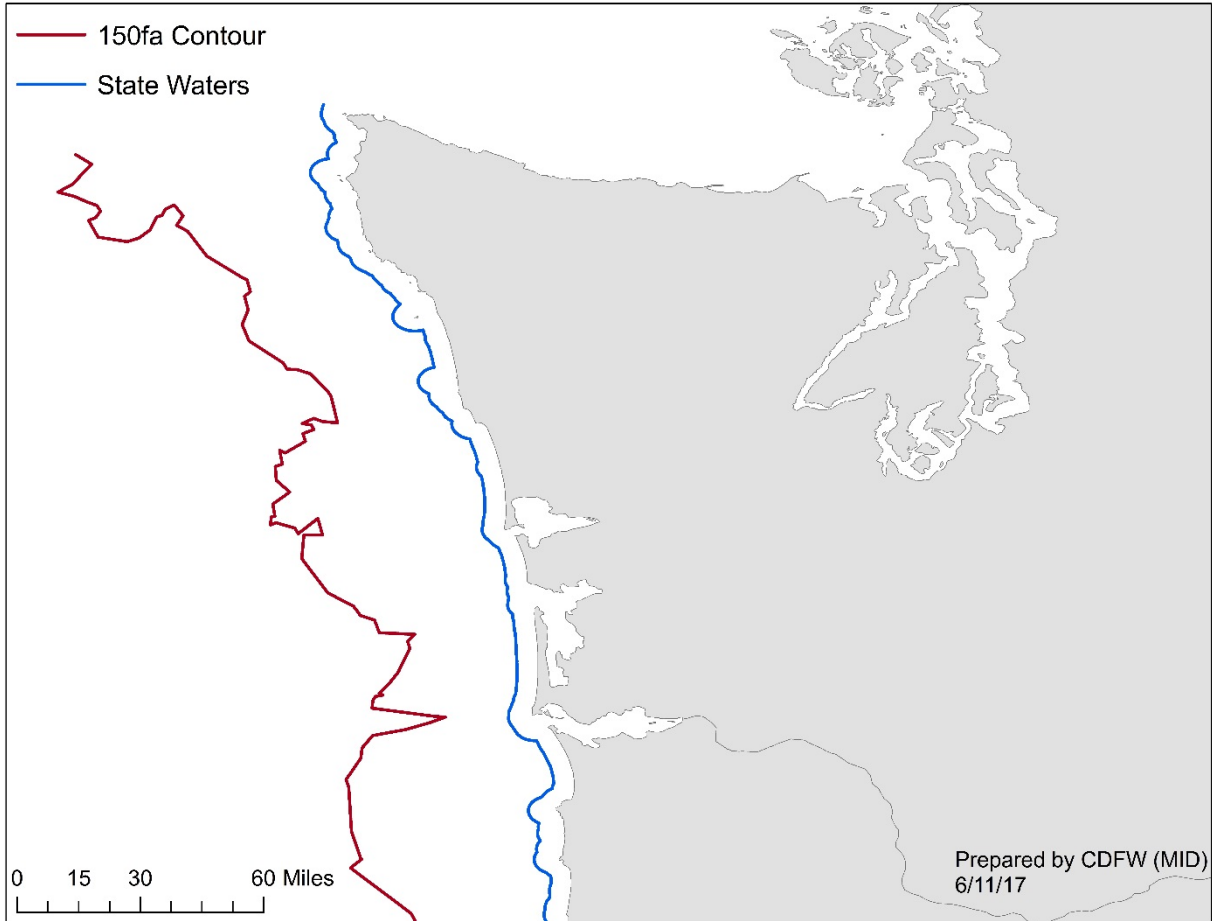


Figure 1. Washington coastline with contours depicting the 150 fathom isobath (red) and 3 mile state water boundary (blue).

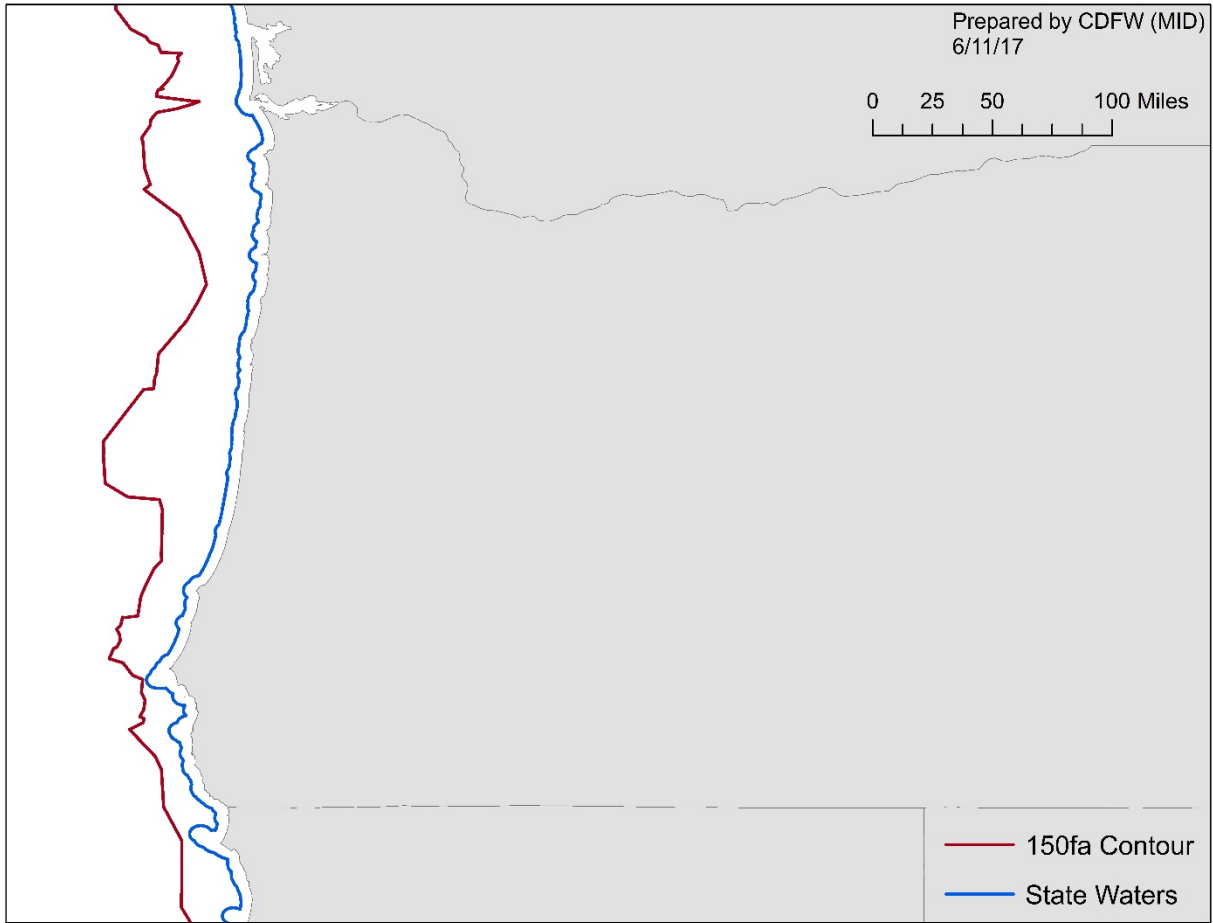


Figure 2. Oregon coastline with contours depicting the 150 fathom isobath (red) and 3 mile state water boundary (blue).

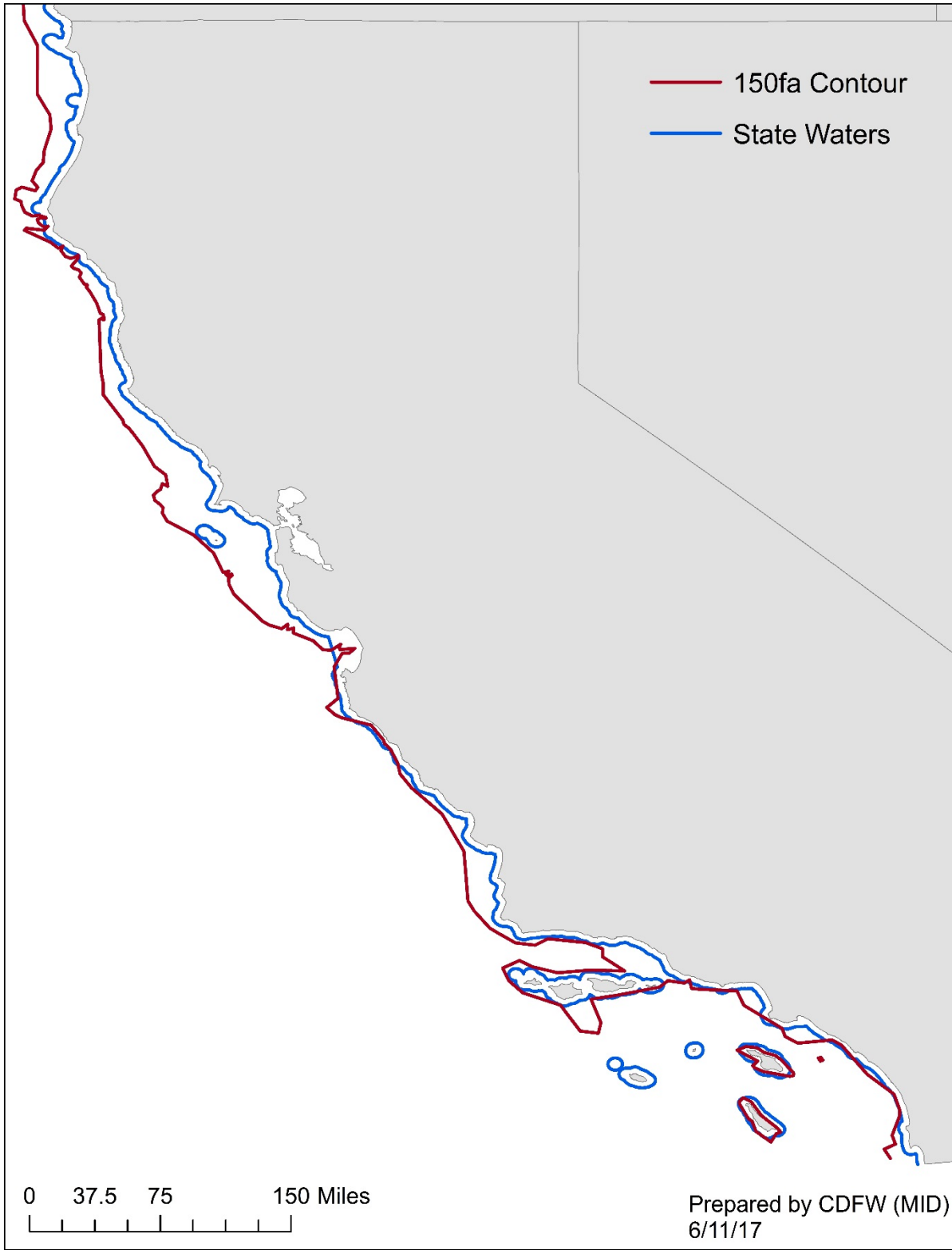


Figure 3. California coastline with contours depicting the 150 fathom isobath (red) and 3 mile state water boundary (blue).

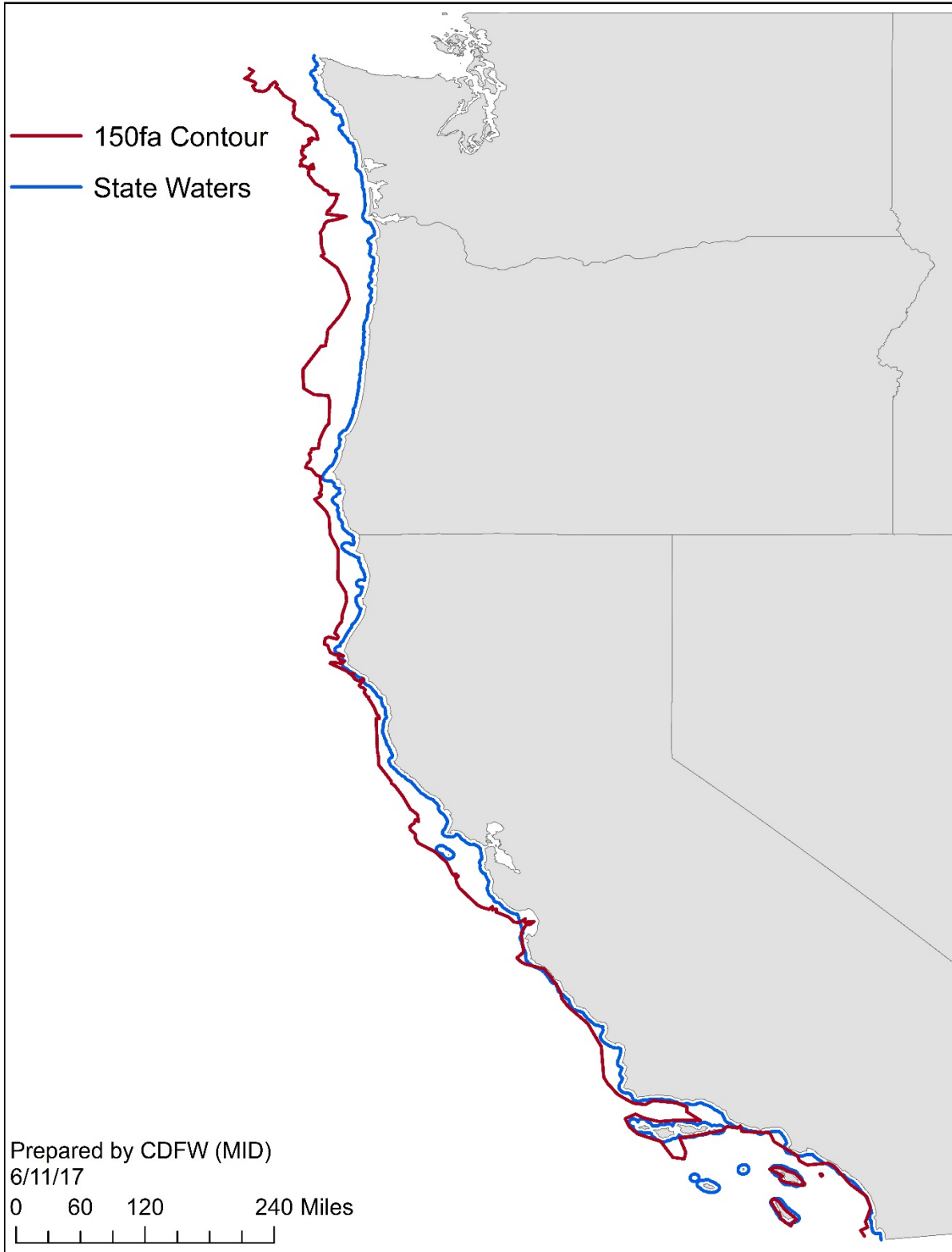


Figure 4. US West Coast coastline south of Pt. Conception with contours depicting the 150 fathom isobath (red) and 3 mile state water boundary (blue).