

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON IMPLEMENT 2014 PACIFIC
WHITING FISHERY UNDER THE U.S.-CANADA PACIFIC WHITING AGREEMENT

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) had a brief discussion about the off-the-top deduction for Pacific whiting for 2014. The GMT had heard from industry on concerns that the off-the-top deduction for research of 2,500 mt in previous years might be too high for 2014, given that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) acoustic survey may not occur. The GMT conferred with NMFS West Coast Region (WCR) staff who track research catch.

In 2013, there was approximately 1,100 mt of Pacific whiting taken in scientific research activities, less than 14 mt of which came from midwater trawls that occurred during the NMFS acoustic survey. For 2014, anticipated research take is anticipated to be approximately 1,100 mt, even without the acoustic survey. In recent years, the majority of Pacific whiting take in scientific research is from gear testing projects that are anticipated to continue in 2014.

The GMT is not aware of the details of what research programs are proposed for 2014. However, the GMT expects that the estimated increased biomass of Pacific whiting may lead to higher catch rates of Pacific whiting relative to rockfish. Therefore, any research on excluder devices may result in larger Pacific whiting catches than previous years.

PFMC
04/07/14