

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
ELECTRONIC MONITORING SCOPING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a report from Mr. Brett Wiedoff about scoping for electronic monitoring (EM) and the proceedings of the initial Groundfish Electronic Monitoring (GEM) Workgroup meeting. The GAP offers the following comments and recommendations.

Development and implementation of an electronic monitoring option for monitoring in the catch share program remains the GAP's highest priority. As highlighted in previous statements, the GAP believes that electronic monitoring offers significant potential to reduce monitoring costs while providing additional flexibility. With overall program costs continuing to rise and more and more fishermen noting missed trips or delays in trips due to observer scheduling issues, it is imperative that the Council develop and implement electronic monitoring in the near term.

The GAP believes that the discussions and scoping meetings on EM to date have been incredibly helpful, and feels like the time is right to capitalize on that momentum. The GAP requests that the Council encourage industry and other stakeholders to bring specific proposals for EM alternatives to the next Groundfish Electronic Monitoring (GEM) meeting in October to help flesh out a reasonable range of alternatives.

On a related matter, the GAP understands that substantial work was done in Amendment 10 with respect to how EM might be developed for the whiting fishery. However, the GEM Workgroup and interested stakeholders have not been able to get access to that document. We don't understand why we are being prevented from taking advantage of work that has already been done and would appreciate clarification on what the problem is. We recognize that the rule was never finalized, but we believe that the preliminary work contained in that document could help speed the process and reduce administrative burden.

PFMC  
09/15/13