

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed exempted fishing permit (EFP) applications and offers the following comments on three of them.

Fosmark/chilipepper longline EFP: The GAP believes this EFP does not entail a lot of workload issues for managers, and the terms and conditions of the EFP are being met. Therefore, we suggest this EFP move forward to the next management cycle.

San Francisco Fishermen's Cooperative-Dan Platt/midwater vertical hook-and-line gear: Mr. Dan Platt provided the GAP with an interim report on this EFP and requested some modest changes in order to provide some flexibility and continue to test the effectiveness of this fishing method.

The EFP has been successful so far at harvesting increased amounts of targeted midwater species, and shows promise for minimizing impacts to overfished species (OFS). At the same time, proponents of the EFP were constrained by the very low set-asides of yelloweye rockfish (the equivalent of two or three fish). This created an odd situation: two large yelloweye were caught, leaving a very low margin of error and insufficient pounds to continue to test the gear; fishing had to be stopped for the year.

Therefore, the EFP sponsors are requesting an increase in yelloweye set-asides, from 0.01 metric tons, or 22 pounds, to 0.03 mt, or 66 pounds in 2014. The GAP supports this increase, since it will have zero to minimal impact overall and will not affect other sectors. This small increase will allow the EFP to continue to test the worth of this alternative gear. Furthermore, this set-aside amount should be included in the 2015-16 biennial specifications cycle.

The GAP also supports the request to modify the EFP to allow four lines of 25 hooks instead of two lines with 50 hooks. The EFP proponents said using a fishing pole with 50 hooks is simply unmanageable.

The proponents also request the outside depth restriction be changed from 100 fathoms to 150 fathoms to allow one of the vessels to target chilipepper rockfish. The GAP supports this change as well.

F/V San Giovanni-Jiri Nozicka/electronic monitoring EFP: The GAP heard a presentation from Mr. Jiri Nozicka regarding a proposed EFP to allow electronic monitoring and full retention without an observer on board.

The GAP understands the San Giovanni situation is unique, but also likely indicative of potential future problems with observer coverage in the trawl rationalization program, particularly in small ports. The San Giovanni cannot obtain observer coverage in Monterey due to extenuating circumstances and has not been able to fish for the last six months.

This situation results in a fisherman who has faithfully participated in the program and secured quota but cannot prosecute the fishery in which he has participated for several years. This is unacceptable.

The GAP readily admits this issue is a little ahead of schedule and that the issue of electronic monitoring as a whole will be considered later this week. However, we request the Council give consideration to this particular situation.

GAP discussion centered around whether full retention would be a problem, for what purpose the EM/video would be used, whether this could be implemented in 2014, and the potential for this single situation to become widespread in the trawl fleet.

Mr. Nozicka said full retention would not be an issue, as he's worked to develop markets for underutilized species.

He also stated the video would be used for confirmation of logbook catch recordings as well as species identification, if that is something that can be tested at this stage of electronic monitoring.

The GAP supports this EFP, recognizing there are other vessels that would like to take advantage of the opportunity but acknowledging National Marine Fisheries Service may not be ready to implement it in 2014. However, the reason EFPs are timed with the biennial specifications process is to allow for set-asides. This EFP would require none, as the San Giovanni has its own quota to use. At the very least, the GAP feels this EFP should move forward in 2015-16 and could be expanded to include more of the trawl fleet as progress is made on electronic monitoring issues.

SUMMARY:

1. **Fosmark EFP:** Move forward for the 2015-16 management cycle.
2. **SF CFA-Dan Platt EFP:** Move forward to 2015-16 with these modifications:
 - Increase yelloweye set-asides from 22 pounds to 66 pounds in both 2014 and the 2015-16 specifications cycle;
 - Change the EFP to allow four lines of 25 hooks each (instead of two lines with 50 hooks); and
 - Change the outside depth from 100 fathoms to 150 fathoms.
3. **F/V San Giovanni-Jiri Nozicka electronic monitoring EFP:** Move forward for the 2015-16 management cycle. If at all possible, allow for an off-cycle EFP in 2014.

PFMC
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