

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON ELECTRONIC MONITORING ALTERNATIVES

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) received a presentation from Mr. Brett Wiedoff (Council staff) regarding the draft alternatives, a presentation from Mr. Dayna Matthews (National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS], Office of Law Enforcement), and reviewed and discussed the materials under this agenda item. The GMT would like to thank Mr. Wiedoff and Mr. Matthews for their time to present and answer questions from the GMT.

The GMT supports the full range of alternatives for electronic monitoring (EM) regulations described in [Agenda Item H.8.a, Attachment 1](#). We offer the following additional thoughts:

- The alternative to phase in the EM program using maximized retention first should be included for further consideration, acknowledging that there must be a clear and appropriate definition of what “maximized retention” means; and
- EM should be considered for both individuals and groups (e.g., EM co-ops) for now, as there are tradeoffs that still need to be further explored.

One of the biggest implications with EM for management of the catch shares fisheries is verifying discard. As part of development of an EM program, methods for estimating discards that EM misses are essential. The GMT is supportive of programs to gather additional information.

Regarding the exploration of programs designed to gather additional information to inform the development of an EM program, the GMT discussed two possible paths:

- If designed properly, an exempted fishing permit (EFP) will collect information that can inform an evaluation of the most effective methods to achieve objectives over a wide range of conditions, prior to implementing a full-scale EM program.
- Alternately, implementation of EM could be achieved by continuing ongoing field trial research currently underway, while dedicating staff time toward the required National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis (also necessary in an EFP process), the proposed and final rulemaking process.
- Whether an EFP or a proposed and final rulemaking process were to occur, the design of either path should be developed and planned by various entities knowledgeable about information needed from the EFP (e.g., NMFS, Groundfish Electronic Monitoring Policy Advisory Committee [GEMPAC], Council advisory group members and Council Staff, State, non-government organizations [NGOs], members of the fishing industry, etc.). Industry interested in the program would then apply, with some incentive, to evaluate the most effective methods.

The GMT supports continued work by the GEMPAC and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) at their next meeting, currently scheduled for January of 2014.