

HMSMT Report on Drift Gillnet Management

Highly Migratory Species Management Team
March 2014 Pacific Fishery Council Meeting
Sacramento, California

Overview

- Background on Motion
- Elements HMSMT was asked to address
- Recommendations

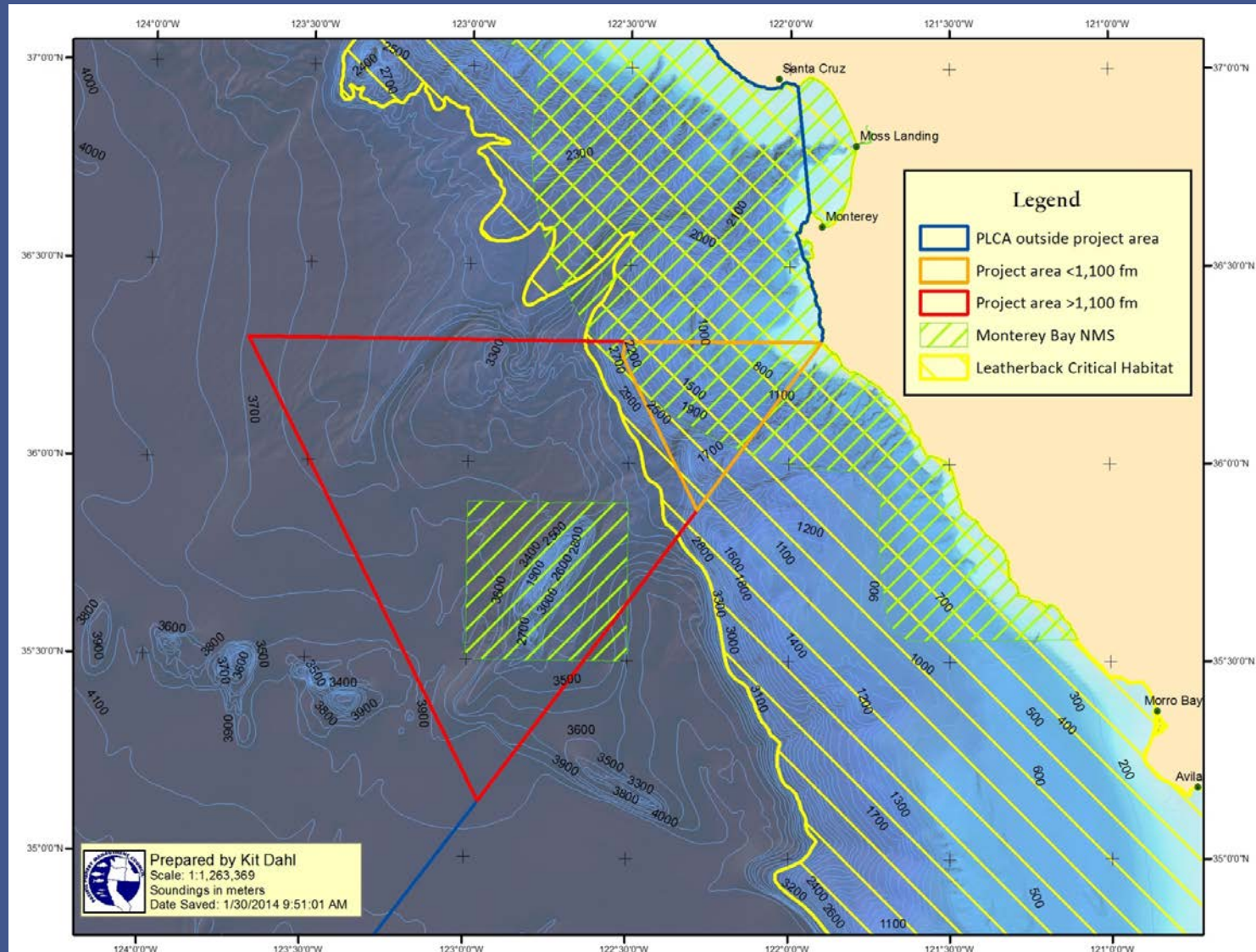
Background

- In March 2012, the Council received information on the status and prospects of the west coast swordfish fishery.
- The Council directed the HMSMT to determine if any changes could be made for the closure dates or the southern boundary of the PLCA.

Background

- In March 2013 the HMSMT presented a preliminary analysis of opening the area south of Point Sur for specified portions of the closure period.
- The Council asked the HMSMT to analyze the impact of opening up a triangle-shaped area south of Pt. Sur out to 100 miles (Area Under Consideration).

Area Under Consideration (AUC)



Elements for HMSMT to address

- Access to AUC for vessels with both observer and VMS coverage
- Estimate future effort levels in the AUC
- Evaluate present and past target and non-target interaction rates in the AUC
- Explore managing DGN fishery with hard caps on incidental takes
- Evaluate whether 20% observer coverage is adequate for estimating bycatch
- Evaluate the use of VMS for compliance

Observed Leatherback and Swordfish BPUE/CPUE by Area and Season, 1990-2000

	Closed Season, AUC (Aug 15-Nov 15)	Open Season, AUC (Nov 16-Jan 31)	Non-PLCA
Observed Effort (Sets)	321	49	3889
Swordfish Catch (Counts)	976	102	6368
Swordfish CPUE	3.0405	2.0816	1.6374
Leatherback Takes (Counts)	2	0	4
Leatherback BPUE	0.006231	0	0.001029
Leatherback- Swordfish BPUE/CPUE	0.002049	0	0.0006281

Estimated bycatch rates for selected Species of Concern (1990-2012)

All Cetaceans

	Open Area	PLCA	AUC
Observed bycatch	486	170	46
Observed sets	6,139	2,226	389
Bycatch per 100 sets (CV)	7.9 (0.06)	7.6 (0.10)	11.8 (0.22)

Leatherback turtles

	Open Area	PLCA	AUC
Observed bycatch	6	19	2
Observed sets	6,139	2,226	389
Bycatch per 100 sets (CV)	0.098 (0.41)	0.85 (0.22)	0.51 (0.68)

Sperm Whale

	Open Area	PLCA	AUC
Observed bycatch	4	6	3
Observed sets	6,139	2,226	389
Bycatch per 100 sets (CV)	0.065 (0.71)	0.27 (0.57)	0.77 (0.58)

Observer Coverage and VMS

- 20% observer coverage is a target based on rare-event sampling design study (Barlow, 1989)
- 30% coverage rate is a target based on NMFS National Bycatch Report (more is better)
- Approximately 34% observer coverage rate for 2013-14 season (one season funding infusion)
- Preliminary estimates show 19 active vessels made 559 sets in 2013-14 season so far
- All 19 vessels had operational VMS units

Comparison of Bycatch Rates Pre-2001 and Post-2000 (Bycatch per 100 sets)*

Period	All Cetaceans	Leatherbacks	Sperm Whales
Pre-2001	8.77	0.385	0.134
Post-2000	5.52	0.084	0.084
Pct Change	-37.1%	-78.3%	-37.5%

* HMSAS requested information

HMSMT Recommendation

- If the Council chooses to open the AUC, exclude leatherback critical habitat from the AUC

Catch rates for selected finfish in the AUC compared to the area outside PLCA

- Swordfish catch rate ↑ inside closed area

