

CONTROL DATE FOR LIMITED ENTRY

Situation: At the November 1999 meeting, the Council received testimony from the industry in support of limited entry for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) fisheries. In response, the Council decided to consider adopting a control date at the March 2000 meeting.

One of the first steps in developing a new limited entry program usually is evaluation of the need for a control date. Control dates generally are established to reduce the incentive for fishers to enter or increase their harvest in a fishery on speculation of receiving future access rights. Speculative participation in a fishery exacerbates management problems and may decrease the effectiveness of future limited entry management (if such a system is eventually implemented and depending on the nature of the rights granted).

Control dates are not regulations. If the Council recommends a control date, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) would publish an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking. The notice does not commit the Council or NMFS to any limited entry program in the future. However, new entrants to the fishery after the control date might not be granted access under future limited entry programs.

If the Council decides to adopt a control date, the Highly Migratory Species Plan Development Team (HMSPDT) and/or Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) will need some direction on the issue of limited entry:

1. Does the Council want to ask the HMSAS to be responsible for developing recommendations on limited entry, or should a separate committee be assigned?
2. If the Council elects to proceed with the limited entry process, when should the process of developing recommendations begin? Does the limited entry process occur as part of the plan development process, parallel to plan development, or after the plan is adopted?
3. What is the HMSPDT's role? Is the HMSPDT responsible for assessing the impacts of the options or will these assessments be part of an analysis separate and distinct from the HMSPDT process?

It is suggested the group directed to develop recommendations for limited entry initially consider the following issues:

1. Time periods for qualification (i.e., the "qualifying window").
2. Vessel or personal catch history used for qualification.
3. Will there initially be a moratorium or another alternative?
4. Which species and fisheries should be included?
5. Should qualifying criteria other than catch history be considered?

Council Action: Consider adopting a control date for a possible limited entry program. Provide direction to the HMSPDT and/or HMSAS on the next steps, as appropriate.

Reference Materials:

1. HMSPDT Statement of Limited Entry Control Date (Attachment F.3.a.).
2. HMSAS Report (Supplemental Attachment F.3.b.).

PFMC
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