

ALTERNATIVE MANAGEMENT ACTIONS FOR VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM PLANS

ISSUE 1: THE MONITORING SYSTEM This issue defines the types of systems and reporting requirements that could be used to monitor fishing activities to ensure the integrity of groundfish conservation areas. The alternatives below describe three approaches to monitoring systems including: a declaration system, a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) program, and fishery Observers.

Alternative 1: No action alternative. Do not define a specific monitoring system for managing the integrity of groundfish conservation areas. Do not define reporting requirements for groundfish vessels conducting allowed fishing activities in conservation areas.

Alternative 2: Declaration system only. Do not define a specific monitoring system for managing the integrity of groundfish conservation areas. Require operators of all limit entry vessels and open access California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessels to provide notice regarding the intent to fish within the boundaries of any conservation area.

Alternative 3: Basic VMS system. Establish standards for VMS transceiver and mobile communication service providers that are consistent with the final NMFS VMS standards. The system would require real-time (or near real-time) intervals between position fix and receipt by NMFS. Require operators of any limited entry vessel or open access California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessel to provide notice regarding the intent to fish in a conservation area.

Alternative 4: Upgraded VMS system. Establish standards for VMS transceiver and mobile communication service providers that are consistent with the final NMFS VMS standards. The system would require real-time (or near real-time) intervals between position fix and receipt by NMFS. In addition to the basic standards, the upgraded system would require two-way communications between the vessel and shore such that full or compressed data messages can be transmitted and received by the vessel. Require operators of any limited entry vessel or open access California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessel, to provide notice regarding the intent to fish in a conservation area.

Alternative 5: Observers. Require vessels to carry observers to monitor vessel activity in relation to groundfish conservation areas. Require operators of any limited entry vessel or open access California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessel without an observer on board, to provide notice regarding the intent to fish in a conservation area.

ISSUE 2: VMS COVERAGE This issue identifies the sectors of the groundfish fleet that would be required to have a VMS or observer monitoring system (as identified under issue 1, alternatives 3,4,& 5) in place in order to participate in Pacific coast groundfish fishery.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not specify mandatory coverage requirements for a monitoring system.

Alternative 2A: All vessels registered to a limited entry permit. Beginning in 2003, require all trawl and fixed gear vessels registered to limited entry permits to have VMS or an observer as specified under issue 1. Vessels would be required to have VMS transmitter units or observers on board at all times regardless of the fishery.

Alternative 2B: All vessels registered to a limited entry permit and that fish for groundfish. Beginning in 2003, require all trawl and fixed gear vessels registered to a limited entry permit to have either VMS or an observer as specified under issue 1, before they can fish in the Pacific coast groundfish fishery. Vessels would be required to have VMS transmitter unit or an observer on board at all times regardless of the fishery.

Alternative 3: All limited entry vessels regardless of where fishing occurs; and all open access and recreational charter vessels that fish in the conservation areas. Beginning in 2003, require all trawl and fixed gear vessels registered to a limited entry permit to have either VMS or an observer as specified under issue 1, before they can fish in the Pacific coast groundfish fishery. By 2004, begin phasing in VMS or an observer requirement for open access vessels (including exempted gears) that fish within a conservation area. Open access fisheries would be prioritized by the estimated impacts on overfished species. By 2004, begin phasing in VMS or an observer requirement for recreational charter vessels that fish within a conservation area. Vessels would be required to have VMS transmitter unit or an observer on board at all times regardless of the fishery.

Alternative 4: All limited entry vessels regardless of where fishing occurs; all fishing vessels operating in conservation area. Beginning in 2003, require all trawl and fixed gear vessels registered to a limited entry permit to have either VMS or an observer as specified under issue 1, alternatives 3, 4, & 5, before they can fish in the Pacific coast groundfish fishery. By 2004, begin phasing in VMS or observer requirements for all other fishing vessels that operate in the conservation areas. Fisheries would be prioritized by the estimated impacts on overfished species. Vessels would be required to have VMS transmitter unit or an observer on board at all times regardless of the fishery.

Alternative 5: All limited entry, open access, and recreational charter vessels regardless of where fishing occurs. Beginning in 2003, require all trawl and fixed gear vessels registered to a limited entry permit to have either VMS or an observer as specified under issue 1, before they can fish in the Pacific coast groundfish fishery. By 2004, begin phasing in VMS or observer requirements for all open access and recreational charter vessels regardless of where the vessel will be fishing. Fisheries would be prioritized by the estimated impacts on overfished species. Vessels would be required to have VMS unit or an observer on board at all times regardless of the fishery.

ISSUE 3: VMS RELATED EXPENDITURES -- This issue defines the responsibilities of purchasing, installation, and maintenance of VMS transmitter units, as well as the responsibilities for transmission of reports and data.

Alternative 1: Vessel pays all. Under this alternative the vessel would be responsible for paying all costs associated with purchasing, installing and maintaining the VMS transmitter unit, as well as the costs associated with the transmission of reports and data from the vessel. This alternative would not preclude reimbursement for all or a portion of expenditures at a later point in time if money were available.

Alternative 2: Vessel pays for transmitter. Under this alternative the vessel would be responsible for paying for all costs associated with purchasing, installing and maintaining the VMS transmitter unit. NMFS would pay for transmission of reports and data only.

Alternative 3: NMFS pays for initial transmitter. Under this alternative, NMFS pays or reimburses the vessel owner for all or a portion of the initial VMS transmitter unit. Associated expenses including installation, maintenance and replacement would be paid for by the vessel. Transmission costs would also be paid for by the vessel.

Alternative 4: NMFS pays all. Under this alternative NMFS would be responsible for paying all costs associated with purchasing, installing and maintaining the VMS transmitter unit, as well as the costs associated with the transmission of reports and data from the vessel.

Table 2.0.1 Summary of Alternative Actions for Monitoring Time-area Closures in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery

ISSUE 1: The Monitoring System	Alternative 1 No action	Alternative 2 Declaration reports from limited entry and open access California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessels intending to fish within any conservation area and landing reports for fish taken in conservation areas	Alternative 3 Basic VMS system and declaration reports from limited entry and open access California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessels without VMS, VMS operable 24 x 7	Alternative 4 Upgraded VMS system and declaration reports from limited entry and open access California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessels and landing reports for vessels without VMS, VMS operable 24 x 7	Alternative 5 Observers and declaration reports from limited entry and open access California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessels and landing reports for vessels without observers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited availability of air and surface craft to monitor conservation areas. Fish tickets and logbooks used to monitor fishing location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Alt. 1 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 386 LE & 1,336 OA - California halibut, pink shrimp, or crab vessels would be required to provide declaration and landing reports Declaration reports aids in identifying vessels fishing legally in conservation areas Landing reports used to direct dockside monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Alt. 1 & 2 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be consistent with VMS standards Vessel location received in real-time. Real-time position data would allow enforcement to respond to infractions. Distress signal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Alt. 1, 2 & 3 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be consistent with VMS standards Vessel location received in real-time Real-time position data would allow enforcement to respond to infractions 2-way communications can be used to transmit reports from vessel; to receive operational messages; and to inquire about use of distress signal Vessel may choose value added services used only by vessel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Alt. 1 & 2 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position data can be used as base for enforcement action Observer reports could be used to verify vessel activities Most observer data is beyond the scope of the identified need Catch composition data would be available to assess the impacts of both legal and illegal fishing activities
ISSUE 2: Coverage (Issue 2 applies only when issue 1, alternatives 3, 4 or 5, VMS or observers are selected as the monitoring system)	Alternative 1 No action	Alternative 2A All vessels registered to a limited entry permit	Alternative 3 All active limited entry, and open access and recreational charter vessels that fish in conservation areas	Alternative 4 All active limited entry vessels and all commercial fishing vessels and recreational charter vessels that fish in conservation areas.	Alternative 5 All active limited entry, open access and recreational charter vessels regardless of where they fish
ISSUE 3: VMS Expenditures (Issue 3 applies only when issue 1, alternatives 3 or 4, are selected for the monitoring system)	Alternative 1 Vessel owner pays for all	Alternative 2 Vessel owner pays for VMS transmitter	Alternative 3 NMFS pays for initial VMS transmitter	Alternative 4 NMFS pays for all NMFS	Alternative 5 NMFS would be responsible for paying all costs associated with purchasing, installing and maintaining the VMS transmitter unit, as well as the costs associated with the transmission of report and data from the vessel

VMS Regulatory Timeline

	Sep-02	Oct-02	Nov-02	Dec-02	Jan-03	Feb-03	Mar-03	Apr-03	May-03	Jun-03	Jul-03
1. Enforcement report - Council recommends VMS go forward for further analysis	█										
2. Draft EA to include Purpose & Need, Alternatives, matrix of biological and socio-economic impacts with initial discussion.		█									
3. PFMC meets in SF, reviews EA and identifies preferred alternatives		█									
4. Prepare final EA/IR/IRFA and proposed rule		█	█								
5. Prepare final rule			█								
6. Draft EA/IR/IRFA available for public review - announcement via news release, posted on PFMC & NWR web page or can be obtained by request					█	█	█				
7. Proposed rule sent to HQ											
8. Proposed rule published in <u>Federal Register</u> with 45 day comment period.							█	█			
9. Public comment taken at March PFMC meeting							█	█	█		
10. Comment period ends											
11. Prepare final rule								█	█		
12. Send final rule to HQ											
13. Final rule published in <u>Federal Register</u>										█	█
14. Final rule 30 day cooling off period										█	█

