

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON THE
EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS (EFPS): UPDATE AND NEW PROPOSALS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed the exempted fishing permits (EFPS) being considered for Council approval and the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) list of EFP priorities.

In general, the GAP concurred with the list of priorities recommended by the GMT and the criteria being used to establish those priorities. The GAP is disappointed that Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has decided to drop the request for an EFP on widow bycatch in the midwater yellowtail fishery and urges either Oregon or Washington to consider conducting this project in 2003.

The GAP also recommends the Council re-approve the shoreside whiting EFP that has been used in the past. Although amendments to the salmon fishery management plan are designed to eliminate the need for the whiting EFP, it is uncertain whether the salmon amendments will be approved in sufficient time to conduct all of the preliminary port meetings that have been used to increase vessel and plant awareness of bycatch avoidance issues. Having the EFP in effect for one more year will help to continue the low level of salmon bycatch.

PFMC
10/29/02