

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR APPROVING EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS

Following the April Council meeting, the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) developed a proposed process and timeline for Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application review and consideration by the Council that consists of an annual process beginning in April (Exhibit B.6.b, GMT Report 2) to coincide with the Council's multi-year management process. The approach would include setting aside a portion of the optimum yields (OYs) for rebuilding species of concern as part of setting the acceptable biological catches and OYs in June; in the absence of EFP applications that meet the standards and criteria sufficient to take the portion of the OYs that have been set aside, there would be a release of those set asides back to the scheduled groundfish fisheries.

The GMT also revised its proposed Council Operating Procedure that describes the standards and criteria for approving exempted fishing permits (Exhibit B.6.b, GMT Report 3) to reflect this proposed process. These proposed standards and criteria are consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Council's West Coast Groundfish fishery management plan, and draft National Marine Fisheries Service standards and protocols.

The GMT recommends the Council approve the revised Council Operating Procedure for the standards and criteria for approving EFPs, as well as the proposed process and timeline.

PFMC
06/02/03