

ENFORCEMENT CONSULTANTS REPORT ON
GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR 2004: FINAL ACTION

The Enforcement Consultants (EC) have engaged in several discussions with members of the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP), both individually and as a group, related to our proposal that limited entry fixed gear vessels not be allowed to drift in the Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA). Members of GAP expressed strong concerns over safety; (i.e., drifting in areas where conflicts could increase with other vessel traffic, versus being able to drift in the RCA).

Members of the EC familiar with the vessel monitoring system (VMS) and its capabilities, advise that drifting vessels and vessels actively fishing will show similar signatures. Allowing drifting in the RCA will adversely effect our ability to use this tool for it's intended purpose and tax our limited resources. We agree that safety is paramount. We would point out that, consistent with safety and with current U.S.Coast Guard regulations, a full time look-out must be provided while a vessel is at sea. Thus, we would respectfully request adoption of the previously proposed language from our earlier statement on this subject (Exhibit C.6.e, Supplemental EC Report) as a regulation for 2004 groundfish management measures.

Concerning the B Platoon, the EC continues to advocate the abolishment of this reportedly underutilized marketing tool.

PFMC
09/12/03