

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON  
LATENT LIMITED ENTRY TRAWL PERMITS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a report from Dr. Steve Freese of the NMFS Northwest Region regarding the status of latent permits in the groundfish fishery.

After reviewing the report and discussing its methodology and contents with Dr. Freese, the GAP concluded that there should be no action taken at this time to address any perceived problems with latent permits. Any time there are massive changes in management systems, time will be needed for effects to move through the system and allow the system to stabilize at different levels. At the moment, we are dealing with the after-effects of a vessel buyback; changes in trip limits; perceptions of future actions regarding individual quotas; and significant restraints needed to avoid species designated as overfished. Combine this with the normal vagaries of markets, changing management, and alternative fishing opportunities in other fisheries, and you get a fishery in a high state of flux. At this point, it is premature to address a problem that, in fact, may not exist.

Finally, the GAP notes that one of the criticisms leveled against effort restriction programs is the lack of opportunities for new entrants. Having latent - and possible lower valued - permits available for purchase will help to answer this criticism.

PFMC  
04/08/04