

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
AMENDMENT 19 (ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT)

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the draft regulations for essential fish habitat (EFH) in conjunction with the Enforcement Consultants at our meeting in early October, and provided suggested changes to Mr. Steve Copps, National Marine Fisheries Service. The GMT reviewed the subsequent draft (Agenda Item H.7.a., Supplemental Attachment 3), dated October 25, 2005, and notes that most of our suggested changes were incorporated. The GMT would like to provide the following comments and recommendations relative to the revised draft:

As part of the Council's action in June, the Council decided to prohibit fishing with dredge gear and beam trawl gear from the shore seaward to 200 miles (i.e., within state waters from 0-3 miles, but not in the bays and estuaries, and within the entire exclusive economic zone [EEZ]). The draft EFH regulations prohibit dredge gear and beam trawl gear only within the EEZ. The GMT believes there are advantages to including those prohibitions in the federal regulations to apply from the shore to 3 miles. Having the federal rules in place will help facilitate the states taking conforming action. Also, having the rules in federal regulations promotes consistency and will help ensure that the prohibitions will remain in place until the Council takes action to change or remove them.

GMT Recommendations

1. Revise the regulations to prohibit fishing with dredge gear and beam trawl gear from the shore seaward to 200 miles.

PFMC
11/02/05