

EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT (EFP) APPLICATIONS FOR 2006

Exempted fishing permits (EFPs) provide a process for testing novel fishing gears and strategies to substantiate methods for prosecuting sustainable and risk-averse fishing opportunities. Because the EFP fisheries harvest or impact a portion of the overall available harvest, preliminary Council approval and harvest set-asides for EFPs in 2006 (and 2005) were adopted along with 2005-2006 management measures at the June 2004 Council meeting. The preliminary 2006 EFP harvest set-asides were 2.9 mt of canary rockfish, 0.5 mt of darkblotched rockfish, 6.5 mt of lingcod, 0.2 mt of Pacific ocean perch, and 0.2 mt of yelloweye rockfish. However, the Council should reconsider these EFP harvest set-asides at this meeting and recommend new harvest set-asides to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in accordance with the bycatch needs of those EFPs recommended for 2006.

Applications for EFPs proposed for 2006 were provided in the June and September briefing books to give Council members, Council advisory bodies, and the general public an opportunity to review these applications and prepare their recommendations for this meeting. Three EFP applications were reviewed and are considered for approval at this meeting: a coastwide shoreside whiting EFP allowing that sector of the whiting fishery to fully retain their catch and land species in excess of their allowable landing limits (Agenda Item H.8.a, Attachment 1), a California shoreside whiting EFP to examine effects of beginning that fishery south of 40° 30' N. Latitude earlier than the current April 15 start date (Agenda Item H.8.a, Attachment 2), and a California spot prawn trawl EFP designed to test finfish bycatch excluder devices (Agenda Item H.8.a, Attachment 3).

The coastwide shoreside whiting EFP (Agenda Item H.8.a, Attachment 1) has been the vehicle to prosecute the shoreside fishery in recent years. The states, Council, and NMFS have yet to resolve details on how to implement the 2006 shoreside whiting EFP and fishery given uncertainties in funding, bycatch caps, and new salmon bycatch limitations.

Under this agenda item, the Council will review and approve EFP applications and EFP harvest set-asides for 2006. Council-approved applications are then submitted by the applicants to NMFS for permit development and issuance.

Council Action:

- 1. Consider EFP applications for 2006 and recommend approval to NMFS.**
- 2. Recommend EFP harvest set-asides (or bycatch caps) to NMFS for 2006 EFPs.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item H.8.a, Attachment 1: Shoreside Whiting Fishery Exempted Fishing Permit Application.
2. Agenda Item H.8.a, Attachment 2: California Shoreside Whiting Experimental Fishing Permit Application.
3. Agenda Item H.8.a, Attachment 3: Application for Exempted Fishing Permit to Test Bycatch Reduction Devices in Experimental Spot Prawn Trawl Fishery.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. State Proposals
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Approve Final EFPs for 2006, Including Caps for Overfished Species

John DeVore

PFMC
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