

EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS FOR 2007 FISHERIES

Exempted fishing permits (EFPs) provide a process for testing innovative 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 2007 (and 2008) were adopted along with 2007-2008 management measures at the June 2006 Council meeting. The preliminary 2007 EFP harvest set-asides were 6.9 mt of bocaccio, 0.4 mt of canary rockfish, 0.1 mt of cowcod, 0.4 mt of darkblotched rockfish, 3.6 mt of widow rockfish, and 0.1 mt of yelloweye rockfish.

Applications for EFPs proposed for 2007 were provided in the June briefing book 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 in June and are considered for approval at this meeting (Agenda Items C.6.a, Attachments 1, 2, and 3). The three proposed EFPs are designed to test different hook and line gear configurations and strategies to selectively harvest abundant chilipepper rockfish off central California. The preliminary EFP set-asides decided in June were based on proposed bycatch caps in two of the three EFP applications provided in June; the third application was incomplete. All three EFP applications now propose bycatch caps for overfished species. The proposed bycatch caps in the third EFP application are 3,600 lbs (1.6 mt) of bocaccio, 240 lbs (0.1 mt) of canary rockfish, 6 cowcod (individual fish), 3,600 lbs (1.6 mt) of widow rockfish, and 6 yelloweye rockfish (individual fish). This represents the additional yield needed to be set aside to accommodate all three EFPs.

Under this agenda item, the Council will review and consider recommending approval of 2007 EFP applications for public review. This will allow the EFP sponsors and the public to understand the Council's intentions for 2007 EFPs prior to final Council action at the November meeting. There might also be a need to consider recommending a shoreside whiting EFP for the 2007 whiting fishery depending on advice from NMFS. Information provided under Agenda Item C.8 may also be helpful for deciding the need for a shoreside whiting EFP next year.

Council Action: Consider EFP applications for 2007 and consider recommending approval for public review.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item C.6.a, Attachment 1: Chilipepper Rockfish EFP Application Sponsored by Berkeley.
2. Agenda Item C.6.a, Attachment 2: Chilipepper Rockfish EFP Application Sponsored by Churchman.
3. Agenda Item C.6.a, Attachment 3: Chilipepper Rockfish EFP Application Sponsored by Kraencke and Pemberton.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comments
- d. **Council Action:** Approve for Public Review

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08/21/06