

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON FMP AMENDMENT 10 (SHORE-BASED WHITING MONITORING)

The Groundfish Advisory Panel (GAP) heard a presentation from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) staff regarding the implementation of Amendment 10 requirements for monitoring of the shoreside whiting fishery.

The GAP supports an industry-federal exempted fishing permit (EFP) designed to develop effective and enforceable regulations to operate the whiting fishery. It is critical that regulations are in place for the 2007 season.

The GAP urges the Council to move forward expeditiously on the transition from the state-sponsored EFP process to the federal regulatory process. Action can be taken at this meeting by identifying a subcommittee of industry members and state representatives to advise NMFS on the development of the program.

User groups should be involved with the design of the program from inception to ensure an efficient and cost-effective program is developed. The ad-hoc committee should include 3 fishermen and 3 shoreside whiting processors, one from each state. In addition, the committee should include a state representative from Washington, Oregon and California. The committee should discuss the design of the program, funding impediments and options for on-shore monitoring, bycatch management and a protocol for observation at plants, complementary at-sea monitoring requirements, and overall program funding.

The GAP reiterates that, in order to have something in place for the 2007 season, there should be a draft regulatory rule approved at the November 2006 Council meeting. To facilitate adequate time for review and discussion, the proposed language should be completed by the November 2006 briefing book deadline.

PFMC
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