

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON SHORE-BASED WHITING MONITORING PROGRAM

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) heard a presentation from Ms. Yvonne deReynier on the suite of alternatives for the shoreside monitoring program. She further noted the NMFS preferred alternative (Option 4B).

The GAP appreciates the importance of catch reporting information and biological data collection for the whiting fishery. Having said that, the GAP recommends that the Council select Alternative 4 as the preferred alternative with the following adjustments:

Monitoring Shoreside Processors:

1. Utilize shoreside catch monitors, trained by NMFS to NMFS certification, who are responsible for ALL shoreside observation, species composition, fish ticket verification, and biological sampling instead of the combination of three different individuals currently outlined in Alternative 4.
2. The initial shoreside level of sampling for the catch monitors defined in number 1 above will be determined based on using the current level of program funding available for shoreside observation. Evaluation of this level of sampling will be conducted using the data collected through the program.

Requiring several different individuals to collect various amounts and types of information is duplicative and potentially cost prohibitive. If the industry is responsible for funding the shoreside processor monitoring program – then the system should be streamlined to collect the optimum amounts and types of information in the most cost-effective manner.

Fish Overages:

1. Overages will be reported on fish tickets and abandoned to the state. Prohibited species will be donated. State enforcement will track compliance (status quo).

While exploring a plan for a donation program for overage fish is admirable (and has been considered on several occasions in the past), the GAP believes that incorporating this possibility into Amendment 10 could delay the implementation of this important amendment.