

GROUND FISH ELECTRONIC MONITORING POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REPORT ON WHITING ELECTRONIC MONITORING FINAL
ALTERNATIVE AND REGULATIONS

The Groundfish Electronic Monitoring Policy Advisory Committee (GEMPAC) appreciates all the work that Melissa Hooper and NMFS staff have done to draft the regulations and NMFS reports. The GEMPAC reviewed the preferred alternatives for the whiting fishery EM program and NMFS reports. The GEMPAC provides the following recommendations regarding the preferred alternatives and draft regulations:

Regarding the Preferred Alternative:

The GEMPAC recommends the following preferred alternatives and notes changes to the preferred alternatives where appropriate (*italics*):

Recommend revising Final Preferred Alternative 2 to be Alternative 3 - Use Logbooks to Estimate Discard (Audit logbook with Camera). The GMEPAC agrees with the Council's original motion for the percent review to be the minimum level determined to be necessary to ensure compliance (no less than 10%) with an escalation clause for non-compliance.

Discard Accounting Option A (Shoreside Sector): Estimate Discard with EM and Count against IFQ

Recommend revising Preferred Discard Accounting Option D (Mothership Sector) to be Option A: Estimate Discard with EM and Count against IFQ

Retention Requirements Option A: Maximize

Halibut Retention/ Discard Option D: Discard Exemption, 100% retained, 100% mortality

Recommend removing the option for Discard Species List Adjustment Option B: Routine Process. The GEMPAC notes that maximize retention does not point to the need for this process. If any issue arises for expanding allowable discards then the Council could address this topic in an additional regulatory amendment.

Eligibility for Camera Use Option A: Initial and Continued Eligibility

Recommend revising EM Vessel Operational Plan - IVMP Expiration Option B to be Option A: No Expiration or if modifications are made.

Declaration of EM Use Option C: Declare until changed with some limit on frequency

Data Transfer Process Option C: Data Transfer by Shoreside catch monitor

Data Transfer Process Option D: Data Transfer by Vessel operator/Crew

Video and Data Processing and Analysis Option D: Third party conducts video review. Recommend removing footnote e/ "once a certification process has been established, until then, Government (Option A) – NMFS or their agent (e.g. PSMFC)."

Payment for Scientific data collection/observations Option A: Government funded scientific observations, same as pre individual fishing quota (IFQ)

Recommend removing Implementation Option B: *Use EFPs to Test Policy – The GEMPAC notes that this option no longer applies.*

Regarding Deeming of the Draft Regulations:

The GEMPAC recommends a delay in deeming of the regulations to a future Council meeting, preferably March or April, 2016. Further discussion is needed on several topics in the regulations. For example, the question arose whether there is a need for a new Federal discard logbooks or if NMFS could work with the states to add discard fields to existing state logbooks. Another example is the need for detailed regulations to certify video reviewers versus general regulations for an EM provider certification process; there seems to be a need for more programmatic regulations for an EM provider as opposed to individual regulations for video reviewers and participants. The GEMPAC requests Council staff to hold a webinar(s) to address these and other concerns to further develop the regulations with NMFS prior to submission of draft regulations for the Council's briefing book. We also recommend NMFS develop the draft regulations to the point of a proposed rule stage prior to deeming at the next Council meeting.

PFMC
11/16/15