

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY PLAN UPDATE

Dr. Steve Freese provided the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) with an update on activities stemming from the 2014 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) guidance on electronic technology solutions in fishery-dependent data collection programs. The GAP supports the initial rationale behind the guidance (i.e. electronic technology can provide efficient, cost effective, near real time data) and believes the West Coast has been a national leader in identifying and implementing electronic technology solutions.

Despite significant progress on electronic monitoring (EM) on vessels and development of e-logbooks, the GAP identified one area that has not received enough focus. Applying electronic technology solutions, such as fish recognition software, in lieu of shoreside monitors could create significant cost savings and flexibility for the industry while maintaining the same high standard of accountability. Mr. Colby Brady had been conducting some initial research into this concept before moving on to another position. The GAP would like to see this research resumed and prioritized because in many instances EM on vessels has made it more difficult and costly to obtain shoreside monitoring services, especially in remote locations.

The GAP also notes that as we move towards EM solutions, and particularly EM for shoreside monitoring as well as optimized retention on vessels, the ability to speciate effectively becomes more and more critical. The GAP recommends requesting that the trawl survey capture species images. The survey captures a lot of fish and has experts on board who could accurately identify groundfish species in many different sizes and life stages. This would greatly improve the image database – as we have heard from many experts, you can never have enough data.

PFMC
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