

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE (CDFW) REPORT ON AGENDA PLANNING RE:
DEVELOPMENT OF SWORDFISH MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

At its March 2016 meeting, the Council directed the HMS Management Team (HMSMT) to move forward with developing a range of alternatives to authorize a deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) fishery concurrent with continuing to collect information through exempted fishing permits (EFPs), in accordance with some preliminary guidance. At its June 2016 meeting, the Council tasked the HMSMT to develop a range of alternatives to analyze a process to federalize drift gillnet (DGN) permits by transitioning the existing California state issued permit program to federally issued endorsements, and to develop special conditions for the DSBG EFP program. That range was adopted by the Council yesterday under Agenda Item J.5.

What does the future West Coast swordfish fishery look like under the Monitoring and Management Plan? The Council acted to move forward on the elements above, but CDFW notes that the Council has yet to ask its HMS Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) to provide current policy advice on what forms the fishery should take and how it should develop and/or change related to DSBG and DGN permits. A number of lists have been made outlining questions needing answers related to forward progress on elements within the draft Swordfish Monitoring and Management Plan ([Agenda Item G.2, Attachment 1](#), September 2015). Input is needed to develop alternatives for the future fishery. At least some of this policy input does not require new information from DSBG Exempted Fishery Permits to proceed, and progress to answer some of these questions and development of alternatives can begin now.

CDFW requests the Council ask its staff to add an item to the HMSAS's November meeting agenda on the subject of permitting policy advice for DGN and DSBG permits, to begin scoping the concepts below in order to develop recommendations and alternatives. As the Council will ultimately need to resolve these questions, advice from the HMSAS (with technical support from the HMS Management Team) would be beneficial sooner rather than later as plan development proceeds.

- Connectivity between future DSBG permits and DGN permit endorsements: Should the plan include alternatives linking these two gear endorsements to allow trade-ins and/or conversion of DGN permits to DSBG permits? Would this connectivity provide DSBG opportunity to active DGN permittees, latent permittees, or both? Or should permits for these two gears remain distinct and separate?
- DSBG permits: How large or small should the authorized and permitted fleet be in one or more geographic areas, and what qualifying criteria, if any, should be established to determine permit issuance when gear is authorized? Is development of the DSBG fishery intended to supplement harpoon operations, serve as an alternative to DGN gear, or both? The HMSAS made some initial progress in their discussions outlined in the Supplemental HMSMT Report ([Agenda Item J.4.a](#)) in describing recommended criteria, terms and conditions, incentives and other considerations.
- DGN Latency: Is there a need to reduce the number of DGN permits in light of upcoming implementation of hard caps for the fishery? What is the right size for the future DGN fishery in light of DSBG authorization and permitting, and what criteria should be established to renew permits? Current information on DGN permit activity, latency and transfers is documented in the Supplemental CDFW Report ([Agenda J.5.a](#)).