

Selective Flatfish Trawl EFP:

Monitoring and Minimizing Salmon Bycatch When Targeting Rockfish in the Shorebased IFQ Fishery

Lori Steele, West Coast Seafood Processors Association

Shems Jud, Environmental Defense Fund

Brad Pettinger, OR Trawl Commission

Mike Okoniewski, Pacific Seafood

Background

EFP intended to “bridge the gap” to full implementation of the Council’s trawl gear change package (March 2016) while collecting important information about salmon bycatch

- Timing is critical to maximize marketing opportunities
- Target January 2017

Goals and Objectives

Determine the nature and extent of bycatch while conducting a rockfish fishery targeting widow, yellowtail, chilipepper without current requirements to use a SFFT and mesh size restrictions

- Demonstrate that removal of outdated and unnecessary gear restrictions will better meet objectives of catch share program

Proposed Action

Two of Eight FPAs from Council's Trawl Gear Package

1. Elimination of Selective Flatfish Trawl Requirements – north of 40-10, shoreward of RCA
2. Elimination of Minimum Mesh Requirements
Bottom trawl vessels only

Proposed Action

Chinook Salmon Bycatch Cap – 4,500 fish

- 50% of current 9,000-Chinook threshold for the bottom trawl fishery
- Real-Time Monitoring
- Industry-Based Bycatch Avoidance/Minimization Program

Chinook Bycatch Cap

Chinook Salmon Bycatch Cap – 4,500 fish

2006 BiOp concludes that the *Incidental Take Statement in the 1999 BiOp continues to adequately characterize the level of Chinook bycatch expected to occur as a result of implementing the Groundfish FMP (9,000 fish).*

EFP Enrollment/Participation

- One enrollment period prior to start of EFP
- Declare in/out on a monthly basis; if a vessel declares out, it is out for the month
- When declared in, all groundfish trips are EFP trips
- Vessels that use MWT gear after May 15 must declare out by May 15 and will be out of the EFP for any months they use MWT gear

Monitoring and Reporting Requirements

- 100% at-sea observer coverage (or EM if participating in one of the EM EFPs)
- 100% shoreside monitoring
- Provide all salmon bycatch information as quickly as possible and without any restrictions on confidentiality

Retention and Sorting Requirements

- **Retain and land all salmon bycatch** on all EFP trips, consistent with requirements for the shoreside whiting fishery
- **Vessels carrying observers** must continue to sort their catch on deck and separate salmon bycatch by each haul to facilitate haul-level observer sampling.
- **Vessels using EM** must sort their catch in order to separate and retain salmon bycatch separately in numbered totes for each haul.

Real-Time Bycatch Monitoring

Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission

- Fish Tickets and Shoreside Monitoring Reports
- Daily Bycatch Report providing:
 - Number of landing events (since last report)
 - Number of Chinook salmon landed
 - Cumulative number of landing events/cumulative number of Chinook salmon landed
 - Information about high bycatch tows/trips

Bycatch Avoidance/Minimization Rules

- A vessel that experiences a **high bycatch tow (10 Chinook/tow)** is required to report the tow as quickly as possible (email); AND
Move its fishing operation before setting out gear again during the same fishing trip.
- Information about high bycatch tows will be disseminated through the PSMFC Report and by OTC/WCSPA.

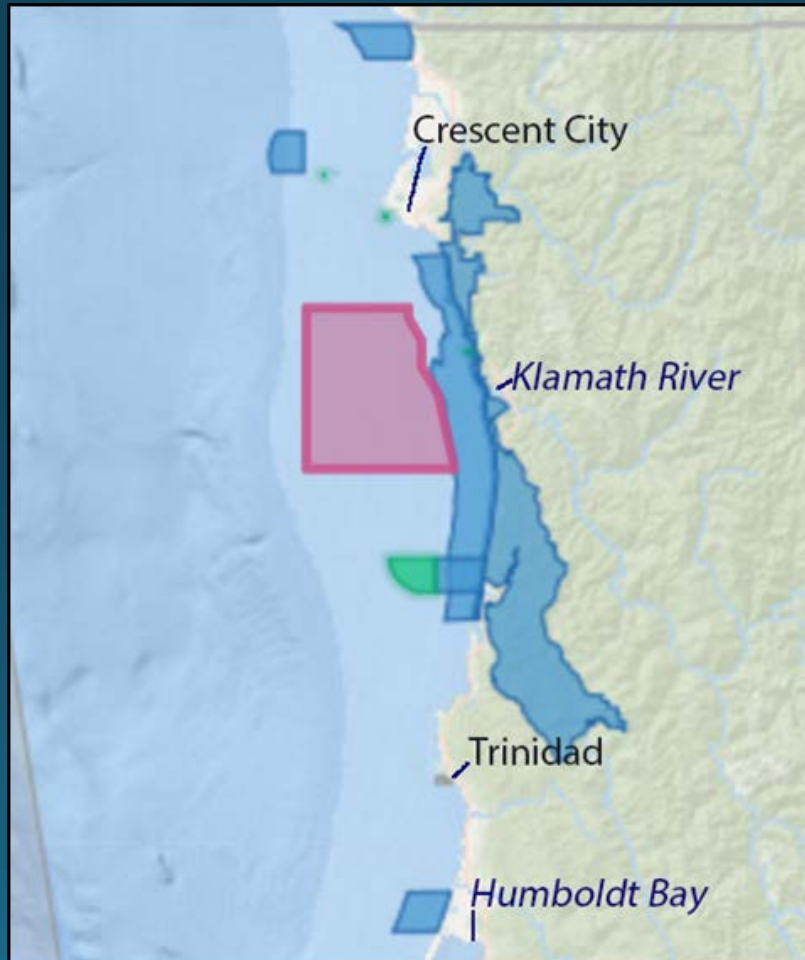
Bycatch Avoidance/Minimization Rules

High bycatch trips = landing 25 Chinook or more

Three-strike rule – A vessel that lands three high bycatch trips during one month will be required to declare out of the EFP for the remainder of that month and for the following month. If this happens twice, the vessel is out of the EFP.

Bycatch Avoidance/Minimization Rules

Klamath River Conservation Zone – Closed to EFP



Bycatch Avoidance/Minimization Rules

Columbia River Conservation Zone – Closed to EFP if 1,000 Chinook are taken.



Outstanding Issues

EFP Proposal/Rules Vs. NMFS Report

- NMFS recommendation for sub-cap (17%) in the Eureka Management Zone
- EM vs. observer coverage
- Columbia River Management Zone closure

Outstanding Issues

Sub-Cap (17%) in the Eureka Management Zone

- Monitor EFP real-time and track fishing effort and salmon bycatch south of 43
- Informational report to Council March 2017; follow-up discussion June 2017 if necessary
- NMFS will have authority to implement mid-season cap south of 43, after consultation with the Council

Outstanding Issues

EM vs. Observer Coverage

- Not clear how many vessels may want to use EM, but not very many – concerned about discouraging the use of EM (conflicting EFPs)
- Opportunity to work with PSMFC and learn about how to document bycatch using EM
- Haul-level data will be collected on all vessels with observers (majority of participants)

Outstanding Issues

Columbia River Management Zone Closure

- Currently proposed for closure if 1,000 Chinook are taken
- Area currently not closed to bottom trawling
- Tradeoffs between immediately prohibiting EFP fishing in the area and collecting some information prior to closure

Timing and Next Steps

The EFP target date is still January 1, 2017.

- Incorporate Council recommendations for EFP rules
- Publish FR Notice ASAP (December 1, 2016?)
- Review public comment, finish EA, prepare package (Jan. 16, 2017?)
- EFP permits available Jan. 23, 2017?
- Every day makes a difference!

Questions?

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