

## SWORDFISH FISHERY MANAGEMENT

In November, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) requested that the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel's (HMSAS) November meeting agenda include the subject of permitting policy advice on Federal permits for California large-mesh drift gillnet (DGN) and future deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) (see [Agenda Item G.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report](#)). (In September, the Council moved to create a Federal limited entry permit for the DGN fishery to replace the current California State permit.) The HMS Management Team (HMSMT) was requested to provide technical support to the HMSAS. This input would help the Council to develop recommendations and alternatives. In particular, CDFW requested the HMSAS to consider:

- Should DSBG and DGN permits or permit endorsements be linked to allow trade-ins and/or conversion of DGN permits to DSBG permits or should there be two distinct and separate permits?
- What is the ideal size of a permitted DSBG fleet? This should be considered with respect to geographic area, use in conjunction with other gears, and other issues identified in [Agenda Item J.4.a, Supplemental HMSMT Report, September 2016](#).
- What qualifying criteria, if any, should be established to determine permit issuance when DSBG gear is authorized?
- Is there a need to reduce the number of DGN permits in light of upcoming implementation of hard caps for the fishery and future DSBG authorization?
- In relation to potentially reducing the number of DGN permits, what criteria should be established to renew permits?

It was noted that current information on DGN permit activity, latency, and transfers is documented in [Agenda Item J.5.a, Supplemental CDFW Report, September 2016](#). The HMSAS and HMSMT are scheduled to meet jointly on Saturday, November 19, and will report on their discussion under this agenda item.

On October 13, 2016, NMFS published a proposed rule that would implement the Council's September 2015 final action to establish hard caps for the DGN fishery. The regulations would implement an immediate closure of the fishery if a hard cap (i.e., limit) on mortality/injury is met or exceeded for certain protected species during a rolling two-year period. The length of the closure would depend on when—during the two-year period—the hard cap is reached. Since the comment period on the proposed rule closes November 28, the Council has the option of submitting comments.

### **Council Action:**

**1) Identify Fishery Permitting Priorities and Policies for the California Drift Gillnet Fishery and a Future Deep-Set Buoy Gear fishery and 2) Provide Comments on the Drift Gillnet Fishery Hard Caps Proposed Rule.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.5, Attachment 1: Proposed Rule, DGN Hard Caps (81 FR 70660)

Agenda Order:

I.5 Swordfish Fishery Management

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- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- b. Public Comment
- c. Council Action: 1) Identify Fishery Permitting Priorities and Policies for the California Drift Gillnet Fishery and a Future Deep-Set Buoy Gear fishery, and 2) Provide Comments on the Drift Gillnet Fishery Hard Caps Proposed Rule

PFMC

10/21/16