

UPDATE ON EXISTING DEEP-SET BUOY GEAR EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS (EFPs)

At its March 2015 meeting, the Council recommended that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issue exempted fishing permits (EFPs) based on submitted applications to test deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) from the Pflegler Institute of Environmental Research (PIER), Tim and Laura Ferguson, and Stephen R. Mintz. Of these, fishing has occurred under the PIER and Ferguson EFPs. (Mr. Mintz did not fish under his EFP; in November 2016 the Council recommended NMFS reissue an EFP to him.)

Attachment 1 is a progress report from Mr. Tim Ferguson and Attachment 2 is a report from PIER. It should be noted that NMFS wrote into the terms and conditions for these EFPs a June Council meeting reporting deadline based on Council Operating Procedure (COP) 20. Although not required by their terms and conditions, the permit holders have provided these updates in March. The Council has requested reports on these EFPs in March, because it initially approved these EFPs in March 2015.

The Council is now reviewing and making recommendations for DSBG EFPs at any Council meeting where highly migratory species topics are on the agenda. This means that EFP activities could begin at any time during the year based on when the permit is issued. The Council should consider whether to vary from COP 20 in terms of reporting requirements. For example, the Council could request reports at the first Council meeting one year after the date NMFS issues the EFP. Clarifying the schedule would help NMFS when drafting the terms and conditions for future DSBG EFPs.

Council Action:

Review Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permit Activity, Make Recommendations as Appropriate.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item J.2, Attachment 1: Interim EFP Progress Report from Mr. Tim Ferguson.
2. Agenda Item J.2, Attachment 2: Pacific Fisheries Management Council Summary Report, 2015-2016 PIER deep-set buoy gear EFP. Preliminary Findings-March, 2015.

Agenda Order:

- J.2 Update on Existing Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) Kit Dahl
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Review Deep-Set Buoy Gear Exempted Fishing Permit Activity, Make Recommendations as Appropriate