

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON AUTHORIZATION OF DEEP-SET BUOY GEAR AND FEDERAL PERMITTING

In the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) report on [Authorization of Deep-Set Buoy Gear and Federal Permitting](#) submitted for the September 2017 advanced Briefing Book, the HMSMT indicated that it would provide a table of preliminary numbers of deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) permits that would be issued under potential permit issuance criteria. The HMSMT has compiled this information, which is provided below in Table 1.

In this same report, the area of DSBG authorization is described as both “Federal waters” and “3-200 nm.” The HMSMT wants to provide clarification, as these two descriptions are not equivalent. In California, state waters extend farther than 3 nm offshore in some areas. DSBG authorization and all alternatives presented by the HMSMT are restricted to Federal waters, which extend offshore of state waters out to 200 nm.

Additionally, the HMSMT indicated its intent to discuss additional potential species of concern beyond prohibited species identified in the Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan. HMSMT members had discussion with state representatives on the Groundfish Management Team, who indicated that at this time, they did not feel there was any concern regarding DSBG catch of sensitive groundfish species in California, due to the large hook size used in DSBG, or off Oregon deeper than the 150 fathom contour line.

In the alternatives provided for DSBG permitting, the HMSMT initially included an option under which permit issuance would be based on permit possession and a landings history. After further discussion, the HMSMT feels that this alternative is too similar to the alternative using only landings history, and recommends that it be removed from the range of alternatives (ROA).

The HMSMT report suggests potential limited entry permit criteria based on landings history. The HMSMT would like to clarify that only commercial landings would count towards qualification for a DSBG permit, and this will be indicated in future versions of the ROA.

At its meeting in August 2017, the HMSMT began discussion of alternatives for a total footprint area in which all pieces of DSBG must be contained, in order to address the concern of gear not being properly tended or lost if extended over too large of an area. While alternatives were agreed upon and included in the report, some uncertainty remained regarding the method by which the footprint was determined. At this meeting, the HMSMT discussed this topic with representatives from the Enforcement Consultants (EC) and the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS). The HMSMT agrees with both the EC and HMSAS on the description of the footprint (Figure 1) and supports it being included in the ROA. However, the included definition of active tending is somewhat unclear, and the HMSMT suggests a revised definition to say the “vessel must maintain a distance of no more than 3 nm from at least one piece of gear.”

Figure 1. DSBG footprint and active tending diagram.

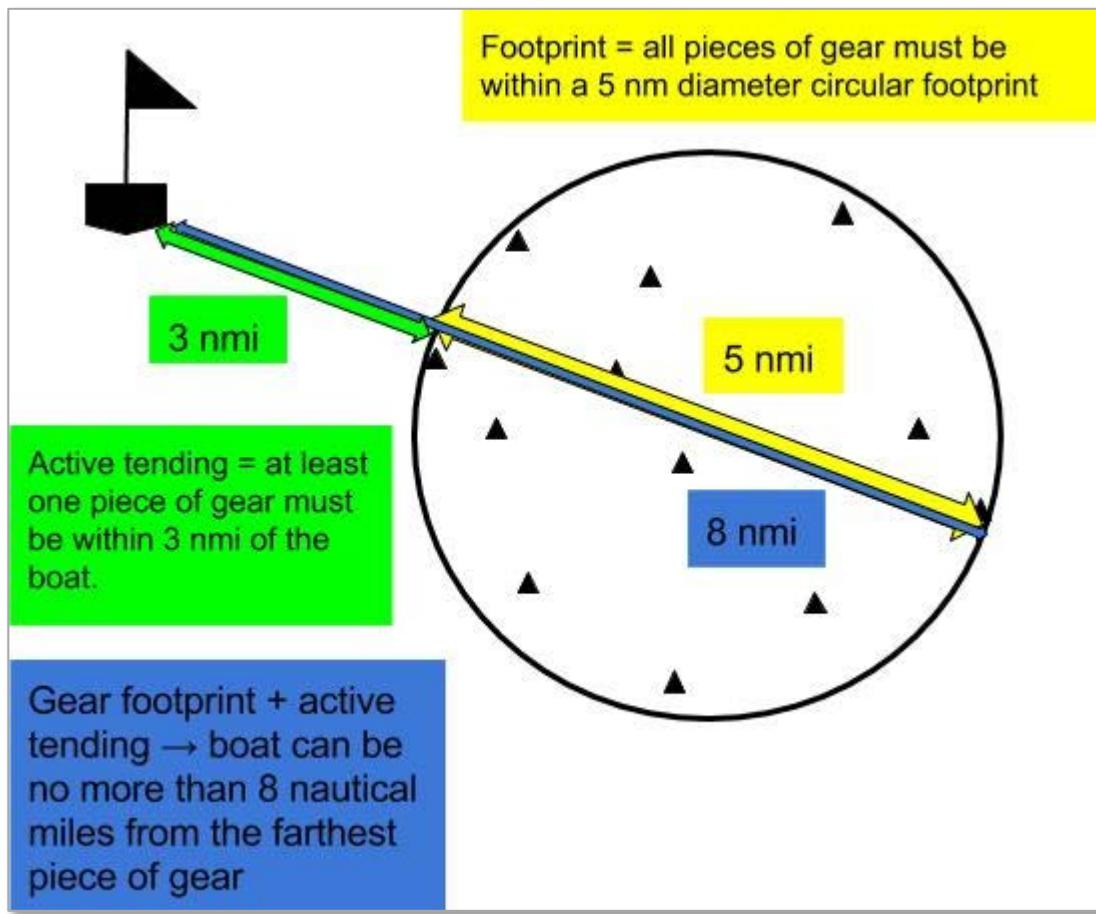


Table 1. Preliminary estimates of numbers of permits under limited-entry permitting options. These data are PRELIMINARY, subject to change and do not reflect final numbers for authorization or permitting.

Qualification	Number of Individuals Under Each Criterion	Running Total Number of Individuals
Tiered:		
1. EFP Recipients		
a) "Active" as of 8/15/2017	7	7
b) Council approved as of 8/15/2017	39	39
2. "Active" DGN Permit - Trade-in (2013/14 - 2017/18)	up to 30	up to 62
3. Harpoon Landings (2013/14 - 2017/18)	26	up to 77
4. DSBG EFP Crew (2/vessel)	78	up to 155
5. "Active" DGN Permit - No Trade-In	30 - #trade-ins	up to 155
6. "Inactive" DGN Permit - Trade-In	up to 37	192
7. "Inactive" DGN Permit	37 - #trade-ins	192
Permit Only:		
1. DGN or Harpoon Permit (as of 08/15/2017)	67 DGN + 49 harpoon	115
2. DGN, Harpoon or DSBG (as of 08/15/2017)	67 DGN + 49 harpoon + 39 EFP	133
a. Include crew	67 DGN + 49 harpoon + 39 EFP + 78 crew	up to 211
Trade-In Stand Alone:		
DGN Permits Only	67	-

Active drift gillnet permits are preliminarily defined as a minimum of one landing of swordfish with DGN gear during specified seasons. Season is April 1 - March 31 of the following year.