

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON PRELIMINARY
APPROVAL OF EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS (EFP) FOR 2019-2020

As a matter of policy and priority, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) does not have adequate enforcement or monitoring/management resources to support a recreational long-leader fishery off California that would operate in times and areas beyond those offered for regular recreational groundfish fishery activity. Development and testing of a recreational long-leader EFP such as the one proposed in Agenda Item F.8 Attachment 5, for the purpose of informing development of regulations for future California fisheries is not an efficient use of Council, National Marine Fisheries Service, Groundfish Management Team or state resources if there is no ability to proceed with implementing information gained from the EFP into a future fishery.

In 2015, CDFW had an opportunity to consider development of a long-leader fishery off Northern California, but declined to proceed with development of analysis in support of such an action. Reasons for this decision were articulated in Agenda Item H.1.a, Supplemental CDFW Report, September 2015 (attached). Each of the 14 concerns itemized in this report remain today.

CDFW remains committed to providing an array of recreational groundfish fishery opportunities statewide, in as many months and depths as possible, within existing harvest limits. Recreational fishery participants and representatives have been encouraged to explore possible new management measures or relaxation of existing measures in the 2019-2020 biennial specifications process, which is now underway.