

Chilipepper/Yellowtail Long Leader EFP

A. Date of Application

October 15, 2017

B. Applicants

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C. Statement of Purpose and Goals

This is an application for a long leader EFP targeting Chilipepper & Yellowtail rockfish in the recreational RCA using the technique that has been successfully performed in Oregon using 'Holloway Gear' and a similar commercial long leader project performed in California. This project would use 30' drop leaders to the first hook, as was used in Oregon. This EFP will test the possibility of conducting a recreational fishery targeting an underutilized midwater species using special gear. This gear will be designed to avoid and/or greatly minimize contacts on species of special concern.

D. Justification for EFP

Chilipepper and Yellowtail rockfish are an underutilized species that most frequently inhabit areas controlled by closures to protect species of special concern like Yelloweye Rockfish and Cowcod. Implementation of MPA's has reduced areas accessible to recreational anglers. Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCA) restrict areas anglers may target many commonly available stocks in good condition. Cowcod Conservation Areas (CCA) were put in place to benefit Cowcod, which seem to be working well, as Cowcod are currently about 34% of unfished biomass. Closures apply to the entire water column for most FMP groundfish species. Yelloweye and Cowcod reside near the bottom as documented on camera surveys in the Commercial long leader EFP.

NMFS previously approved a similar EFP for use in the Oregon recreational fishery. Use of the Holloway Gear in Oregon's recreational RCA is now authorized by regulations published in March 2018. The Emley/Platt EFP now allows California commercial fisherman to use similar gear to access these same species in similar depths. The Nature Conservancy long leader project operated under a now completed EFP using 25' to the first hook and hydraulic fishing reels. This EFP established that canary, cow cod, and yellow eye are successfully avoided long leader gear while accessing chilipepper and yellowtail rockfish.

Midwater species exist in relative abundance, yet are inaccessible. We believe using special gear can be developed which can provide access to midwater species without causing any additional impacts on Yelloweye or Cowcod. Bottom habitat is all that needs protection from hooking impacts. This could provide increased opportunity for recreational anglers and relieve pressure on nearshore species. Increased opportunity is something that has been lacking for many years of incremental constraints on

all fisheries. This EFP will allow legal retention of inaccessible species and increase data sources in areas not adequately sampled for some time.

#### E. Broader significance and fleetwide applicability

Recreational mid water gear can be used by anglers to access underutilized fish stocks without undue complication for enforcement. Only a long leader and float differentiate this gear from standard practice.

#### F. Duration of EFP

One year with a possible renewal application in January 2020, if more data is needed to evaluate success.

#### G. Number of vessels covered under this EFP

There will be 9 vessels covered under this EFP, as follows:

1. Huli Cat Capt. Tom Mattusch, Pillar Point Harbor, CA 650.726.2926
2. Queen of Hearts, Capt. Bob Ingles, Pillar Point Harbor, CA 650.421.6233
3. Seawolf Capt. Jon Yokomizo, Emeryville, CA 916.521.5879
4. New Huck Finn, Capt. Jay Yokomizo, Emeryville, CA 510.774.5288
5. Tigerfish, Capt. Allen Chin, Emeryville, CA 415.860.1688
6. El Dorado, Capt. Robert Gallia, Berkeley, CA 415.298.3948
7. New Sea Angler, Capt. Rick Powers, Bodega, CA 707.875.3495
8. Caroline, Capt. John Kluzmier, Monterey, CA 831.375.5951
9. Velocity, Capt. Ken Stagnaro, Santa Cruz, CA 831.427.2334
10. (alterantes: Joe Gallia New Easy Rideror Jim Smith Cal Dawn)

#### H. Description of species and amounts

Target species are Chilipepper and Yellowtail rockfish. Expected encounters of species of concern may include Yelloweye rockfish. A bag limit of 15 rockfish will be used and this quantity is the base for impact estimates.

There will be 9 vessels and up to 20 anglers per trip. There will be up to 50 trips. This will result in 600 angler days.

Total estimated impacts per angler per trip:

Species # Fish	Average lbs/fish	angler trips	total mt	
Chilipepper	7	0.258	1000	0.82
Widow	2	0.393	1000	0.36
Yellowtail	5	0.513	1000	1.16
Olive	0.15	0.595	1000	0.04
Sharpchin	0.1		1000	0.00
Greenspotted	0.3	0.404	1000	0.05
Greenstripe	0.3	0.168	1000	0.02
bank	0.05	0.332	1000	0.01
Squarespot	0.1	0.149	1000	0.01
Yelloweye	15	1.404		0.009555354
Chinook Salmon	20		N/A	N/A
Cowcod	1	0.8625		0.000391334
Canary	N/A	N/A		0.4

#### I. Monitoring

At-sea on board observers will be used on all trips. These observers will be PSMFC certified groundfish observers, NOAA observers or Alaska Observers Inc. They will be provided by either the individuals vessels or a NFWF Grant which has been applied for.

#### J. Data Collection and analysis methodology

##### Monitoring and Data

Direction of observer coverage will be under Alaska Observers Inc or those approved for the project. Data will monitor through observers and include catch rates, and progress towards project caps. Data will be recorded at the 'drift' level. Drift level recording will make statistical baseline data for subsequent renewals of project. All "overfished species" will be 'lengthed and sexed', returned using properly approved descending devices. Observers may gather species needed for biological analysis. Individual trips will not proceed if observers are not available. Observer coverage must be made in advance of anticipated trips. If bycatch caps are reached the project will be suspended until needed

changes allowed within this EFP can be determined and implemented. Timely observer communication regarding ongoing catch rates will be a top priority. Dr. Susan Sogard and Dr. Rick Starr will advise on project as well.

#### Analysis

Direction and data collection, collation and analysis will be under Dr. Susan Sogard and shared with CA DFW Marine Resources Program. Bycatch rates resulting from performance of this EFP will be compared to similar data from fisheries projection model as to further CA long leader research. This can be done geographically and/or using nonparametric statistical testing. The success criteria would be for the bycatch rates for overfished species and species of special concern to be significantly less than the nearshore fishery.

#### K. Criteria for Vessel selection

Vessels have been chosen based on the individual owner/captain history of successful participation with prior fishery management monitoring and special projects and no known fishery violations.

#### L. Time, place and gear.

##### Time

Fishing will take place either January thru March or between April and December to coincide with the normal rockfish season. Attempts will be made to find user friendly weather windows to assure timely completion of the project and collection of data

##### Location

Fishing will be conducted off the California coast from Newport to the Oregon border

##### Depth

60 -120 fathoms

##### Gear

The gear to be used will be designed to target hooking fish in the water column and avoid bottom dwelling species. The proposed gear for this fishery will employ the use of a long leader between sinker and hooks. The purpose will be to elevate the hooking gear above the bottom a sufficient distance to avoid and or minimize contact with species of concern. The leader will be 30', a change of leader length will be made only if incidental impacts are high or access to target species is low without incidental impacts. A float will be affixed to the upper end of the leader. The purpose of the float is to prevent hooking gear from descending below the upper level of the leader. The float must have sufficient buoyancy to support all hooking gear and line above equivalent to leader length. Past experience with the Oregon project that was successful show that a buoyancy of 2.25 ounces would be sufficient. Floats must be constructed of solid material and may be wood or closed cell high density foam. No hollow floats allowed. Maximum number of hooks is to conform to current regulations, (2) unless it is recommended to try up to 4 hooks. Small plastic worms or grubs may be used or shrimp flies. Weighted hooks and large lures will be prohibited.

#### M. Signatures

*Tom Mattusch*  
Tom Mattusch