

DEEP-SET BUOY GEAR AUTHORIZATION – RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES AND LIMITED ENTRY CRITERIA

Since March 2016, the Council has been developing a range of alternatives to authorize a fishery using deep-set buoy gear (DSBG). The attached Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) Report presents the range of alternatives organized into three alternatives: No Action; Action Alternative 1, a fishery without a limited entry permit component; and Action Alternative 2, a fishery with a limited entry permit component. The only element of the alternatives yet to be specified is the qualifications necessary to obtain a limited entry permit under Alternative 2. As stated in the attached HMSMT report, the Council will determine qualifying criteria with advice from advisory bodies and the public at the time a final preferred alternative is adopted.

The Council is scheduled to adopt a final preferred alternative at the March 2019 meeting. Therefore, the Council should specify this outstanding element of the range of alternatives to allow public review of the range and analysis by the HMSMT and National Marine Fisheries Service to support a Council decision in March.

In September 2017, the HMSMT presented information on different options for limited entry permit qualifying criteria ([Agenda Item J.6.a, HMSMT Report 1](#)). Qualification options described in this report were grouped in the following categories:

1. Tiered system under which potential permit recipients are ranked according to use of DSBG under an exempted fishing permit, permit possession in another swordfish fishery, and active participation within those fisheries. Criteria to further rank individuals within those categories were not presented, however.
2. Possession of a Federal limited entry drift gillnet permit, California state harpoon, or DSBG exempted fishing permit.
3. Participation in swordfish fisheries based on gear use and landings.

The report also discussed the option of issuing a DSBG limited entry permit to individuals who surrender their drift gillnet limited entry permit.

Any specified set of qualification criteria would result in a discrete number of eligible permit recipients, which can be estimated with reasonable accuracy. The Council has adopted a range for the maximum number of limited entry permits to issue (with permits renewed annually). Thus, qualification criteria can be matched with an option within this range of the number of permits to issue.

In June 2017, the Council adopted the description of this proposed action and its purpose and need from [Agenda Item H.3.a, HMSMT Report](#), which is reproduced in Attachment 1. The Council may wish to review this description and consider any modifications.

The attached report from the Pleger Institute of Environmental Research (Agenda Item J.4.a, PIER Report 1) describes results of NOAA-funded research tagging swordfish using DSBG. One of the conditions of the grant was to report results to the Council. This report also may be informative in considering management measures for a DSBG fishery.

Council Action:

Review Progress and Provide Guidance on the Range of Alternatives and Preliminary Preferred Alternatives Including Criteria for a Potential Limited Entry Program; Provide Additional Guidance as Necessary

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item J.4.a, HMSMT Report 1: Range of Alternatives for the Authorization of a Deep-Set Buoy Gear Fishery for Swordfish in Federal Waters off the West Coast.
2. Agenda Item J.4.a, PIER Report 1: Improving Stock Structure Estimates for West Coast Swordfish Using Fishery Independent Methods.

Agenda Order:

- J.4 Deep-Set Buoy Gear Authorization – Range of Alternatives and Limited Entry Criteria Kit Dahl
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Review Progress and Provide Guidance on the Range of Alternatives and Preliminary Preferred Alternatives Including Criteria for a Potential Limited Entry Program; Provide Additional Guidance as Necessary

PFMC
10/09/18