

ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM REVIEW

At the April 2020 Council meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduled to review the electronic monitoring (EM) Program status, consider possible changes to the final rule, review EM exempted fishing permits (EFPs) if they are submitted, and consider an extension of the EM EFPs.

In June 2019, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announced a final rule to implement the Council's EM Program for the West Coast with specific regulations for the midwater trawl and fixed gear catch shares fisheries, effective January 1, 2021 (Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 1). The proposed regulations and environmental assessment for the bottom trawl and non-whiting midwater trawl catch share fisheries are being developed for publication soon so that these regulations would be effective by January 1, 2021.

At the [November 2019](#) meeting, the Council reviewed, but did not finalize their recommendations on the revised EM Program Guidelines and Draft EM Manual. The Council requested more information in response to the November 2019 [GEMPAC/TAC Report 4](#); therefore, NMFS will provide an update regarding the development of these documents at the April 2020 meeting. After the November meeting, the Council sent a letter to the NMFS stating they would like to delay implementation of the EM regulations until 2022 and consider an extension of the EM EFPs at the April and June 2020 meetings (Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 2). NMFS provided a response to that letter (Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 3). The Council provided an opportunity for the industry to submit revised or new EM EFPs at the November and March meetings and scheduled preliminary and final review for the April/June meetings; however, no EM EFP applications have been submitted.

NMFS submitted a report with several recommendations for the Council to consider regarding potential regulatory changes for the EM Program (Agenda Item G.5.a, NMFS Report 1). In addition, a final NMFS Storage Procedural Directive is expected for Council review. If it is received in time for the agenda item, the Council could recommend regulatory changes to the West Coast EM program that reflect the Directive's timeline for retaining and storing EM data.

Per the Council's request at the March 2020 meeting, NMFS and Council staff are planning a public, pre-council webinar to provide general information about topics that will be discussed at the April Council meeting. In addition, the Groundfish Electronic Monitoring Policy Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee are scheduled to meet on April 4 to consider adjustments to the final rule and potential EFP extension for the EM Program. A supplemental report is expected.

Council Action:

Provide Guidance on Regulatory Changes, Exempted Fishing Permit Extensions, or Other Issues, As Appropriate.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 1: Final Regulations for West Coast EM Program (*Electronic Only*).
2. Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 2: Council Recommendation to Delay EM Final Rule Effectiveness.
3. Agenda Item G.5, Attachment 3: NMFS Response to Delay of EM Final Rule Effectiveness.
4. Agenda Item G.5.a, NMFS Report 1: Electronic Monitoring Regulatory Changes.
5. If Received, Public Comments are Electronic Only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- G.5 Electronic Monitoring Program Review Brett Wiedoff
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Provide Guidance on Regulatory Changes, Exempted Fishing Permit Extensions, or Other Issues, As Appropriate

PFMC
03/17/20