

Electronic Monitoring Implementation Update
Prepared by NMFS West Coast Regional Office
PFMC Meeting, March 2-11, 2021

This report lays out the timeline for completing remaining rulemaking and other tasks for implementation of the Groundfish Electronic Monitoring (EM) Program. Following completion of a [final rule](#) that delayed implementation of the EM Program for an additional year, the EM Program is now scheduled to begin January 1, 2022.

Rulemaking

NMFS still needs to complete rulemaking to implement EM regulations for bottom trawl and non-whiting midwater trawl gear types. We are combining these regulations with the regulatory changes that the Council recommended as part of the “clean-up” regulatory amendment in June 2020. We anticipate publishing the proposed rule in April 2021 and a final rule in August 2021.

Implementation

There are a number of steps to permitting EM providers and vessels this year in preparation for January 1, 2022. These steps are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. EM program implementation timeline

Date	Task
March 2021	NMFS consults with Council on EM Program Guidelines and level of video review per the regulations
April 2021	NMFS completes EM Program Guidelines and publishes notice in the Federal Register
May 1, 2021	2021 EM provider online applications open
June 1, 2021	EM provider applications due for Jan 1 start
September 1, 2021	2021 vessel owner online applications open
October 1, 2021	Vessel owner applications due
December, 2021	Provider permit and EM authorizations issued
January 1, 2021	EM regulatory program begins

At the January 2021 GEMPAC/TAC meeting, a member of the public asked if it would be possible for providers to receive permits earlier than December. NMFS intends to make decisions on provider permit applications as soon as possible, and as early as September. However, the exact timing will depend on the individual application under consideration.