

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON PRELIMINARY
REVIEW OF NEW EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS FOR 2023

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) discussed requests for three exempted fishing permits (EFPs), two by the California Wetfish Producers Association (CWPA) in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and another by the West Coast Pelagic Conservation Group (WCP) in cooperation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. All collaborative projects intend to address the continuing need for data, including alternative biological sampling and collection by purse seine net, to assess CPS biomass inshore of current National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Acoustic Trawl surveys.

Both the WCP and CWPA are working collaboratively with the National Marine Fisheries Service Southwest Fisheries Science Center in an effort to improve survey data collection that will lead to better-informed stock assessments and fishery management. Two surveys will focus on confirming biological composition and school size of CPS estimated by acoustics surveys and spotter planes. In addition, a third survey will collect biological data, especially fishery age structure data. Data from the CWPA biological sampling EFP was used in the stock assessment model for the first time since the directed fishery closed in 2015. Approving the three EFPs will allow the continuation of a biological data stream for sardines started in 2018 in California and 2017 off Washington. Therefore, the CPSAS strongly urges the Council to approve these preliminarily EFP proposals as submitted.

PFMC
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