

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS) REPORT ON HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS) ACTIVITIES

Deep-Set Buoy Gear (DSBG) Authorization Update

On May 8, 2023, NMFS published final regulations ([88 FR 29545](#)) to implement Amendment 6 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) that authorizes deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) for catching swordfish and other HMS in federal waters off of California and Oregon. On May 22, 2023, NMFS sent letters by mail and e-mail to individuals likely to be eligible for LE permits informing them of the tier we anticipate them qualifying under. If an individual did not receive a letter, they may still apply for an LE permit. Beginning on June 7th, 2023, applicants will have 60 days to apply for an LE permit with the application period ending on August 7th, 2023. Interested applicants may request the data determining their eligibility, and seek corrections, prior to August 7th, 2023.

NMFS's [frequently asked questions \(FAQs\) page](#) contains additional information on the permitting process. Background information on this FMP amendment and regulatory action can be found online on the [NMFS DSBG webpage](#).

Drift Gillnet Loggerhead Sea Turtle Closure Status

NMFS regulations at 50 CFR 660.713(c)(2) to implement the Drift Gillnet Loggerhead Sea Turtle Closure require that sea surface temperature (SST) data from the Southern California Bight (SCB) during the third (March) and second (April) months prior to the month of the closure (June 1) will be the trigger for implementing the closure period. The El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) reports that cover SSTs for April and March both indicated an 'El Niño Watch' status. To date, warmer than normal SSTs have not been present off of Southern California, thus a closure has not been triggered.

NMFS continues to monitor the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center (CPC) [ENSO Diagnostic Discussion monthly reports](#) and the NOAA Coastwatch West Coast Regional Node [Loggerhead Conservation status page](#) for temperature anomalies in the SCB.