

SEAN BURKE

F/V PILIKIA

DSBG 2022

In 2022 we fished DSBG a total of 9 days and set 72 pieces of gear. Zero swordfish hit the deck.

We did harpoon a fish in July and one in Sept. Total weight was 737 lbs.

Looking forward to having better luck with the operation this year.

Thank you ,

Sean Burke

F/V PILIKIA

1134177

F/V PACMAN

Standard DSBG Season Report 2022

The soonest we could get the boat ready to fish was by the beginning of November. We fished a total of six days. Three of the six we had an Observer on board. Each day we fished an average of eight hours per day. We set ten sets of gear each day with a total of one hook per set, with the exception of the first three days as we only set six sets of gear with one hook per set. We landed a total of three swordfish within the six days of fishing. No other species of fish were hooked besides swordfish on our gear. For bait we used only squid. We did not have any issues with other boats around our gear. I think that DSBG is good fishery and is profitable especially if you can keep expenses down. My brother and I are looking forward to putting many DSBG days in this upcoming season as all of our gear is ready to go. Thank you so much for allowing us to use DSBG to target swordfish.

Days fished.

11/04/22 (6 hooks, 0 fish landed), 11/05/22 (6 hooks 0 fish landed), 11/06/22 (6 hooks 0 fish landed) 11/23/22 (10 hooks, 1 swordfish landed), 12/8/22 (10 hooks. 3 fish hooked, 2 swordfish landed) 12/19/22 (10 hooks, 0 fish landed)

Best Regards,
Ryder DeVoe
Fisher DeVoe

2022 DSBG season, F/V Olinka

Douglas Dirkse

Hi Chris,

We didn't have much time to fish DSBG, got into a rigging rebuild in Newport Oregon, and didn't get back to SoCal till mid December to fish DSBG.

We only got in one four day trip which resulted in only one swordfish landed in 2022.

After the holidays the weather in January was not conducive to exploring for swordfish, the fuel expense was pretty brutal in 2022 also~

Hoping to get started in 2023 quite a bit earlier, maybe even in June, doesn't sound promising for a commercial salmon season in 2023.

Doug Dirkse

Janelle Louie

F/V Olinka

Jolene Ann 2022 DSBG Report

In 2022 it was the Jolene Ann's first year for DSBG. We fished 13 days and set 10 bouys each time for 3 swordfish total, 3 of the days were observed.

Summary of Deep-Set Buoy Gear Fishing operations for *F/V AUDAX* during 2022

Executive Summary

The exempted fishery permit (EFP) for Daniel and William Fuller to fish deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) targeting Swordfish in the southern California bight was approved in September 2018. Limited improvements to gear and fishing strategy continue to be made to increase efficiency and productivity.

Between October 28 and December 3, 2022, three one-day trips were undertaken for 3 total fishing days. Average trip duration was 14:45 hours (range: 13:00 – 18:00) and average set duration was 5:04 (range: 1:42 – 9:45) for 279.1 total hook hours fished. Absolute catch-per-unit-effort of 1 fish per 39.9 hook hours, or 2.3 fish landed per fishing day. Only squid was used for bait as it seems to be the most convenient to use.

Gear configuration

No significant gear modifications were made for fishing operations during 2022.

Observer Coverage

An observer was assigned for one of the three fishing trips for 33% coverage.

Fishing Summary

All fishing was conducted during daylight hours where the gear was removed from the water well before sunset, unless a fish was hooked. A total of 7 Swordfish were captured during two of the three (one zero day). There was a total of 12 probable swordfish bites (determined from bait and/or leader damage), of which 9 were hooked (identified by strike indicator being up), and 7 of those landed. One blue shark was captured and released in alive but poor condition, and there was no additional evidence of shark bites. However, there was extensive bait depredation by what is believed to be squid, where baits used in 19 of 55 (35%) sets were damaged.

Fishery Interactions

During most fishing trips during 2022 it was common to be fishing in relative proximity (~0.5-3 miles) to other DSBG vessels. At no time was there any issue or conflict with any of those encountered and all interactions were professional. Generally, contact was either made by radio or directly boat side and efforts were made to ensure there was enough area for each boat to manage their gear.

Once again, during 2022 there was considerable recreational effort and on any given day there would be >10 recreational vessels nearby. Most recreational fishers are courteous and avoid the gear, but there is a small proportion who do not. Some recreational fishers have deployed gear within 30 meters of DSBG and while there were no entanglement issues should a fish be hooked; it will be an issue.

Considerations for 2022

More effort for 2023 is planned. During 2022 there was continued and consistently good fishing for other HMS species (Bluefin, Dorado), and with poor swordfish fishing reports, fishing effort was focused on other species.

Data

We maintain a detailed fishing log for every set made. This data is available for research purposes upon request.

Summary of Deep-Set Buoy Gear Fishing operations for *F/V Shearwater* during 2022

Executive Summary

The exempted fishery permit (EFP) for *F/V Shearwater*, Markus Medak and Daniel Fuller, to fish linked and deep-set buoy gear, targeting Swordfish in the southern California bight was approved in October 2021. However, due to several logistical challenges fishing did not begin until 2022.

Between November 13 and December 16, 2022, five trips were undertaken for a total of 16 fishing days. Average trip duration was 3 days (range: 1d 16h – 4d 20h) and, in total, 1,178 total hook hours fished. Absolute catch-per-unit-effort of 1 fish per 56.1 hook hours, or 1.3 fish landed per fishing day. Only squid was used for bait as it seems to be the most convenient to use.

Gear configuration

All fishing gear was constructed in October 2022. Mainline length measured out at 900 feet with leader lengths varying between 25 and 50 feet.

Observer Coverage

An observer was assigned for three of the five fishing trips for 50% coverage of fishing days.

Fishing Summary

All fishing was conducted during daylight hours where the gear was removed from the water well before sunset, unless a fish was hooked. A total of 21 Swordfish (average weight 168 pounds) were captured during four of the five trips (one zero trip, 2 days fishing). There was a total of 30 probable swordfish bites (determined from bait and/or leader damage), of which 25 were hooked (identified by strike indicator being up), and 21 of those landed. Thirteen blue sharks were captured and released, 9 in alive but good condition, and four in alive but poor condition. There were several instances where there was evidence of additional shark bites. There was also extensive bait depredation by what was believed to be squid.

During a trip fishing near San Clemente Island, blue sharks appeared abundant and were being caught frequently. Due to the interaction, fishing operations were suspended early to avoid further interaction. Having pulled the buoy gear early, effort was focused on bluefin tuna fishing during the night where 7 were landed on rod-and-reel gear before relocating to another area.

While retrieving gear on the late afternoon of December 2, 2022, several with fish on, the crew lost track of one buoy/flag. Efforts to locate it during the evening and night were unsuccessful, however, during the early morning hours of December 23, the flag was located, and gear recovered.

Fishery Interactions

During most fishing trips during 2022 it was common to be fishing in relative proximity (~0.5-3 miles) to other DSBG vessels. At no time was there any issue or conflict with any of those encountered and all interactions were professional.

During 2022 there were numerous recreational vessels fishing the same areas, and on any given day there would be 10+ vessels nearby. Most are courteous and avoid the gear, but there is a small proportion who do not. Some deploy rod-and-reel gear within 30 meters of DSBG and while there have been no entanglement issues, if a fish is hooked, there will be an issue.

One fish was lost on November 14, 2022, when the mainline was severed by another vessel. The bite indicator was up, and the fish identified as a swordfish, however, there were several other fish hooked at the time, so pulling the gear immediately wasn't an option. After, about 90 minutes, the gear was

retrieved, and it was obvious it had been severed by a propellor. It is not clear who may have run the gear over, but there was substantial traffic in the area, most of which were recreational vessels, but also two naval ships conducting operations.

Considerations for 2023

More effort for 2023 is planned. During 2022 there was continued and consistently good fishing for other HMS species (Bluefin), and due to poor swordfish fishing reports, fishing effort was focused on other species.

Data

We maintain a detailed fishing log for every set made. This data is available for research purposes upon request.

DSBG EFP Report for 2022: F/V Fishtail USCG #1031136
Owner/Operator Mike Graves

April 17, 2023

In mid September 2022 all the pandemic related hurdles were jumped and the new engine was in the boat and ready to go. All the buoy gear was loaded, stowed, and ready for action. The only problem was the lack of good fishing report around the northern Channel Islands. It was going to cost more fuel and time for a maybe. I ended up crewing for the FV Defiance on a 4 day trip where we caught 1 200 lb swordfish on our first set. The rest of the remaining 3 days were uneventful as far as fishing.

The FV Fishtail is now for sale and I am searching for a more seaworthy vessel that will allow me to fish my DSBG EFP as well as my limited entry groundfish permit at the same time around the pinnacles, walls, and canyons where both of these species congregate.

Thank you,
Mike Graves

Steve Greyshock
F/V Emma Ray
2022 Season

We made two trips without an observer, because he was unavailable, and no swordfish or by-catch were caught. We used squid and mackerel for bait.

We had heard that some swordfish was being caught off San Diego but the price of fuel prohibited us from making the trip.

It would be best if we could run more gear, at least 15-20 sets of gear instead of 10.

Sincerely,
Steve Greyshock

EFP review committee,

My name is Fred Hepp and I am reporting for the **Spaniard 2022 DSBG year end report**. I fish with my co-permit holder and boat owner Sean Robertson. Our year started late as we could not get a haul out til August due to Covid Pandemic backup.

Our year was not spectacular as we had 9 sets for 3 swordfish. Usually doing 2 day trips. We lost one fish . And on a separate trip did harpoon a swordfish, but was not buoy gear fishing. We had 4 days of coverage by an observer, 44 percent. Did see a couple other boats , but no issues with overcrowded fishing grounds. An interesting note, again we had a hot water year with several months of water temps in the 70's. This is not normal in our area , and it was a La Niña year where you would think water temps would have been cooler than normal. I did hear of several boats having decent Harpoon Swordfishing but they were using airplanes and seeing fish underwater. Every year is a little different!

As for the financial aspects each trip would cost us around \$500 for fuel, ice and bait. we were hoping for a fish a trip, but ended up with 3 fish in 4 trips. we were getting \$8/ lb. With an average of #180 per fish that is approximately \$1500 per fish. If we can average a fish per day it could be profitable.

Our gear has worked out well, feel we could fish a couple more set ups as we only fish one hook per line and the fact we hardly ever see another boat near us. Enjoyed our season just had commitments during our prime fishing time. Hope to be able to fish more this coming season.

Fred Hepp

Sean Robertson

Reel Deep DSBG report from 2022 .

In total there were 4 trips covering 4 days on the water. 10 hooks were set per day (40 in all) with an average of 7 hours of soak time per day. Observer coverage was 100%, covering each day of fishing. In total 1 fish was landed,

Blake Hermann

Sharon G's DSBG report from 2022 .

In the 2022 season we set for a total of 5 days for a total of 50 hooks. Bait's average soak time was 8 hours with 1 fish landed. Observer coverage was zero over all trips. 2022 was a primarily harpoon season, which is why DSBG sets this year were so low this year.

Blake Hermann

2022 DSBG Elizabeth H

For the 2022 DSBG season the Elizabeth H made 10 sets, 7 of which were observed. Of those 10 sets only 3 swords, 1 thresher and one escolar were caught. The overall lack of swordfish caught by buoy gear in the Southern California Bight forced me to concentrate on other fisheries as revenue sources to provide for my family.

In my opinion, in order to make this a viable permanent fishery such as the one on the East & Gulf Coasts, we simply must be allowed the ability to fish more gear and have the option to fish both day and nighttime gear in order to accurately target the swordfish. I urge the council to allow the EFP's put forth by myself and several others to test this theory and make this a lucrative fishery for ALL permit holders.

2022 DSBG season, F.V. Patricia J

Turned out to be a less than desirable DSBG fishing season for us. Started off with good fishing with harpoon we didn't set the buoy gear everyday and when we did we caught 0 fish on the DSBG. We started fishing in the beginning of August and didn't catch our first buoy gear fish until the end of September. We fished a total 53 sets caught and released 1 Thresher shark and the remainder of our catch was swordfish, so I believe we did very well at catching what we were targeting. Having a few extra buoys to fish at different depths would help to increase catch.

From our observation when the fish were finning they were not biting, when the fish were biting they were not finning. Similar to drift gill net fishing during a good harpoon season. Once again if we had a few more buoys to do different depths it could help increase catch when there not at the standard daytime depth.

On two of our trips we had NOAA, MNFS observers for a total of 9 days. observers are interesting to have on board ,everyone is so different, some are ready for the adventure and know what to expect ,some are not. we have some funny stories im sure they do too. One observer we took out saw his first ever whale in the wild!

Like any fishery there will be good to poor seasons depending on many factors, we are thankful to be involved with the DSBG program as it is a great way to sustainably harvest swordfish and goes well with harpoon fishing. if we could get a bit more distance to from the buoys to scout for finning fish it would really help for harpooning, when were in the tower with gyro binoculars we can monitor the DSBG area from quite a distance, a extra mile could make a big difference to up our harpoon catch.

Thank You ,Kent and Toni

Stephen Mintz, Fishing vessel D. J. Report 2022 DSBG EFP

Our Albacore season this year ended later than previous seasons. We had several things to do to the vessel and the gear to get ready. When we completed that, purchased bait, groceries, Coast Guard Sticker, fuel, and actually sent in our notice of trip. At that time we had a death in the family. By the time all tasks necessary were completed, it was mid-December and a little on the late side to begin our season. I do fully intend to participate in the 2023 fishing season.

Thank you, Stephen Mintz

Nathan Perez
F/V Bear Flag 2

Dsbg report 2022

The 2022 deep set buoy gear season was slow to say the least. We focused more on the harpoon fishery because it was more productive this season. We only made a few sets due to the low catch rate this year. Maybe with more gear we could've had a better dsbg season. We weren't able to make any night set buoy gear sets this year but plan to make up for it this next season. I wish I had more to report for this past season but unfortunately it was a slow year. I hope next season is better.

Perguson
F/V ESPADA
Report for 2022 DSBG

Sorry to say we did not get any fishing in with the DSBG in 2022.

We have had our share of personal hardships in regards to health, sickness and the passing of loved ones.

We are looking forward to fishing the 2023 season.

Thank You

Tim Ferguson

F/G ESPADA

Pacific Fisheries Management Council 2023 EFP Summary Report

2015-2022 PIER Deep-Set Buoy Gear and Linked Buoy Gear EFP Update

May, 2023

Prepared by: Chugey A. Sepulveda, PhD & Scott A. Aalbers, MS

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Address: 315 Harbor Drive South, Oceanside CA. 92054; www.pier.org

EFP Fishing Vessels: *Gold Coast, Aurelia, Spirit, Leah Gail and Three Boys*

PIER EFP background and progress to date: PIER has managed two groups of cooperative fishers operating under exempted status to test both deep-set buoy gear (DSBG; 2015-22) and linked buoy gear (LBG; 2018-22) off the California coast. To standardize gear configurations between vessels, both DSBG and LBG configurations were designed and assembled by the EFP manager. Fishers were also trained on gear deployment, responsibilities as EFP participants and rationale behind different bycatch mitigation features. Gear characteristics were detailed in the initial EFP submission based on gear development work conducted during NOAA sponsored research trials (2011-22). Cooperative fisher training sessions were performed with all team members onboard both the PIER research vessel as well as during dockside trials on respective team-member vessels. All cooperative fishers were issued vessel logbooks, signed EFP documentation and observer staffing protocols prior to the initiation of fishing activities. Vessel activities were monitored using NOAA certified observers issued through the NOAA West Coast Observer Program as well as an independent electronic monitoring study (2020-2021).

DSBG EFP Fishing Effort

(2015-2022): Despite cooperative fisher interest in DSBG deployments above Point Conception, all DSBG fishing effort to date continues to be focused from the Channel Islands (~34°N) to the Mexican border out to ~100 nautical miles

(~120°W). Set activity and locations continue to be influenced

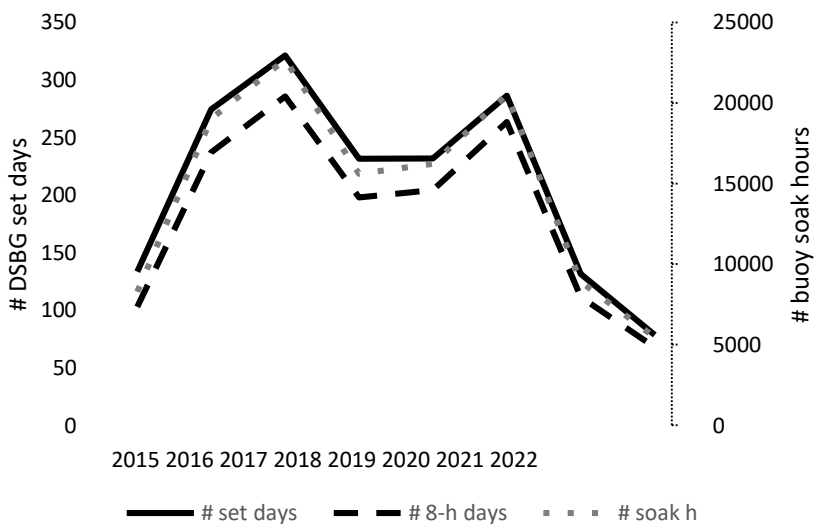


Figure 1. PIER DSBG-EFP fishing effort from 2015-2022.

by proximity to homeport, market price and fish availability. Relative to previous seasons, deep-set fishing activity was greatly reduced in 2022 with limited effort clumped into small areas of regional productivity. In the 2022 season there were only 83 collective DSBG sets performed by the group on 31 trips (2.6 d average) (Figure 1). The effort and trip length in 2022 was much lower than that of previous seasons. For example, the 2020 season had over 3.5 times the effort of 2022 and trip length was nearly double that of this past season (83 in 2022 vs 291 DSBG sets performed in 2020 with mean trip duration of 2.6 vs 4.0 d). When presented in soak hours, DSBG fishing effort in 2022 decreased to just 5,800 h compared to the 20,859 soak hours of the 2020 fishing season. Collectively the EFP has now logged more than 119,000 soak hours since 2015. Reduced fishing effort in 2022 was attributed to slow fishing conditions and the lack of swordfish in the Southern California Bight.

Overall, a total of 1,726 DSBG sets have been performed since 2015, with nearly 17,000 pieces of gear deployed under the PIER DSBG EFP. As reported previously, only one piece of gear has been lost to date (due to engine problems during the 2016 season).

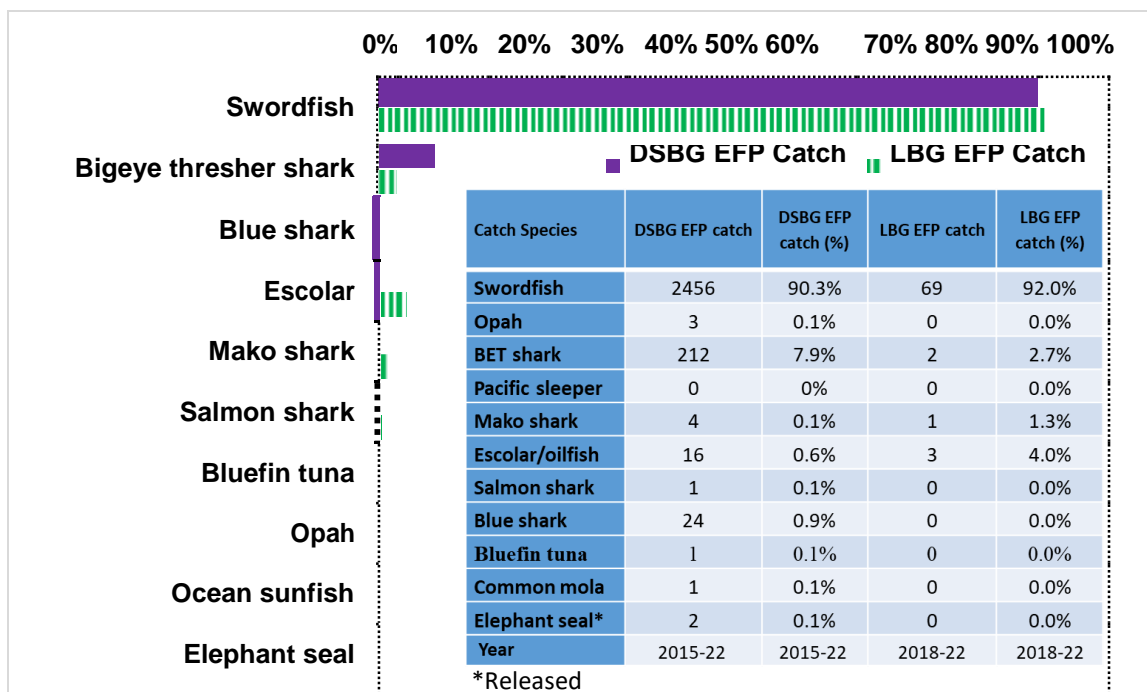


Figure 2. Catch composition from both deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) and linked buoy gear (LBG) sets performed by the PIER EFP groups (2015-2022).

DSBG Catch: Since 2015, the PIER DSBG EFP team has landed nearly 2,500 swordfish on more than 1,500 standardized 8-hr fishing days. Overall, swordfish have comprised over 90% of the total catch, with bigeye thresher sharks making up an additional 8% (Figure 2). Other marketable

species caught during the EFP trials include opah, escolar and mako sharks. Non-marketable catch has made up less than 1% of total catch and has primarily consisted of blue sharks.

Target catch rates have varied by vessel and year, with mean annual catch rates ranging from 1.1 to 2.0 swordfish per standardized 8-hr set day up through the 2021 season. In 2022, daily swordfish catch rates for the PIER EFP group dropped to 0.6 swordfish/8-h day and marked the first year that DSBG swordfish catch dropped below one swordfish per 8-h set day. Average daily catch rates in 2022 were the lowest since EFP trials were initiated in 2015, down from a peak in 2017 when the average annual catch rate for the five DSBG EFP vessels was nearly 2 swordfish/8-h d and up to 2.5 swordfish/8-h d for one of the PIER EFP vessels.

EFP Observation: Observation of the PIER-DSBG EFP was initially (2015-2018) staffed and coordinated by PIER. In 2018, responsibility for observer coordination shifted to the NOAA West Coast Region (WCR) Observer Program. Because observer placement was managed by the WCR over the past five seasons, observation rates and specifics are not reported for DSBG or LBG in this summary. In 2020-2021, PIER EFP vessels also participated in a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation supported electronic monitoring (EM) study. The findings from this work will be published in 2023 and support the use of EM as a future option for monitoring the DSBG and LBG fishery.

All EFP vessels continue to perform check in and out procedures (with NOAA, CDFW, and PIER) and vessels continue to furnish PIER with detailed activity logs. To assess non-observed trips, catch and bycatch were reported daily to PIER via a mandatory check-in procedure and verified through logbook and landing receipt records. All swordfish catch was also tracked using traceability collar tags on each fish, which continues to generate positive feedback from local markets.

Linked Buoy Gear Description: LBG was designed to facilitate deep-set fishing under heightened sea conditions or from larger vessels without the need to track individual pieces of DSBG. LBG retains similar bycatch mitigation features as DSBG (i.e., rapid descent rates, strike detection, active tending). Hook depths and catch composition have been demonstrated to be similar for both LBG and DSBG. LBG also allows vessels to set a higher number of hooks (all 30) at depths that are within the swordfish daytime target range.

LBG EFP Fishing Effort (2018-22): Exempted LBG trials commenced in September of 2018. Similar to DSBG, PIER assisted with training, rigging and outfitting of EFP vessels with LBG equipment. PIER has also expanded LBG training and outfitting to the four additional commercial

vessels (*F/Vs* Chula, Piky, Bear Flag, DJ) that were issued LBG EFPs independently through the PFMC. Training exercises were conducted onboard the PIER research vessel as well as through dockside events.

LBG EFP effort has remained low likely due to limited testing within the Southern California Bight (many of the fishers have opted to deploy DSBG over LBG when fishing near the coast or proximal to other vessels). From the PIER LBG EFP, 55 LBG sets have been made with over 400 soak hours. A total of 487 LBG sections containing 1,460 baited hooks have been deployed between Santa Cruz Island and the Mexican border. Eighty-two percent of LBG sets consisted of a full complement of 10 LBG sections, including 30 baited hooks, while the remaining 10 set days included a combination of both DSBG and a partial complement of between 3 and 7 sections of LBG. PIER has recently published additional LBG set data from research trials in 2023.

LBG Catch: Catch on LBG has consisted primarily of swordfish (92%; n=69), with additional catch consisting of bigeye thresher shark, mako shark and escolar (Figure 2). All LBG catch was marketable and no catch was released or discarded. Although comparison of catch rates between LBG and DSBG are premature due to (1) the limited number of LBG EFP sets to date, (2) the learning curve associated with using the new gear type, and (3) the lack of a full season for comparison, initial daily swordfish catch rates on LBG are similar to those using DSBG. We believe these data to be preliminary given that catch rates during PIER LBG research trials increased steadily from 2015 to 2020, suggesting that EFP catch rates will increase with gear experience. Differences in gear configurations, crew familiarity and other variables between LBG and DSBG also confound initial comparisons.

Market Dynamics: Although swordfish catch rates were reduced in 2021-22, price for deep-set caught swordfish remained elevated throughout the fishing season (suggesting that price was not a factor in the reduced effort observed in 2022). Market trends during past EFP seasons showed early season price starting out relatively high (~\$7.50 to \$8.00) and proceeding to drop throughout the fishing season. The price drop was usually associated with the influx of landings from both foreign fleets (i.e., Mexico) and the CA DGN fishery. In 2022 fishing was slow and landings were reduced from both the neighboring Mexican fleet in Ensenada, Mexico as well as local DGN vessels (pers. communication, O. Sosa, Ensenada, Mexico). In 2022, price for deep-set swordfish did not follow the typical late season decline observed in previous seasons.

Social Interactions: Members of the PIER EFP group reported a few conflicts with other commercial deep-set EFP vessels as well as recreational deep-drop fishing vessels that interacted with fishing operations by fishing too close to deployed gear sets. Considering that less than 30

commercial vessels have been fishing DSBG in the last few years, EFP fishers have expressed concern over future crowding potential, especially in years like 2022 when swordfish were only found within a few productive areas.

EFP Outreach: Throughout the EFP trials, PIER has worked with cooperative fishers to communicate EFP progress, summarize logbook data, place observers on vessels, and provide routine reports to HMS managers. In addition, PIER has continued to refine gear design (DSBG and LBG), assess stock structure and address other research questions that relate to swordfish and other HMS species. All work is presented at regional meetings and published in the scientific literature. PIER will continue to provide updates to the community, PFMC, and its advisory bodies.

F/V Saronga - Max Rippo

The Saronga intended to fish DSBG October-December in 2023, but was unable to due to a medical condition (double hernia) that I needed an operation for upon my return from Alaska in October. I intend to continue in the fishery next season.

0 Sets

0 Fish

0 Bycatch

I hope to see the sword fishery continue to develop new methods here in San Diego but am happy to continue trying with DSBG for the time being.

Good Morning Chris , 4/24/2023

This is my report for 2022 EFP DSBG . The year started with health issues primarily lower back pain. I got a epidural cortisone shot in the end August. Then my siblings and I sold the property that we live at for sixty plus years and family split up.

I didn't get to go out for DSBG in 2022 due to having to not move once but move twice and ended up in South Oceanside. I plan on going for swordfish this year for sure, I may bring boat up to Oceanside in October 1st and work from Oceanside and in the other months fish out of G.ST. All the gear is on boat and ready to go. Can't wait to get started fishing this season.

Romolo Ghio boat ST. Aniello

2022 deep set bouy gear report F/V Extremis

F/V Extremis deployed 16 sets DSBG in result landed 28 swordfish, 1 bluefin (hooked at 1,000 feet) 2 bigeye threshers which were successfully released unharmed.

Gear set up

F/V Extremis DSBG is set up with the mainlines being 1,000 feet depth with **one** 4 fathom leader and **one** 16/0 circle hook which we attach at the 8 pound weight and 2 lights, 1 flashing and 1 steady.

Bait used

F/V Extremis use squid only.

Recommendations

F/V Extremis we feel that 15-20 sets of DSBG can be manageable (especially with a good pair of binoculars) keeping most set in full sight. If given the opportunity to set more DSBG it would be beneficial to set different depths, color lights, length of leader during slower parts of the season, after all we only use **one** hook on each line resulting in just 10 baits. We have experimented with using 2 hooks on one line which resulted in massive tangles. Also this season we saw an influx of sport deep drop boats we have not had any entanglements yet, However with so many boats fishing same area we feel they deplete the school faster thats give us less chance to make a catch of multiple fish.

F/V Extremis would like to thank everyone involved with DSBG program and giving us the opportunity to participate in this amazing fishery

Owner/operator Jordan Souza
Operator Jordan Souza
F/V Extremis

Dr. Tracy, Chairman Anderson, PMFC, HMSMT, HMSAS
Executive Director PFMC
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Portland, OR 97220
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Dear Dr. Tracy, Chairman Anderson, PMFC, HMSMT, HMSAS

PFMC, HMSHT

This is the 2022 annual report for DSBG fishing efforts under the EFP issued to Ben and Jack Stephens pertaining to the F/V Tres Mujeres (33ft. trawler) and DEA (24ft. trailerable skiff)

Tres Mujeres

In 2022 F/V Tres Mujeres engaged in 27 days of fishing effort using standard DSBG combined with other gear types to target primarily swordfish and any other marketable species. 27 sets were made using 10 pieces of gear each day for each set (some were hauled and re-set). Each piece used a single hook at bottom of gear configuration. Squid was the primary bait used on 100% of the gear.

During the 27 total days fished, 6 days were with observable coverage which amounted to 22%. Labor cost of observers was covered by NMFS. Over those 27 days 10 swordfish were landed, and 4 were released/lost. In addition, 5 other species of Mahi were caught hook and line and landed for personal consumption.

Total pounds of swordfish landed – 1584 lbs.

*The **Gross** revenue for swordfish landed: \$9826.75

DSBG swordfish average price per fish - \$982.68

Average price per pound - \$6.20

**Fifth year primary operating expenditures which included the basic fuel & oil, bait, ice, tackle, crew, food (observer included) far exceeded revenues which is one reason the vessel did not operate as many days as previous years.

**NOTE: That even though average price per pound decreased from 2021, overall revenues were not nearly as high as projected due to fewer days fished, but mainly a lower daily catch rate. A lower per trip average of fish landed which lead to fishing efforts being diverted to not just other fisheries such as diving (Dave) and albacore and longlining (for Ben), along with other career opportunities (for Jack) as well.*

*** NOTE: Expenditures do not account for the overall cost of operations. This does not represent operational cost like safety equipment and inspections, boat repairs, slip and insurance fees.*

DEA

In 2022 F/V DEA did not fish due to vessel repairs. In addition, low catch and lower average market price affected decision on viability to economically make it worth fishing. Efforts were shifted elsewhere.


In analyzing the data from both vessels and comparing their efficiency and effectiveness, 2022 was a season that did not yield as much catch/revenues as hoped. 2022 was an unpredictable year mostly due to late sporadic fishing and per unit catch effort.


Moving forward, we would like to continue to pursue fishing the standard DSBG in 2023 in order to record further data that will continue to help determine the economic viability of using standard DSBG to target swordfish using both larger multi-day vessels vs. 1-2 day smaller fishing vessels.


As an endnote we would like to point out that 2022 commercial DSBG fishing season continued to be significantly impacted by the influx of sport/recreational fisherman. For the past 3 seasons we have witnessed a huge influx of recreational fisherman targeting the same species. Just like the previous seasons, the further the season progressed more and more recreational fisherman participated in the "Deep Drop" fishing and small fishing grounds became highly competitive with a concentration of recreational fishing vessels. This opened the door for a whole host of conflicts:

1. Recreational vessels setting gear in close proximity to CF resulting in gear conflict and competition for same concentration of fish selecting multiple baits.
2. **Recreational gear's surface footprint (horizontal line attached to their gear) extends upward of ½ mile behind their vessels. This becomes a danger to both navigation and entanglement of protected marine species which CF are scrutinized for and have to fish a vertical line with minimum surface footprint (usually less than 5 yards).**
3. Often there is a > 10:1 ratio of Rec vessels to CF vessels. Each rec. vessel fishes 2-3 lines and can bring aboard 2 fish per angler. (some vessels have 6+ anglers. = 12+ fish harvested a day). This leads to overfishing by recreational anglers and drives **the illegal sales of fish** and does NOT promote a sustainable fishery.
4. **Recreational vessels using illegal harpoons to assist in landing their fish and use on surface swimming Swordfish and Bluefin Tuna.**

This DSBG method/fishery was designed and tested within the commercial swordfishing fleet to help **augment** the harpoon and DGN fisheries. It should be kept solely as a commercial fishing method/fishery. Allowing recreational fisherman to use practices and techniques that CF use to land swordfish and bluefin tuna would be a grave mistake. By allowing recreational fisherman to use harpoons and spears to assist in landing these species will support more illegal activities and blur the lines between CF and recreational fishing permitting and legal regulation. Lastly, allowing "Deep Drop" fishing and the use of power assisted reels, recreational fishermen **are not** truly practicing "sport" techniques and harvest more fish than they can reasonably personally consume in one year thus opening the door for continued illegal sales of "sport" caught fish.

Dave Stephens 

Ben Stephens 

Jack Stephens 

F/V Tres Mujeres & F/V DEA

Vessel Lil Jack #32648

Home Port: Dana Point Ca,

We did not fish this year between covid and the oil spill that occurred it was difficult for me to commit funds to participate.

Just a quick comment for the 3-4 years prior I requested the council to allow us to fish more gear to make this fishery profitable. Now I see Pier applied and was accepted for and extended link buoy gear EFP that increase their hook count over 300%. While Nathan Perez's EFP for D.S.B.G. was only extended from 10 to 15 pieces of gear allowed to fish. How is this fair for the D.S.B.G. fleet? Equal access and participation I this fishery are not happening at this point. Why has the council not automatically extended the rights to fish more gear to everyone in the fleet automatically instead of having to ask and submit it in writing? At this point it is obvious that the council has finally acknowledged the fact we need to fish more gear. At this point the fleet the fleet should not have to ask for permission via submission of an EFP it should be granted automatically. The council and their handling of these issues only reinforces their lack of leadership and complete disregard for the participants in this fishery.

Respectfully,

Matt White

Zack Roach
F/V Addiction
DSBG 2022 Report

For the 2022 season the FV/Addiction conducted 4 sets of DSBG. Of those sets caught 1 swordfish 124 lbs and released a blue shark alive.

Observer coverage was for all 3 of 4 sets.

In regard to recommendations, we agree there should be more sets allowed. We feel that 15-20 sets can be managed responsibly by one boat. More gear will increase our area of coverage and expand our zone of fishing. Additionally, a larger fishing footprint of 5 miles area would allow for increased coverage. Plus let us fish at night

Zack Roach

FV Chula 2022

Started the first of 8 trips August 17th 2022.

We had a total of 80 days fishing, traveling or waiting for weather.

We had a total of 55 Swordfish, 27 were harpoon fish.

On deep set buoy gear we made 32 sets and 7 sets were observed for 28 swordfish, 2 big eye thrashers, both released alive and in good condition.

All 10 sets of the buoy gear are set at 1000 feet, with a 8 pound weight, 1 circle hook with a single squid and assorted lights and colors.

We did not fish the linked gear.

With rising expenses especially fuel, it is hard to run all over trying to find new spots with out a lot of boats around.

Recommendations

To allow boats with link gear permits on the boat to deploy 15 sets of buoy gear when your off shore to cover a little more area in the effort to find more fish with slow fishing and high fuel cost.

John Foster

F/V Chula