

PRELIMINARY EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS FOR 2025-2026

Groundfish Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) authorize vessels to engage in collection of limited experimental data through activities that would otherwise be prohibited by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act or MSA) or other fishery regulations. As described in [Council Operating Procedure \(COP\) 19](#), EFPs may promote increased utilization of underutilized species, realize the expansion potential of the groundfish fishery, or increase the harvest efficiency of the fishery. EFPs are commonly used to explore ways to reduce effort on overfished species, encourage innovation and efficiency in the fisheries, provide access to target species while directly measuring the bycatch associated with those fishing strategies, or to evaluate current and proposed management measures.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) process for considering and recommending EFP proposals is a biennial one that is synchronized with its biennial groundfish harvest specifications and management measures decision making process (see Agenda Item E.5 and E.7, respectively). Under this agenda item, the Council should review EFP applications and determine which to forward for public review. Any Council-recommended modifications to EFP applications will be communicated to the EFP sponsors and the public. If appropriate, the Council may also task the Scientific and Statistical Committee with conducting a more thorough review of EFP proposals, prior to the June 2024 Council meeting. Yield set-asides needed for the EFPs should also be adopted. These set asides will be taken into account when the Council adopts preliminary biennial management measures for 2025-2026 under Agenda Item E.7.

The Council is scheduled to make its final recommendations for 2025-2026 EFPs and set asides at its June 2024 meeting, at which time final harvest specifications and management measures are also adopted. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will then be notified of those EFPs the Council included in its final recommendations. Council Operating Procedure 19 further describes the process and required components of EFP applications.

2025-2026 EFP applications have been submitted for Council consideration at this meeting, as listed in the following table.

Sponsor	Short Description and Notes	Groundfish Set-Aside(s) Requested/ Salmon Bycatch Caps
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) (Attachment 1)	CDFW 2025-2026 Exempted Fishing Permit Application and 2023 Interim Report September 27, 2023 Continuation of previous 2023-2024 EFP with addition of quillback and yelloweye rockfishes	None (See p. 3, Harvest Limits)
Dan Platt & Dan Yoakum	Vertical Hook and Line Research Estimate	See p. 6-7 (as numbered at top).

Progress reports on 2023-2024 EFPs are due at this meeting and should include catch-to-date and intent to continue the EFP in 2023. Progress reports provided for the advance briefing book are as follows: California Department of Fish and Wildlife EFP as part of Attachment 1 and the Emley/Platt Yellowtail Rockfish Jig Fishing EFP, that allows the testing of natural bait (Attachment 3). Interim reports for other 2023-2024 EFPs have not yet been received at the time of the advanced Briefing Book production.

Council Action:

- 1. Decide which 2025-2026 EFP applications should be moved forward for public review, providing preliminary recommendations for modification, as appropriate.**
- 2. Decide whether or not to refer any EFPs to the Scientific and Statistical Committee or other advisory bodies to engage in a more thorough EFP review.**
- 3. Adopt yield set-asides to accommodate those EFPs recommended for public review.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.6, Attachment 1: California Department of Fish And Wildlife 2025-2026 Exempted Fishing Permit Application And 2023 Interim Report September 27, 2023.
2. Agenda Item E.6, Attachment 2: Vertical Hook and Line Research Estimate (Platt/Yoakum).
3. Agenda Item E.6, Attachment 3: Interim Report for the Emley Platt EFP (2023-2024).
4. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#))

Agenda Order:

- E.6 Preliminary Exempted Fishing Permits for 2025-2026 Jim Seger
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt Preliminary Exempted Fishing Permits and Proposed Set-Asides for Public Review and Provide Other Guidance, as Necessary

PFMC
10/12/23