

## LIMITED ENTRY FIXED GEAR ACTIONS: GEAR ENDORSEMENTS, COST RECOVERY, AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

The Council began its second review of the limited entry fixed gear (LEFG) permit stacking program (i.e., primary tier fishery) in September 2020. In June 2022, the Council completed its review with [adoption of the final report](#), including research and data needs and recommendation for program changes.

Following the adoption of the review, the Council prioritized a series of potential management measures off the groundfish workload list related to the LEFG program and gear marking and other entanglement risk reduction measures for vessels that operate under the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan that use pot and longline gear in March 2023. The Council recommended splitting those items into two packages (fixed gear marking and LEFG follow on actions) with fixed gear marking being prioritized initially. The Council took final action on the fixed gear marking and entanglement risk reduction measures package in June 2024 and the associated regulations are anticipated to be in place by the start of 2026.

In September 2023, the Council adopted a purpose and need and range of alternatives for the LEFG follow on actions. The alternatives are centered around potential changes in gear endorsements to promote flexibility, development of a cost recovery program for the primary tier fishery, and other administrative changes. While the Council was originally scheduled to adopt a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) in November 2024, the action was delayed in order to consider the analysis and terms and conditions of the Humpback and Leatherback Sea Turtle Biological Opinion (discussed under Agenda Item H.2). The Council should consider the analysis provided in Attachment 1 and adopt a PPA if possible at the meeting. The selection of a final preferred alternative tentatively scheduled for June 2025.

Additionally, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) provided a report in response to one of the requests from the LEFG review regarding owner-on-board exemptions. The Council should consider the report and provide any recommendations or comments to the NMFS.

### **Council Tasks:**

- 1. Consider any revisions to the range of alternatives**
- 2. Adopt a preliminary preferred alternative, if possible**
- 3. Provide guidance on next steps**

### **Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item H.7, Attachment 1: Draft EA/RIR Analysis (*Electronic Only*).
2. Agenda Item H.7.a, NMFS Report 1: Owner-On-Board Exemptions in the Primary Sablefish Fishery.
3. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

### **Agenda Order:**

H.7 Limited Entry Fixed Gear Actions: Gear Endorsements, Cost Recovery,  
and Other Administrative Changes

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- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
- b. Public Comment
- c. **Council Action:** Revise Range of Alternatives, as Appropriate, Adopt Preliminary Preferred Alternative, Provide Guidance on Next Steps

PFMC  
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