

LIMITED ENTRY FIXED GEAR ACTIONS: GEAR ENDORSEMENTS, COST RECOVERY, AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES- FINAL ACTION

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) underwent its second review of the limited entry fixed gear (LEFG) permit stacking program (i.e., primary tier fishery) from September 2020 to June 2022. Following the adoption of the review, in March 2023 the Council prioritized a series of potential management measures off the groundfish workload list related to the LEFG program, including gear marking and other entanglement risk reduction measures for vessels that operate under the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan and use pot and longline gear. 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.

The Council adopted a purpose and need and range of alternatives for the LEFG follow on actions in September 2023 and chose a preliminary preferred alternative in March 2025. 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. Based on the recommendations from the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel in March 2025, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has provided NMFS Report 1 on a proposed cost recovery program. The Council should consider the analysis provided in Attachment 1 and information in NMFS Report 1 and adopt a final preferred alternative.

Additionally, Council staff have provided proposed fishery management plan (FMP) language for the Council and its advisory bodies to consider and adopt (*Supplemental Attachment 2*). Outside of direct changes proposed in the preliminary preferred alternative, *Supplemental Attachment 2* also proposes to update language regarding LEFG and open access allocations related to Amendment 6 to the groundfish FMP. As highlighted in Attachment 1 and during the March 2025 meeting, elements of the FMP are outdated relative to establishing allocations within the non-trawl fisheries. The Council directed staff to provide potential updates to describe the allocation policy without retaining specific historical elements.

Council Tasks:

- 1. Adopt a final preferred alternative.**
- 2. Adopt FMP language.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.2, Attachment 1: Draft EA/RIR/RFA Analysis (***Electronic Only***).
2. *Agenda Item E.2, Supplemental Attachment 2: Proposed FMP Changes.*
3. Agenda Item E.2.a, NMFS Report 1 on Cost Recovery Program.
4. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- E.2 Limited Entry Fixed Gear Actions: Gear Endorsements, Cost Recovery,
and Other Administrative Changes- Final Action Jessi Waller
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Preferred Alternative including a Fishery Management Plan Amendment.

PFMC
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