HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS – PRELIMINARY OR FINAL ACTION

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and HMS Management Team (HMSMT) held a joint meeting to discuss exempted fishing permits (EFPs). Both applicants Malcolm Mitchell (I.3 Attachment 1) and Kosha Arabi (I.3 Attachment 2) were present and spoke to the respective EFPs. We appreciate their initiative and creativity.

The HMSAS recommends the Council forward the Mitchell EFP to NMFS for issuance as written. The HMSAS sees value in expanding the gear's footprint when accompanied with technology that tracks the gear's location and movement.

The HMSAS continues to have questions about the Arabi EFP (I.3 Attachment 2). For example:

- What mitigation measures will the applicant include to minimize the potential for interactions with seabirds. For example, incorporating a streamer may prove effective. While the applicant does not believe there will be any, experienced fishermen who have used similar gear types from a vessel have expressed concern.

- The verbal description of the gear and how it will be prosecuted differed from the written materials submitted in the application.

- What measures will be utilized to ensure that user conflicts are minimized? The HMSAS expressed significant concerns about the potential for user conflicts. The HMSAS suggests limiting the deployment of the gear to five (5) pieces of this gear at any one time. Then after a year of operation, we can make more informed decisions about increasing the allowed number of deployed pieces of gear.

- The HMSAS assumes the active tending and footprint requirements for the permitted DSBG fishery will apply to this EFP. The HMSAS recommends this be clarified in a subsequent submission.

As such, the HMSAS recommends Arabi resubmit his EFP in March addressing concerns expressed by the Advisory Bodies.

PFMC
11/15/26