

**Regional Electronic Technology Implementation Plan: April 2019 Update  
Pacific Fishery Management Council Meeting, Rohnert Park, CA**

**Upcoming Pacific Fishery Management Council and NMFS WCR Actions**

*Integrating Electronic Monitoring in the West Coast Trawl Fishery*

The West Coast Regional Office (WCRO) is working on a final rule to implement EM in the whiting mid-water trawl and fixed gear fisheries, which is expected to publish in June 2019. The WCRO is also developing a proposed rule to implement EM for the non-whiting mid-water trawl and bottom trawl fisheries. Due to delays caused by the partial government shutdown, the WCRO will be discussing the implementation timeline for these two rules with the Council at this April meeting, looking at a new implementation date of January 2021. This new timeline envisions publication of the final regulations this summer, followed by development of the EM program guidelines with the Council in fall 2019. Provider applications would be due in June 2020, giving providers early 2020 to review the guidelines and prepare their applications. Vessel applications would be due in October 2020 and the program would transition to regulations in January 2021.

*Electronic Monitoring in the Drift Gillnet Fishery*

At its September 2017 meeting, the Council revised its purpose and need for increased monitoring in the drift gillnet fishery to collect information on bycatch in order to inform future discussions on monitoring. WCRO staff analyzed the Council's alternatives and reported the results to the Council its June 2018 meeting. At that meeting, the Council reaffirmed its preferred alternative adopted in September 2015. The Council's preferred alternative, as reaffirmed, is in the near term to achieve a 30 percent monitoring coverage level through a combination of human observers and electronic monitoring and work toward the objective of monitoring all vessels. In doing so, the Council requested NMFS find ways to ensure all vessels are capable of observation by electronic monitoring (including those vessels that cannot currently accommodate human observers). The Council plans to further consider its proposal at a future time as information becomes available on initiatives to enhance drift gillnet fishery monitoring.

The WCRO is working to obtain funding to deploy EM in the drift gillnet fishery for the 2020-2021 season. EM would be used to supplement observer coverage for previously unobservable vessels.

*Electronic Monitoring in the Commercial Rockfish Fishery*

The Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFS) was able to test a low-cost, small-scale, and transferrable EM system in 2018 on one exempted fishing permit (EFP) vessel. Video is yet to be analyzed. There is interest in 2 other EFPs targeting rockfish in Oregon and California to continue this research. Conversations have begun with the CA EFP and should begin soon with OR. The NWFS hopes to expand the types of units being tested in 2019.

*Electronic Reporting in the Observer Program*

The West Coast Groundfish Observer Program continues live testing Observer Program Technology Enhanced Collection System (OPTECS) software and ruggedized tablets. Live testing has expanded since 2018 and further refinement of the software continues alongside a revamp of the observer database that has existed since 2002.

### *Vessel Movement Monitoring*

After the Council took final action on measures to improve vessel movement monitoring in West Coast fisheries, implementation issues were identified that the Council will receive an update on at this April meeting. Pending the outcome of that discussion, the WCRO will be undertaking proposed and final rulemaking this year to implement the Council's recommendations, with a target implementation date of approved measures early 2020.

### **Related Activities**

#### *Electronic Fish Tickets*

California Department of Fish and Wildlife continues development and roll-out of electronic fish ticket requirements for all California commercial buyers. Use of e-tickets became voluntary in July 2018 and will be mandatory in July 2019.

#### *ET Policy Development*

NMFS will be providing an update at the May Council Coordinating Committee meeting on national policies under development related to the implementation of ET:

- an updated national ET Policy Directive,
- a final EM Cost Allocation Procedural Directive,
- a draft policy on the record retention schedule for EM video imagery that is held by NMFS (i.e., a federal record),
- a draft policy on the record retention schedule for video imagery that is held by third parties, on behalf of industry, and,
- a draft framework for new ET plans.