

EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS (EFP) FOR 2012

At its November 2011 meeting, the Council adopted harvest specifications and management measures for the 2012 Pacific sardine fishery. As part of the management measures the Council set aside 3,000 metric tons (mt) as a research set-aside. The intent of the set-aside is to continue aerial surveys that were conducted each year since 2008 by industry representatives. The Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Advisory Subpanel and the CPS Management Team supported the 3,000 mt set-aside to continue the aerial survey that has contributed to the sardine stock assessment. Because all or part of the aerial survey may be conducted during a period closed to directed harvest, an exempted fishing permit (EFP) from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will be required.

The EFP proposal requests access to 3,000 mt of Pacific sardine, for survey activity in the Pacific Northwest, submitted by the Northwest Sardine Survey, LLC (Agenda Item D.1.a, Attachment 1). The proposed research is very similar to previous years' aerial surveys, and will employ a two-stage sampling design. The first stage involves aerial transect sampling along pre-determined east-west transects, to photograph and estimate the surface area of sardine schools. The second stage involves at-sea sampling (point sets) to quantify the relationship between individual school surface area and biomass.

At the March meeting the Council is tasked with adopting an EFP proposal for public review. The Council is scheduled to make final recommendations on EFPs at its April 2012 meeting in Seattle, Washington. If recommended by the Council, the proposal would then be considered by NMFS, which issues EFPs. Any portion of the EFP set-aside not allocated to an EFP would be reallocated to the third period directed fishery (September 15-December 31), as would any portion of the set-aside not utilized during research.

Council Action:

Adopt Exempted Fishing Permit for Public Review.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item D.1.a, Attachment 1: Northwest Aerial Sardine Survey 2012 Application for Exempted Fishing Permit.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt EFP Proposals for Public Review

Kerry Griffin