

**False Killer Whale Take Reduction Team
Potential Solutions Work Group Teleconference, Friday, March 19, 2010**

Call Summary

Participants: Clint Funderburg, Andy Read, Brendan Cummings, Kris Lynch, Robin Baird, Eric Gilman, John Hall, David Laist, Bennett Brooks, Scott McCreary, Keith Bigelow, Michael Marsik, Kristy Long, Nancy Young, Karin Forney, Erin Oleson

Additional ideas generated since the February TRT meeting

- Deploy buoy to broadcast vessel sounds; break the positive reinforcement cycle of vessels=food
- Protocols for vessel reactions to false killer whale detection or interactions
- Adjusting vessel profiles based on Karin's findings of characteristics fishing methods or gear used by vessels with very high or very low bycatch or depredation
- In general, add potential solutions to brainstorm list based on additional findings from observer data

Update on new gear research:

- Clint discussed a gear modification involving the use of a small wire through the bait to change the acoustic reflection of the bait, with the goal of reducing false killer whale predation on the bait
 - Status:
 - Working with PIFSC and Observer Program to provide observers on the vessels using the gear modification
 - Working with PIFSC and Observer Program on experimental design (alternating experimental and control gear within or between baskets, etc.)
 - Plans to deploy experimental gear on both of Clint's vessels, on trip starting around 3/24
 - Clint will informally present the idea and any preliminary results to the Team at the April meeting
 - Experimental and observer protocols will be drafted by Keith and Michael and distributed to the Team ahead of the April meeting
- John discussed idea for using a plastic tube with embedded glass microspheres, to slide onto the wire loop to change the acoustic reflection of the bait, and possibly tunas on the hooks
 - Status:
 - Technically feasible, but no firm details yet on implementation
 - May be able to begin experimentation before end of TRT's 4th meeting
 - Geoff McPherson tested a similar concept, but different material/design; Erin will request Geoff bring samples of his gear modification to the April meeting
 - Suggestion that Paul Nachtigall might do tests with his captive false killer whale, Kina, to test her detection and response to the gear modification
- Andy will provide an update on any preliminary results from weak hook experiments in the North Atlantic

- Informal testing of a change in the use of spotlights on one of Clint's boats resulted in fewer lost fish; spotlight changes may be a strategy to pursue
 - Suggestion that Paul Nachtigall might test Kina's visual responses to get a threshold for luminosity detection

Prioritization of near-term solutions

- Mostly deferred this topic to the Team meeting for full discussion
- A few suggestions for high priority or short-term analyses, such as quantifying any reductions in depredation or bycatch if vessels move following interactions
- Request that predictive modeling be used to identify measures that would bring M&SI to below PBR, so in case technological fixes don't work, there are still management options

Protocols for near-term gear research

- Make sure to keep relevant people in the loop (e.g., PIFSC, Observer Program, Karin, Erin, Nancy)
- Adequate preparation and documentation so results can be used by the Team

Next steps

- Karin (via Nancy) will send data on the sequence of catch, depredation, and false killer whales to the Work Group
- Michael and Keith will meet with Clint 3/22 or 3/23 to discuss experimental protocols
- John and Clint will develop brief descriptions and plan for informal presentations of the gear modification experiments for the April TRT meeting
- Erin will request the Geoff McPherson bring samples of his gear modifications to the April TRT meeting
- Karin to mine observer data to identify distance/time vessels needs to move/wait following depredation event to avoid depredation on a subsequent set
- Andy will look into providing update on the North Atlantic weak hook experiments
- Eric to provide information on fleet communication protocols

*** No additional calls for this Work Group are scheduled before the April TRT meeting ***