

November 2016 Update

Regional Electronic Technology Implementation Plans: NMFS West Coast Region (WCR)--

Electronic Monitoring (EM) and Electronic Reporting (ER) Implementation

EM: Whiting midwater and fixed gear IFQ Fleets: Proposed rule published September 30, 2016. Rule implements an electronic monitoring (EM) program for two sectors of the limited entry trawl fishery. The regulatory amendment proposes to allow catcher vessels in the Pacific whiting fishery and fixed gear vessels in the shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) fishery to use EM in place of observers to meet the requirements of the Trawl Rationalization Program for 100-percent at-sea observer coverage. Public comment period ended October 3rd, and NMFS WCR is developing final rule with expectation that final rule published late November with effective date of January 1, 2017.

EM: Non-whiting midwater trawl and midwater trawl IFQ fleets: Pacific Fishery Management Council scheduled to select preferred alternative at its April Meeting. Goal is to have final implementing regulations for January 1, 2018.

ER: Sablefish Rule—Final rule package sent to HQs and awaiting publication. Its expected to publish by December 1, 2016. Rule will be effective January 1, 2017. This action will revise fishery monitoring and equipment requirements for commercial groundfish fisheries, including a new requirement for submitting electronic fish tickets for limited entry fixed gear and open access vessels that land sablefish. It will also revise limited entry permitting administrative actions and provide greater flexibility and efficiencies for limited entry groundfish fishery participants. This action will also make administrative changes and clarifying edits to improve consistency of the regulations with past Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) actions and with the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP)

ER-Vessel Movement Monitoring Rule—The original goal was to have the rule published in January 2017 and final rule in April—but this rule making will be delayed because of loss of staff and current staff diverted to higher priority project.

ER: Groundfish Electronic Logbooks: Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) has recently received \$100,000 for this project. PSMFC has developed Microsoft access data entry programs that can be used to as basis of E-logbook for trawlers. Converting this program to a web-enabled program would allow this program to be placed on a laptop and the laptop to capture data without being connected to the internet. The captain would use it at sea, capture the data, and then upload the data when at shore. This logbook and application can also be used for the sablefish fishery. Similarly, a disconnected application can be used for remote buyers of trawl and fixed gear fish. This project will add the trawl catch shares program and the sablefish tier fishery, and help achieve the goals of the West Coast Region (WCR)/Pacific Fishery Management Council's Regional Electronic Technologies Implementation Plan. It will also fulfill the WCR's commitment to the Pacific Fishery Management Council to implement a federal logbook in the sablefish fishery.

EM: Cost Analysis: (No new progress) Cost estimates on fixed gear and whiting show industry cost savings. Cost analysis for bottomtrawl fleet also shows cost savings, but we are not confident about these estimates. Few bottom trawl vessels participated in the 2015 EM exempted fishing permit (EFP), and cost estimates are sensitive to assumptions about the number of participants, the number of trips, and various fixed costs categories, such as storage and service fees. It is not clear why there is a lack of interest by bottom trawlers in participating in EFPs but we expect increased participation in 2016.

ER: Vessel Movement Monitoring (VMM): The Council adopted increased ping rates for vessels currently under regulation (groundfish, salmon troll, California halibut, ridgeback prawn, and cucumber trawl). The original goal was to have the rule published in January 2017 and final rule in April—but this rule making will be delayed because of loss of staff and current staff diverted to higher priority project. The Council will consider the use of VMM in the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Drift Gillnet fishery when it reviews HMS regulations for 100% monitoring (through EM or observers) for 2018.

EM: Groundfish Electronic Monitoring Statistical Research: Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission has recently received \$100,000 to analyze EM data for purposes of supporting upcoming regulations concerning the whiting, bottom trawl, and fixed gear fisheries. Subprojects include comparison of observer to EM data for those trips that carried observers in the 2015 Exempted Fishing Permit, analysis to support less than 100% video review, analysis that supports the development of EM auditing standards for when the responsibility for video review is transferred to the industry, comparisons of retained catch on whiting trips to fish tickets to verify captains' estimates of cod-end capacity, and developing new camera/sensor/fish handling processes that reduce the amount of video recording needed and improve estimates of catch.

EM: Pacific Groundfish Total Catch Accounting using Electronic Monitoring on Fixed Gear Vessels. Pacific States has recently received about \$50K for this project. Vessels participating in the Pacific Groundfish Trawl Catch Share Program are required to have 100 percent monitoring, but the cost of human observers at-sea and human compliance monitors dockside continues to climb. As these costs transition from federal subsidies to industry funding, the industry seeks less costly and more flexible methods to monitor catch and bycatch. EM with video cameras on fishing vessels has proven a viable, potentially cost saving, alternative for monitoring discards the fixed gear fleet, but vessels are still required to use a dockside catch monitor. Dockside monitoring generates logistical issues when vessels land at small ports and contributes to the high cost associated with the current catch monitoring program. This project will test the viability of EM as a data source for total catch accounting at-sea and dockside for fixed gear vessels as part of the West Coast Catch Share Program. In other words, can EM serve as replacement for both human observer on the vessel and the human compliance monitors that observe a vessel's offloads into the fish plant?

WCR Electronic Technology Implementation Plan Update: At its April 2017 meeting, the Council review the Plan.

EM: Renewal of Groundfish EM EFPs is scheduled for this winter. Last year The WCR will likely issue EFPs to 45 vessels, including 24 whiting, 13 bottom trawl, 7 fixed gear, and 1 Scottish seine vessels. The research priority will be to see if revised retention policies can allow for IFQ species to be discarded. Whiting and fixed gear EFPs will continue until replaced by implement regulations.

EM: WCR/GARFO EM Study Group: August workshop was held which included representatives from some of the other regions. Workshop also included several lawyers from HQs, WCR, AKR, and OLE—

Issues such as confidentiality were discussed. Differences in implementation/council/industry views were also discussed. WCR cost analysis presented.

EM: Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan: This plan, which the Council is still developing, could include EM and may be discussed at the upcoming Council meetings. A recent drift gillnet EM research project was cancelled due to lack of industry participation.

ER: Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQ) Electronic Reporting: The NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center is working on adapting an ITQ accounting system for use with smartphones and tablets.

ER: Recreational Logbook--All of the SAC (Sportfishing Association of California) vessels are now using the e logbook with no major problems. The e logbook went live in August 2015 and has improved speed the speed of logbook submission. Effects on logbook compliance have not yet been analyzed. There will be an effort made to increase use of the e logbook system to the CPFVs in Central and Northern California. The increased submission speed should increase the accuracy of preliminary catch and effort estimates.

ER: Tribal E-tickets: NWIFC Tribes are developing a e-fish ticket system

Policy Directive Metrics to Report

The number of FMPs with defined fishery-dependent data collection monitoring goals: **0 out of 4 possible**

West Coast Region has four FMPs: Salmon, Highly Migratory Species, Coastal Pelagic Species, and Pacific Groundfish. Although these FMPs have data reporting and collection requirements including observer coverage, none of the FMPs have fishery dependent data collection monitoring goals. Generally speaking, our current management of these fisheries has 100% state fish ticket requirements. For some fisheries there are required federal or state logbooks. Both the HMS and Groundfish Fisheries have observer programs. In the Groundfish fishery there are mandatory requirements for carrying observers in the catch shares fisheries (100% in shorebased IFQ and mothership catcher boat fleet and 200% in the mothership and catcher-processor fleets.) The Groundfish IFQ requirements include 100% monitoring of offloads by compliance monitors.

The number of FMPs reviewed to identify fisheries where the adoption of additional electronic technologies would be appropriate for achieving data needs: **4 out of 4 possible**

In the development of the Regional Electronic Technologies Implementation Plan for West Coast Fisheries, all FMPS were reviewed to identify fisheries where adoption of additional electronic technologies would be appropriate for achieving data needs. The Plan includes electronic fish tickets for all FMP fisheries, electronic logbooks for some fisheries, and use of electronic monitoring for some fisheries.

For fisheries where additional electronic technologies are identified as appropriate, the number of FMPs with electronic technologies incorporated into fishery-dependent data collection programs: **2 out of 4 possible**

The Pacific Groundfish FMP currently requires electronic fish tickets be submitted by first receivers for all IFQ landings. As a data quality control mechanism, compliance monitors also file fish tickets electronically. These tickets are compared to determine how the IFQ vessel accounts should be debited. The Highly Migratory Species FMP has a voluntary albacore e-logbook program. VMS is implemented in both Pacific Groundfish and HMS fisheries.