

**BERING SEA POLLOCK FISHERY
EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT
AUTHORITY: 50 CFR 600.745(b) AND 50 CFR 679.6
PERMIT #2025-01**

The Regional Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Alaska Region, acting on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce, hereby authorizes vessel(s) acting under the direction of the permit holders, John Gauvin, under contract with North Pacific Fisheries Research Foundation and Andrea Keikkala, President of North Pacific Fisheries Research Foundation to test salmon excluder devices for trawl gear targeting pollock as set forth herein. The salmon excluder devices that will be tested under this exempted fishing permit (EFP) must be consistent with the EFP application submitted by the EFP holders (see Section A) on March 12, 2025. That application is publicly available at the NMFS Alaska Region website. This EFP describes the terms of this authorized regulatory exemption.

The EFP holders (see Section A), the owners and operators of all EFP vessels, and the EFP representatives (see Section C) must comply with the terms of this EFP and, except as set forth in this EFP (see Section D), must comply with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), and 50 CFR parts 600 and 679. An authorized EFP representative for each vessel participating in experimental fishing under this EFP must complete and sign a copy of the Vessel Data Sheet contained in Appendix A of this EFP. NMFS will maintain the list of EFP vessels (see Section B) during the EFP effective period.

This permit (permit 2025-01) will be valid and effective when signed by the Regional Administrator and the EFP holders. Once effective, this permit will be valid through September 15, 2025. If experimental fishing concludes before September 15, 2025, EFP holders may terminate the permit by notifying Maggie Chan at maggie.chan@noaa.gov, NMFS Alaska Region. This permit may be revoked, modified, or suspended under the permit's terms, by the Regional Administrator or by regulatory action under 50 C.F.R. part 679, 50 C.F.R. 600.745, or 15 C.F.R. part 904.

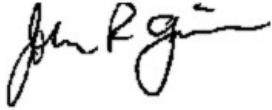


Jonathan M. Kurland
Regional Administrator

5/23/2025

Date Signed

BERING SEA POLLOCK FISHERY
EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT #2025-01
EFP HOLDER SIGNATURE PAGE



EFP Holder Signature

John R Gauvin

EFP Holder Printed Name

North Pacific Fisheries Research Foundation

EFP Company/Affiliation

5/22/2025

Date Signed



EFP Holder Signature

Andrea Keikkala

EFP Holder Printed Name

North Pacific Fisheries Research Foundation

EFP Company/Affiliation

5/22/2025

Date Signed

BERING SEA POLLOCK FISHERY
EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT #2025-01
TERMS AND CONDITIONS
AUTHORITY: 50 CFR 600.745(b) AND 50 CFR 679.6

TESTING SALMON EXCLUDER DEVICES IN THE BERING SEA POLLOCK TRAWL
FISHERY

A. EFP Holders

John Gauvin

Under contract with North Pacific Fisheries Research Foundation
4005 20th Ave W suite 116, Seattle, WA 98199
(206) 282-2599

Andrea Keikkala

President of North Pacific Fisheries Research Foundation
4005 20th Ave W suite 116, Seattle, WA 98199
(206) 282-2599

The individuals listed above are the EFP holders for this permit. The EFP holders will be the main points of contact for the EFP vessels (see Section B) and NMFS. The EFP holders are responsible for ensuring that the EFP representatives (see Section C) understand and comply with the provisions of this EFP. The EFP holders must immediately notify the NMFS Alaska Region, NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center Fisheries Monitoring and Analysis (NMFS Observer Program), and the owner of any EFP vessel if there are indications that an EFP vessel or EFP representative is not complying with the EFP.

The EFP holders will provide written and oral interim reports as requested by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) or NMFS Alaska Region. Within one year of the end of EFP fishing under this EFP, a final report shall be submitted to the NMFS Alaska Region that describes how well EFP objectives were accomplished. NMFS will make these reports available to the public. The EFP holders are solely responsible for providing the reports as set forth in this section. EFP objectives include assessments of:

1. the performance of salmon excluder designs,
2. salmon bycatch escapement rates, and
3. effects on pollock catch rates.

B. EFP Vessels

Up to three vessels are authorized to participate in this EFP. The vessels will be selected through an application process administered by the EFP holders. The EFP holders will inform NMFS with the list of EFP vessels at least 5 business days prior to EFP vessel fishing under this EFP.

For any additions to the list of EFP vessels, the EFP holders shall submit additional EFP vessels to NMFS at least 3 business days prior to the effective change. The list of EFP

vessels will be maintained by NMFS during the EFP effective period and made available on the NMFS Alaska Region website.

A physical or electronic copy of this EFP must be kept on board each EFP vessel and made available to NMFS staff, NMFS Observer Program, the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, the U.S. Coast Guard, or a designated NMFS representative upon request. The EFP representative and the owner and the operator of each EFP vessel are responsible for complying with this requirement.

C. EFP Representatives

Each EFP vessel (see Section B) must designate a representative to serve as a point of contact. Each EFP representative must complete and sign a Vessel Data Sheet (Appendix A). The Vessel Data Sheet must be submitted to NMFS Alaska Region and the EFP holder at least 3 business days prior to the EFP vessel fishing under this EFP.

D. Exemptions from Federal Regulations

During an EFP fishing trip, an EFP vessel and its owner(s) and operator(s) are exempt from the following regulations:

50 C.F.R. § 679.2 “Authorized fishing gear.” paragraph (14): definition of pelagic trawl gear.¹

50 C.F.R. § 679.7(a)(2): prohibits the conduct of fishing contrary to notification of inseason action, closure, or adjustment issued under § 679.20, § 679.21, § 679.22, § 679.25.²

50 C.F.R. § 679.21(a)(2)(i): requirement to minimize catch of prohibited species.³

50 C.F.R. § 679.21(f)(1) through (12): Fishing under the terms of this permit is exempted from the Bering Sea Chinook salmon bycatch management program.⁴

50 CFR 679.22(a)(5): Fishing under the terms of this permit is exempted from catcher/processor restrictions within the Catcher Vessel Operational Area.⁵

¹ This exemption is necessary to allow for modifications to the pelagic trawl net due to the installation and use of the salmon excluder.

² This exemption is necessary to allow EFP vessels to fish in a manner that would encounter salmon for testing the excluder device. This exemption would allow EFP vessels to fish in Rolling Hotspots or seasonal salmon closures if the EFP as needed to meet the objectives of the EFP.

³ This project will, by implication, require EFP vessels to conduct EFP fishing in areas and modes of fishing that otherwise increase the chances of salmon encountering the trawl net and salmon excluder device. This exemption will only apply during EFP fishing.

⁴ This exemption is necessary to allow for a sufficient number of salmon to enter the trawl net and encounter the salmon excluder during the testing of the salmon excluder device to meet the sampling design requirements of the EFP.

⁵ This exemption is necessary to allow the EFP Catcher/processor to fish in an area that would encounter salmon for testing the excluder device.

E. Exempted Fishing Areas
Fishing under this EFP is restricted to the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area, as defined in 50 C.F.R. § 679.2 (Bering Sea Subarea of the BSAI).

F. Total Allowable Groundfish Harvest
The overall groundfish catch for the effective period of this EFP is not counted against the total allowable catch (TAC) limits specified in the annual harvest specifications (§ 679.20(a)) and must not exceed 3,000 metric tons (mt). Any additional groundfish taken as part of the EFP activities will be counted against the TACs. If groundfish catch limits of 3,000 mt in the EFP are exceeded, the exempted fishing may be terminated by the Regional Administrator.

G. Prohibited Species Catch (PSC)
Existing regulations governing retention and release of PSC species, as defined at § 679.21(a), will apply to the vessels when EFP fishing. EFP vessels that take salmon during EFP fishing are exempt from several PSC requirements listed in Section D.

The EFP holders must ensure that Chinook salmon PSC under this EFP, in combination with Chinook salmon PSC under the AFA Bering Sea pollock fishery, does not exceed the overall Chinook salmon PSC limit established in the 2025 harvest specifications (90 FR 12640, March 18, 2025). EFP fishing will stop if the total amount of Chinook salmon PSC would exceed the Chinook salmon PSC limit.

H. Requirements for EFP Vessels
EFP vessels participating under this EFP must comply with the following provisions:

1. *Catcher Vessels*: For purposes of recordkeeping and reporting, catcher vessels shall not conduct EFP fishing and non-EFP fishing during the same fishing trip. Fishing trip is defined at § 679.2.
 - a. For deliveries to shoreside processors, motherships, and floating processors, EFP information must be marked as research by using the “RES” management program code on the groundfish landing report completed in eLandings.
 - b. Catcher Vessels in the Trawl Electronic Monitoring (EM) category as defined in § 679.51(g):
 - i. EM catcher vessels must follow all EM requirements in 679.51(g).
 - ii. EM catcher vessels must ensure that their EM systems are fully functional for the duration of the fishing trip as outlined in their NMFS-approved Vessel Monitoring Plan.
 - iii. EM catcher vessels must ensure that all catch handling related to this EFP takes place in full view of the EM system cameras and must ensure that no catch is discarded as a result of EFP-related catch handling.
 - iv. Any additional EM cost, such as cameras, is borne exclusively by

the EFP vessel.

- v. For each EFP trip, EM catcher vessels must indicate EFP trip in their Notice of Landing to the shoreside processor or stationary floating processor. Notification must occur prior to offload.
- vi. For each EFP trip, EM catcher vessels must indicate EFP trip in their logbooks.

2. *Catcher/Processors and Motherships:*

- a. Each haul taken during exempted fishing must be reported using eLandings or seaLandings as research⁶ by using “RES” as the management program code on the Electronic Logbook.
- b. The observer must be notified of EFP hauls upon deployment of the gear.
- c. The owner or operator of a catcher/processor or mothership must use eLandings or seaLandings to submit a production report to record and report daily processor groundfish production data and groundfish and prohibited species discard or disposition data. Each day of exempted fishing activity must be reported as research by using “RES” as the management program code on the groundfish daily production report
- d. Catcher/processor or mothership vessels must comply with all salmon handling and storage requirements as specified at 50 CFR 679.21(f)(15).

I. Sanctions

Failure of the EFP holders, EFP representatives, EFP vessel crew, or the owners or operators of EFP vessels to comply with the terms and conditions of this EFP and 50 C.F.R., parts 600 and 679, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, or any other applicable regulations, except as set forth in Section D, may be cause for revocation, suspension, or modification of this EFP, as well as civil or criminal penalties under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

⁶ The “RES” designation is a flag for catch accounting, and does not indicate that the activity under this permit is designated as any activity other than EFP fishing.

Appendix A. Vessel Information Form for EFP # 2025-01

EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT: #2025-01

EFP VESSEL

Vessel Name:

Length Overall (LOA):

Gross Tonnage:

Federal Fisheries Permit Number:

License Limitation Permit Number:

USCG Official Number:

Vessel Homeport:

Owner Name:

Owner Address:

Owner Phone and Email:

Vessel Managing Company:

EFP Representative Name:

EFP Representative Address:

EFP Representative Phone and Email:

Signature of EFP Holder

Signature of EFP Representative

Printed name of EFP Holder

Printed name of EFP Representative

Date signed

Date signed

The signature(s) above confirm this information, but do not constitute a final commitment to participate in the EFP.