



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

605 W. 4th Ave. Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 271-2809
Fax (907) 271-2817

Action Memo

File Number:Cons 16-013

Agenda Date10/3/2016

Agenda Number:C4

Dan Hull, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:

2017 Observer Program Annual Deployment Plan - Review; OAC Report

STAFF CONTACT: Diana Evans

ACTION REQUIRED:

- Review draft 2017 Annual Deployment Plan (ADP)
- Receive Observer Advisory Committee (OAC) Report

BACKGROUND:

2016 Annual Deployment Plan

The Council is scheduled to review the draft 2017 Annual Deployment Plan (ADP), and provide recommendations to NMFS for the final 2017 ADP. The ADP evaluates deploying observers by gear type as in 2016, and also evaluates separate strata for vessels delivering to tenders, and for small catcher processors in partial coverage. NMFS' recommendation is to deploy into 6 strata in 2017, by gear type, and with separate strata for vessels delivering to tenders. Based on optimal allocation of observer days among the strata based on discarded groundfish, the preliminary selection rates would be:

- Trawl: 18% for trawl vessels, and 14% for trawl vessels delivering to tenders
- Hook-and-line: 11%, and 27% for hook-and-line vessels delivering to tenders
- Pot: 3% for pot vessels, and 6% for pot vessels delivering to tenders

The OAC met on September 19 and 20 in Seattle to discuss the 2017 ADP, and generally agrees with NMFS' recommendations, although there was a lack of consensus about the recommendation to separate out tender strata specifically for hook-and-line and pot gear. The OAC also expressed concern about the lower deployment rates that are projected for 2017, which are a direct result of the lower total observer days available in the budget. The 2017 observer deployment budget is entirely dependent on the industry fee, as opposed to the last three years when it has been supplemented by Federal funding. The OAC recommends that the Council consider approaches to address low coverage rate that include considering ways to optimize coverage with the current budget, an increase in the observer fee, and a request for supplementary Federal funding.

The recommended deployment strata were also brought to the joint BSAI and GOA groundfish plan teams during their September 13-16 meeting in Seattle. The discussion can be found in the plan team minutes under agenda item C2.

Other OAC report items

The OAC reviewed the EM Integration Analysis (agenda item C3) and the Observer Lead Level 2 Discussion

Agenda Date10/3/2016

Agenda Number:C4

Paper (agenda item C5) and provided recommendations. Additionally, the OAC reviewed the status of regulatory amendments and other analytical projects affecting the Observer Program (a status report on all such projects is included in the staff tasking agenda item E). Based on the 2017 ADP, the OAC recommends that work on the observer tendering analysis continue to remain on hold pending the proposed differential strata for vessels delivering to tenders. The Committee also received a briefing on the national Observer Safety Action Plan.