



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

File Number:Cons 15-039

Agenda Date6/1/2015

Agenda Number:C8

Dan Hull, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:
Observer Coverage on Small CPs - Final Action

ACTION REQUIRED:
Final Action on RIR/IRFA to place certain small catcher/processors in partial observer coverage

BACKGROUND:
In April 2015, the Council reviewed an initial review draft analysis to revise the allowances for placing certain small catcher processors in the partial observer coverage category, and selected a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA). At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to make a final recommendation on this issue.

Currently, under the Observer Program, there is a general requirement that all catcher processors are placed in the full coverage category, with limited exceptions intended to address vessels with small levels of groundfish production. Under the Council's PPA from April 2015, the exceptions would be revised such that only a fixed gear catcher processor vessel that is not participating in a catch share program would be eligible for partial coverage, and only if their production is below an average weekly level of 79,000 pounds (35.8 metric tons). Under the PPA, the three vessels that qualify for the current exceptions could continue in partial coverage if their fishing patterns remain unchanged, and potentially five to seven more vessels may qualify in future.

NMFS staff have revised the analysis with additional information, including responding to the SSC recommendations, and the document was distributed for public review in early May.