

NOAA
FISHERIES

Alaska Region

Exempted Fishing Permits

Council Coordination Committee

May 2018

Objectives

- Overview of Alaska Region (AKR) Exempted Fishing Permit Process
- Examples of recent EFPs off Alaska
- Examples from Southeast Region

Exempted or Experimental Fishing

Fishing that involves activities prohibited by regulations and authorized under an EFP

EFPs:

- Issued for limited testing, public display, data collection, exploratory fishing, compensation fishing, conservation engineering, health and safety surveys, environmental cleanup, or hazard removal that is **otherwise prohibited**
- Exempt vessels from regulations specified in the EFP – all other regulations remain in effect

EFP Process and Timeframe

- AKR recommendation: Apply 6 months prior to desired start of EFP fishing
- Submit completed application to AKR. AKR requests Alaska Fisheries Science Center review of experimental design
- After review & revision → Federal Register notice and comment
- Council/Advisory Panel/SSC review application and provide input
- AKR staff prepare NEPA analysis and ESA consultation, if necessary
- AKR staff works with the applicant, General Counsel, enforcement, and the Alaska Fisheries Science Center to develop permit terms and conditions and specify applicable exemptions from regulations.
- Applicant agrees with terms and conditions – Permit issued

EFP Best Practices and Reporting

- Many applicants have well-established relationships with NMFS staff and we work collaboratively on EFP design before a formal application is submitted.
- After an EFP is completed, the results are presented to NMFS in a written report.
- Longstanding practice is that principal investigator presents the results to the Council and the SSC. This helps guide the consideration of future EFPs or potentially the development of regulations.

Recent EFPs in the Alaska Region

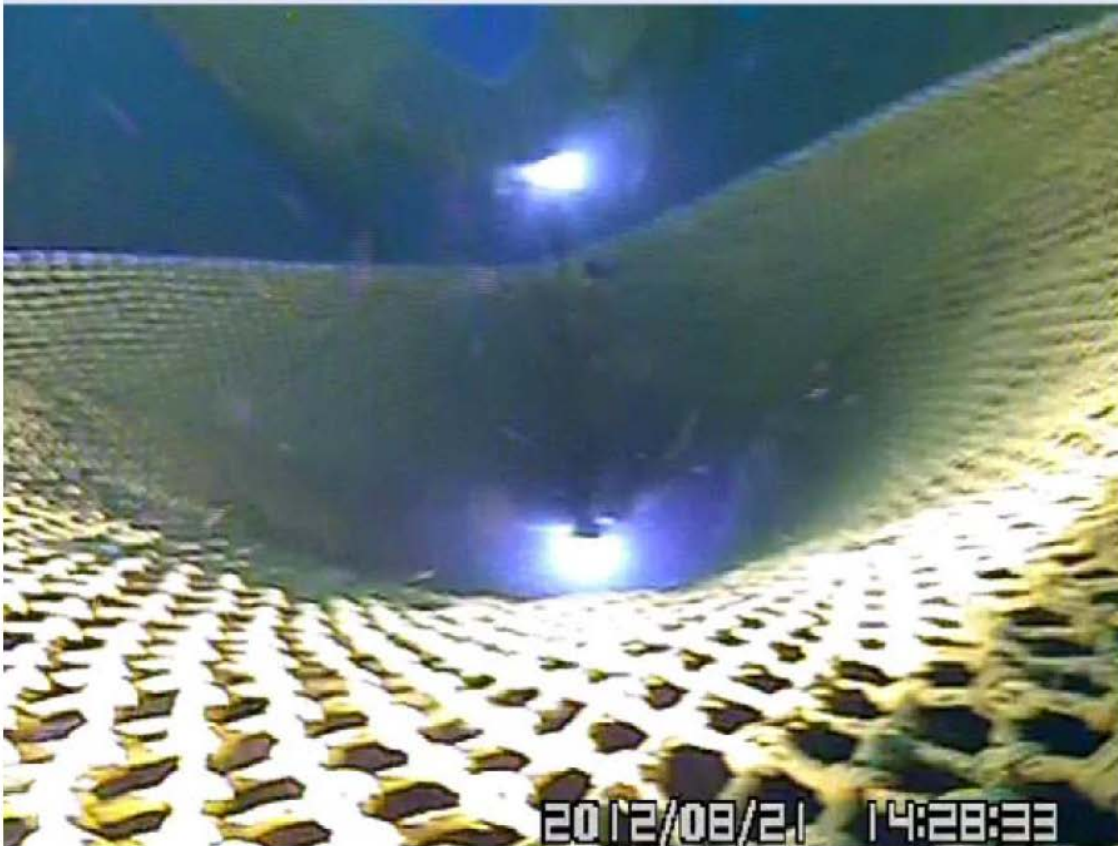
- Seven EFPs to test salmon excluder devices in Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) pollock fisheries
- Six EFPs to test methods to sort and remove halibut on deck of non-pelagic trawl catcher processors to improve survival
- Two EFPs to use electronic monitoring to assess halibut at-sea discards in the GOA rockfish fishery
- EFP to test halibut excluder devices in the GOA Pacific cod trawl fishery

Halibut Deck Sorting EFP



Salmon Excluder Device EFP

Figure 4. Beta version of the O/U excluder, Pacific Prince 2012 B season. View is from aft of the excluder looking forward.



EFPs for Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper

- In April 2018, NOAA Fisheries issued EFPs to each of the five Gulf state marine resource agencies.
- The EFPs allow each Gulf state to set the red snapper season for participating private anglers fishing in state or federal waters during 2018 and 2019.
- The states will monitor private angler red snapper landings and prohibit fishing when their respective private angler quotas are reached or projected to be reached.



Lionfish EFPs – Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic

- Lionfish are an invasive species that have established a broad depth and geographic distribution.
- Southeast Regional Office received three EFP applications to test various types of trapping gear to catch lionfish.
- Fish traps are effective at catching lionfish but are prohibited in Gulf and South Atlantic.
- Applications were withdrawn but additional applications expected.

