

Council Motion

E Staff Tasking, Observer Coverage

April 10, 2017

Motion to establish a Council process for developing options for increasing observer coverage rates in the partial coverage fisheries.

Move that the Council request the OAC to provide recommendations on addressing the challenge of increasing the current and projected observer coverage rates in the partial coverage fisheries. In June and October 2016, the Council has stated its concerns about the current year coverage rates, which are likely to decrease further in 2018.

The Council is interested in recommendations that focus on methods to:

- Increase economic efficiencies in the partial coverage program
 - Within the partial coverage contract
 - Formation of monitoring coops
 - Develop tools that motivate harvesters to choose least expensive alternatives
- Make operational changes that increase the utility of current coverage levels
 - Catch accounting program modifications
 - Re-evaluate use of the zero selection pool; including multi-year strategies
 - Evaluate deployment strategies that minimize observer down-time between vessels
 - Evaluate a sampling rate analysis
 - Evaluate a technical report on observer performance
- Increase revenues for funding the program
 - Existing fee
 - External funds
 - A hybrid pay as you go and fee based system

The examples listed under each major bullet are illustrative and are not intended to be exclusive.

Development of a cost model for EM integration and a tool for assessing data quality improvements resulting from increases in EM and human observer coverage rates will be important for the success of this effort.

Any recommendations that concern the next contract for partial coverage will be needed by the October Council meeting in order to meet the NMFS schedule for developing the next contract.