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NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Legislation Details (With Text)

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12/6/2016	1	North Pacific Council		

Dan Hull, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:
EFP-3 - Final Report on Salmon Excluder EFP

STAFF CONTACT: Diana Stram

ACTION REQUIRED:
Receive final report.

BACKGROUND:
EFP 15-01 set out to test an “over and under” (O/U) style salmon excluder in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. The impetus to focus on this particular excluder was that it achieved 33%-54% escapement for Chinook salmon with 1%-9% pollock escapement in the Central Gulf of Alaska (GOA) EFP during trials in 2013 and 2014. With escapement portals on the top and bottom of the net, this new excluder has been largely embraced as the excluder to use by GOA pollock captains and many feel it provides advantages over other designs in terms of adaptability into GOA pollock nets and lower need for tuning to achieve the desired shape at normal towing speeds.

The Bering Sea testing spanned the 2015 A season, the 2015 B season and the 2016 A season (February 2015 - March 2016). Vessels selected were the F/V Commodore (133 feet, 1,700 hp), the F/V Destination (180 feet, 3,000 hp), and the F/T Northern Jaeger (336 feet, 7,200 hp). Escapement rates of salmon and pollock were generated from video observations of fish escapes. Whereas overall pollock escapement was negligible (0.5%-2.2%), salmon escapement rates ranged from 3%-18% across the three vessels. Overall, salmon escapement rates were considerably lower than hoped relative to GOA EFP results and even some previous Bering Sea salmon excluder EFP’s using older excluder styles (flapper versions). Performance results also did not follow expectations based on horsepower and towing differences between Bering Sea vessels in the EFP. Steps needed in order to resolve differences in performance in future investigations are outlined in the attached final report.

Principal investigators for the salmon exclude EFP will be available to present the final report.