

Coastal Fishing Communities Project

Update on Efforts Related to Staff Recommendation #4

November 4, 2020

Recommendation: Engage legislative staff to pursue adjustments to laws as ideas are refined, if warranted to support fishing communities.

Overview: Recognizing that some possible actions may be outside of Commission authority to accomplish, direct staff to seek to partner with stakeholders, the Department, and non-governmental organizations to find appropriate issues and means of engaging with legislators and legislative staff.

Progress by Focal Area

Commission and Department Initiatives

- *Experimental fishing permit (EFP) program:* The EFP program (Phase II currently in development; see SR 3 update) is being developed specifically with the intent of allowing flexibility and adaptability in coastal commercial and recreational fishing, consistent with the enabling statute.

Collaborations and Partner Efforts

- *Legislative engagement:* Commission staff have been and intend to continue to engage in Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture hearings as a way of identifying potential areas of mutual interest that legislation may help support/facilitate. Commission staff also confers regularly with the committee's chief consultant.

Relevant External Actions and Models

- *Legislation:* The [Fisheries Omnibus Bill](#) (Senate Bill 1309; Chapter 985, Statutes of 2018) contains specific provisions for increasing flexibility for California halibut trawl vessel permit transfers. While small, this is an example of increasing flexibility within a state-managed restricted access fishery, reflecting legislative responsiveness to industry needs supported by both the Department and Commission.

Potential Next Steps

As needs emerge, determine opportunities for adjusting legislation to facilitate adaptations to meet coastal fishing community needs; these may be identified through conferring with stakeholders, the Department, non-governmental organizations and legislative staff where supported by the Commission.

Linkages to Other Staff Recommendations

This recommendation is linked to SR 5 (*coordinate with sister agencies*), as both are ways in which the Commission could collaborate on issues that are outside the scope of its authority. SR 3 (*approve small-scale projects*) will be facilitated through an EFP program, a result of legislation directly addressing issues relevant to this project.