



## NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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National Fish & Wildlife Foundation  
1133 Fifteenth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20005  
Via email: [Gray.Redding@nfwf.org](mailto:Gray.Redding@nfwf.org)

Dear Sir or Madam:

On behalf of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), I am writing in support of proposals related to Alaska fisheries that have been submitted in response to the Electronic Monitoring (EM) and Reporting Request for Proposals and are directly responsive to the Council's EM priorities:

- Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association (ALFA) and Archipelago Marine Research (AMR) are collaborating on a project titled: "Implementation of AI in EM review for Alaska fixed gear fisherman."
- Real Time Data is continuing to test electronic logbook data collection and reporting in Alaska's groundfish and halibut fisheries, extending the project another year.
- Extension of Pilot Phase 2 of Alaska Groundfish Databank's Testing Electronic Monitoring on Trawl Catcher Vessels Participating in the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) Rockfish Program.

The Council has actively pursued the development of EM technology for several years. Thanks in large part to support from NFWF, the Council was able to implement a fixed gear EM program that has been operational since 2018 to allow EM as an alternative to carrying an observer to meet the monitoring requirements for the fixed gear groundfish and halibut fisheries off Alaska. Additionally, the Council has been working for several years in collaboration with industry, to develop and implement the Trawl EM Program for pelagic trawl catcher vessels participating in the pollock fishery. This has been a key part of improving data quality and cost efficiency in the pelagic trawl fisheries in both the BSAI and GOA and NFWF grants have been instrumental in supporting the development and expansion of this program. The regulated Trawl EM Program will be effective as of January 1, 2025.

In the past several years NFWF has provided support for multiple proposals for EM in other Alaska fisheries, which the Council greatly appreciates. External funding is essential for development of these programs, as revenue from the partial coverage observer fee (used to fund monitoring costs throughout Alaska) can only be used to support EM once a program is implemented in regulation. The proposals that are being submitted this year build on and extend the accomplishments from the projects funded in 2023. The Council supports the following proposals in no relative priority:

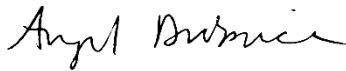
The Council supports a **proposal submitted by ALFA and AMR to enable at-scale integration of AI-assisted data review across the Alaska Fixed Gear EM program**. The project will take existing AI tools and incorporate them into the operational workflow for EM data review to allow for reduced review labor and faster data turnaround times for the entire fleet of EM-equipped vessels (160+) in the project. Additional work will be done to train AI models for improved accuracy within the fleet.

The Council supports a **proposal submitted by Real Time Data for real time electronic logbook data collection and reporting in Alaska's groundfish and halibut fisheries**. The Real Time Data project will expand upon a project funded in 2022 and 2023, testing electronic logbooks in the GOA fixed gear halibut and sablefish fleet. The third year of the project would increase vessel participation, expand into other gear groups including trawl, and begin to address logistical questions more in-depth, such as how to integrate data into the catch accounting system.

The Council supports a **proposal submitted by Alaska Groundfish Databank, Testing Electronic Monitoring on Trawl Catcher Vessels Participating in the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) Rockfish Program: Pilot Phase 2**. This project expands upon 2023 efforts to test the use of cameras to review catch for both pelagic and non-pelagic trawl gear and develop vessel monitoring plans that demonstrate successful catch handling procedures. Pilot Phase II will also begin investigating shoreside components including utilizing cameras for salmon sorting compliance and observers in processing plants collecting data that can be compared to at-sea observer data and fish ticket data for species composition as well as differences between data at the trip and haul level.

In sum, the Council recognizes the value of the proposals submitted by the Alaska regional stakeholders; to develop electronic logbook technologies that will improve efficiency and quality of data collection and to test new technologies that allow more timely review of EM data in the fixed gear fisheries, and to test EM in the CGOA rockfish fishery to develop the next logical step in expanding the use of EM in Alaska trawl fisheries. I hope that you will consider the proposals submitted from these stakeholders favorably and that this letter can be distributed to reviewers. Development of proposals from our region has been, and continues to, be closely coordinated with NMFS to ensure useful data to support new technologies and programs. The Council is ready to invest our resources to ongoing oversight and coordination that will facilitate successful execution of all three projects.

Sincerely,



Angel Drobnica  
Chair, NPFMC