



Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee—partial coverage subgroup

REPORT

Seattle, WA, Nov 19, 2018

Committee Members in attendance:

Bill Tweit (chair)	Abigail Turner-Franke	Farron Wallace (NMFS)
Elizabeth Figus (staff)	(NPFA) ph	AFSC)
Julie Bonney (AGDB)	Jennifer Ferdinand (NMFS)	Jane DiCosimo (National
Nicole Kimball (PSPA)	FMA)	Observer Program)
Dan Falvey (ALFA)	Lisa Thompson (NMFS)	
Bob Alverson (FVOA)	FMA)	

Others in attendance:

Luke Szymanski (AIS) ph	Tom Meyer (NOAA) ph	Molly Zaleski (Oceana) ph
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Report

In October 2018, the Council recommended “*the Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee partial coverage subgroup develop additional recommendations for how to potentially lower costs and increase observer coverage rates in the partial coverage category while maintaining: the data sufficient for managing the fisheries; randomized deployment; and cost equity considerations among participants. The subgroup should also continue to provide input on differential deployment base levels by gear type.*”

Topics identified for further work by the subgroup consistent with Council direction:

- 1. What would a monitoring cooperative look like with a non-federal contract? (see description and objectives of a pilot project detailed below.)**
- How to best integrate the different monitoring tools, such as full coverage, partial coverage, dockside monitoring, EM, and cooperatives to meet overall monitoring objectives for a management area or fishery?
 - The 2018 Annual report shows that approximately 92% of observer days were in the full coverage strata and 8% were in partial coverage. Within partial coverage, EM may account for 15% to 20% of sea days, dockside monitoring collects data for halibut and salmon, and monitoring cooperatives may be developed which could account for 10% to 50% of partial coverage sea days. Each of these tools has a different cost structure and inherent strengths/weaknesses in meeting the multiple management objectives associated with Alaska’s fisheries monitoring programs. These objectives include biological sample collection, catch accounting, regulatory compliance, stock assessment, and marine mammal/seabird interactions among others. To meet Council objectives of cost effectiveness while “maintaining: the data sufficient for managing the fisheries; randomized deployment; and cost equity considerations among participants”, the FMAC subgroup recommends further work on how to integrate the various tools to meet overall monitoring objectives for a management area or fishery.
- Metrics for determining the base hurdle
 - The gap analysis (G1 metric) is based on 50% probability of getting at least one trip in an area per gear type. The G3 metric is based on three trips and may allow for variance calculations, blending, and providing the information publicly. Neither metric directly relates to the time/area

thresholds used in the Catch Accounting System (CAS), nor do they provide information on the impact of using borrowed data. Continued work on the impact of borrowed data and metrics related to the time/area thresholds used by the CAS may better inform the base hurdle thresholds. A subgroup of stock assessment staff has been formed to evaluate needs for biological data, but they haven't met yet.

4. Methods of determining bias in the annual report – 6 trip metrics
 - a) NMFS is currently evaluating the 6 trip metrics to determine if all are useful and relevant, if some should be dropped or new ones added. This evaluation possibly could be included in the June 2019 Annual Report. The subgroup expressed interest in providing input on the metrics prior to their use in the annual report; J. Ferdinand will communicate best timing, potentially end of February, early March, or April for subgroup input.
5. Changes to ODDS to keep cancellation/inherited trips issue at the forefront
 - a) Goal: reduce temporal bias in current system that automatically selects next logged trip for coverage if observed trip is cancelled.
 - b) First task: document what ODDS currently does (current logic).
 - c) Second task: compile potential options to deal with trip cancellations.
 - d) Need to program ODDS to include the EM pool.
 - e) Has been tasked to NMFS; potential to include PSFMC staff time; no changes planned for 2019.

1. What would a monitoring cooperative look like with a non-federal contract?

Monitoring Cooperatives—The primary idea emerging from this meeting is to use a pilot project to test logistics and cost effectiveness of a monitoring cooperative based on the ODDS randomized selection process.

Objectives for this concept include:

- a) maintain data sufficient for managing fisheries
- b) continue to use randomized deployment
- c) determine cost of randomized deployment of observers under a non-federal contract
- d) identify operational changes that reduce costs (observer accommodations, lead time, etc.), and provide greater transparency about cost factors for all stakeholders
- e) maintain cost equity (defined as vessels/processors continue to pay based on ex-vessel revenues, not an equal flat rate)

Monitoring Cooperative **pilot program elements**:

- a) Pilot program would be multi-staged.
 - i. Stage 1 objectives would be to evaluate logistical and cost considerations of randomized deployment of observers under a non-federal contract.
 - ii. Stage 2 objectives would be to evaluate mechanisms for pilot program vessels to fund the cooperative directly in return for reduced or zero observer fees. This would likely require an EFP.
 - iii. Stage 3 objectives would be to evaluate appropriate scale of cooperative to reduce overall monitoring costs and maintain data quality.
- b) Under Stage 1.
 - i. Vessels and processors would continue paying the Observer fee under current Regulations. A NMFS grant or other outside funding (NFWF, SK etc.) would be used for Stage 1 pilot program observer costs.

- ii. Pilot program would consist of a group of vessels willing to test the idea at a reasonable scale (200-300 observed sea days) in a program well-aligned with the scale of funding opportunities (\$300,000 to \$500,000).
- iii. Vessels would continue logging trips into ODDS for selection and would be assigned a separate stratum within the partial coverage sector.
- iv. Cooperative would use contracts to bind members to a set of rules (civil contracts substituting for federal contracts/rule-making).
- v. Cooperative would contract with one or more observer providers who would be responsible for providing a number of observed sea days commensurate with ADP-stipulated rate(s) of coverage (with flexibility to achieve greater or fewer number of days as needed each year).
- vi. Data from a cooperative would be used for in-season CAS and would not reduce data quality.

Key questions include:

- a) Once established, would cooperative vessels be required to continue to pay a reduced Observer fee to support overall at-sea monitoring?
- b) During the scaling stage, what is the overall impact on the observer program? (a cooperative centered around vessels that are logistically easy to deploy observers on may drive up costs for non-cooperative observed boats.)
- c) Can we meet all our objectives?

Subgroup members concluded it may be necessary to explore whether an additional alternative is needed in the observer fee analysis such that *if a monitoring cooperative is formed, then those cooperative members would be released from the fee for that year.*

The subgroup tentatively scheduled their next meeting for January 17, 2019.