

Summary of 2016/2017 Herring and Mackerel Fishery Electronic Monitoring Project

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Project Title: “Greater Atlantic Region Electronic Monitoring Implementation Project for the Atlantic Herring and Mackerel Midwater Trawl Fisheries”

Funding: The initial funding (NMFS Fishery Information System/National Observer Program) for this project equaled \$406,400. Then NMFS was able to secure an additional \$588,600 to support this project. The total funding for the project equals \$995,000.

Steps Completed:

- October 2015 - Applied for funding
- January 19, 2016 - Project approved to receive \$406,400
- May 2016 - Funding allocated to Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC)
- May 9 - 31, 2016 - Solicited for electronic monitoring (EM) service provider
- July 2016 - Secured addition NMFS funding for project (\$588,600)
- August 2016 - Awarded EM project contract to Saltwater Inc.

Next Step: NMFS will organize meetings with Saltwater and industry members to develop vessel monitoring plans (VMPs) and begin equipment installation. The goal is to have EM installed on vessels and functional before October 15, 2016.

Project Goals Overview:

- Analyze the utility of EM in monitoring fisheries as a means of informing future EM programs.
- Deploy and test an EM program in an operational setting, allowing analysis and adjustment of EM program requirements.
- Evaluate the range of information that can be gathered with EM systems. Attempts will be made to:
 - Verify slippage events;
 - Categorize the types of slippage events;
 - Verify other discard sources; and
 - Determine if EM can help estimate the amount of catch retained (if not all catch is retained).
- Refine EM cost estimates for NMFS and the fishing industry.
- EM systems will not be used to monitor compliance with existing regulations during this project.

General Overview of Contract with Saltwater

Time Period: 16 months (2 months setup; 12 months operation; 2 months analysis and final reporting)

Outreach: Saltwater will hold regular meetings with participating vessels (EM installation, operation, data retrieval, equipment repairs and replacement, etc.) and with NMFS.

EM Units: EM units must meet or exceed EM technical specifications established by the NEFSC.

Field Services: The key field service tasks for Saltwater include:

- Establish local support for management of EM program in Northeast;
- Establish installation schedule for vessels;
- Install, test, and initialize systems;
- Pay for alterations (except power supply);
- Establish VMP for each vessel; and
- Log installation and alterations over the course of the project.

Data Analysis: The key data analysis and reporting tasks for Saltwater include:

- Assess the quality of image data on a per trip basis;
- Analyze vessel sensor data for quality and completeness;
- Review 100% of video footage at the trip level;
- Identify all fishing episodes;
- Identify discarding by slippage, operational discards, discard from the grate, or any other discarding event;
- Document the net/codend or purse seine and its contents after pumping is complete;
- Identify all instances where the catch does not come onboard after a fishing event;
- Identify interactions with protected species;
- Identify anomalous events in the data set that may warrant further investigation; and
- Submit data reports according to EM summary file standards

Final Report: Saltwater will provide a final report on EM Systems, data collection, and analysis.

Ownership of Materials: All data will be owned by NMFS, and NMFS will adhere to confidentiality rules for collected data. Saltwater may not share data without permission from NMFS.