



Meeting Summary

Market Squid Advisory Panel

October 22, 2021, 3:00-5:00 pm

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) convened the first meeting of the Market Squid Advisory Panel (MSAP) members on October 22, 2021. Eight of ten MSAP members attended, along with ODFW and Oregon State Police (OSP) staff, and members of the public. ODFW described the timeline and process for making rule recommendations to the Commission in February 2022 and suggested holding a second MSAP meeting by the end of November before finalizing ODFW staff recommendations. A revision to the agenda was suggested and accepted; the order of topics here reflects the amended agenda.

Net Size Limitations

ODFW described Commission direction to staff to explore a limit on net length in response to public testimony during the March 2021 Commission meeting, and input from participants directly to staff regarding limits on both net depth and net length. MSAP input was mixed, but there was general agreement that any net limitations should be compatible with gear currently in use across the region to avoid having a different net for each state or fishery. Some supported a depth limit because they felt it would prevent squid being caught in deeper waters before they reach shallower spawning areas, an impact they observed in California, while others felt that fishing deeper reduces impacts on squid egg beds. Members stated that longer nets can be fished more nimbly around crab pots, as they can be set in less of a 'perfect circle', and that the limits on net length in Alaska herring are to slow fishing down for quota management (not applicable here). Members suggested analyzing logbook data for correlations between net size and fishing depth or bycatch before considering limitations.

Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)

ODFW described Commission direction to staff to investigate an electronic VMS requirement to address interactions with crab pots (movement or loss) by identifying which squid vessels were in an area with reported interactions. ODFW reported that 19% of vessels that participated in the Oregon squid fishery have VMS due to requirements in other fisheries. Members, including those with VMS units, were not supportive of adding a VMS requirement and felt it would be ineffective because there are frequently many squid vessels targeting the same small area. Most felt avoiding interactions with other fisheries is a matter of courtesy and etiquette and did not favor a regulatory approach. Alternatives to VMS were suggested including sharing maps of squid fishing grounds with crabbers, a seasonal squid fishery closure during the winter months when crab pot density is highest, and electronically marking crab pots.

Additional rib line specification and cable gear

ODFW reviewed input from participants about possible loopholes in recently adopted rib line regulations and relayed strong concerns from some fishery participants about the use of steel

cables to purse nets in California. Steel cable purse lines can be hauled back more aggressively and are thought to have a higher impact on bottom habitat, squid egg beds, and bycatch, and members quickly reached a consensus recommendation to prohibit cable purse lines. Members and OSP staff discussed potential challenges with enforcing current rib line regulations. There was general agreement that the rib line regulation could be improved, and the group reached a consensus recommendation to prohibit purse rings from being attached to the lead line.

Limited Entry (LE) Control Date (CD)

ODFW described Commission direction to staff to recommend a limited entry control date (CD), and that the purpose of a CD is to set a date beyond which participation in the fishery may not be considered for qualifying for a future limited entry permit. ODFW reviewed the number of vessels participating each year in the fishery, (57 unique purse seine vessels have made a landing since 2016) and CD precedents in other state managed fisheries. The group established that a CD does not necessarily mean a limited entry permit will be implemented, that the Commission would have the authority to change it later (although this might undermine the purpose), and that the CD could precede the date of adoption. Members generally agreed that the size of the squid population presently in Oregon would not support 57 vessels over the long term and felt a fleet size of 20-30 vessels was more appropriate. ODFW suggested that one purpose of a CD is to limit speculative participation, and members agreed that a CD would be effective. Members discussed treating Oregon-based vessels preferentially in development of a limited entry permit program but did not recommend this for establishing a CD. The only specific CD discussed was January 1, 2022, with several members voicing support and none objecting.

New, emerging, or other issues identified by panel

Members identified several topics for future discussion including establishing a 30-day protection similar to the crab fishery, light boat prohibition or regulation, modifying current weekend closures, establishing a closed season during the height of crab season, water weight in landings, and enforcement of closed area boundaries.

Public Comment

ODFW offered members of the public an opportunity to comment at the end of the meeting, and one observer stated that they felt it had been a productive meeting and congratulated everyone involved.