



Meeting Summary

Market Squid Advisory Panel

August 9, 2024, 10:00-11:30 am

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) convened the fifth meeting of the Market Squid Advisory Panel (MSAP) members on August 9, 2024. Five of 10 MSAP members attended, along with ODFW and Oregon State Police (OSP) staff, and members of the public. In response to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission's (Commission) March 2023 request for ODFW staff to either develop a proposal for moving the commercial market squid fishery from open access to a limited-entry (LE) system or provide an interim report about the fishery and potential to implement an LE system in Oregon, staff will provide an interim report to the Commission at their upcoming meeting on September 13, 2024.

ODFW staff presented results from the market squid opinion survey conducted earlier this year and provided a summary of their interim report to the Commission (see presentation). Staff sought input from the MSAP about the survey results and interim report, and requested input on the cost to outfit a vessel for the market squid fishery. Staff also discussed the upcoming expiration of the three-year term for current MSAP members.

Market squid survey results and interim report summary

One point of discussion focused on the suggestion by several survey respondents that anyone who had made landings or had participated in the market squid fishery should be given a permit. The MSAP asked whether suggested landings criteria referred to trawl or historical (pre-2016) landings, but staff noted that no further information was provided by respondents. One member noted that they selected 40 as the appropriate number of LE permits, which was the highest option, because it was closest to the number of vessels that have participated in the Oregon fishery. Members agreed it was likely that other respondents selected that option for the same reason. Another member stated that it is difficult to determine the number of boats that the fishery can support given the uncertainty about the market squid biomass off Oregon and the sporadic nature of the fishery. They thought that even 20 boats were too many and that there is currently not enough biomass to make it a profitable fishery with the high cost of gear, that many boats only wanted permits to get value out of them in the future, and that LE is not warranted until more is known about the resource and how the fishery unfolds in the future. Staff explained that the survey was one way to get feedback on people's opinions about LE and said there would be more opportunities to provide input. The report will be part of the Director's Report and should be available two weeks prior to the September 13 Commission meeting. People can sign up for the open public forum and speak more to the topic of LE there.

When presenting an overview of topics the Commission will need to consider if they choose to move forward with LE (e.g., policy goals, fleet size, transferability/restrictions, scope of gears involved, light boats, etc.), staff emphasized that they were not recommending moving to an LE system or proposing any specifics. Staff provided reasons for their recommendation to not move forward with LE at this time, namely that regulations are already in place, market squid are managed by the Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan, there are weekend closures to allow for egg escapement, the fishery is not

consistent, there is no consensus about LE among members of the MSAP or public, and that an LE system would be difficult to implement with the budget approved by the Commission and associated loss of staff.

MSAP members provided cost estimates for entering the market squid fishery. Estimates ranged from \$100,000 to \$500,000 for the main pieces of equipment like a net, boom, and skiff, depending on quality and condition. For someone new to the fishery, members thought it would cost about \$250,000 to set up a vessel, but also noted that a fleet of highly mobile West Coast and Alaska purse seine vessels already exists, and their investment would just be time and fuel to get to the fishing grounds. A member who could not make the meeting provided an estimate of \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 via email, depending on whether the vessel had previously been set up to seine for other species or not. Other feedback from the MSAP included the comment that the fishery will self-regulate due to the volumes of squid available, a concept that was consistent with this year's fishery, with only three vessels making landings.

MSAP membership

As the current membership's three-year term is expiring this year, staff asked the panel about their interest in continuing to serve on the MSAP. One member stated that participation likely depends on what the Commission decides on September 13. Staff noted that meetings usually are only once a year and that there may still be need for input on other management measures if the fishery starts back up.

New, emerging, or other issues identified by the panel

ODFW asked if members had any new issues that they would like to discuss in the future. None were identified.

Public Comment

No public comment was given, and the meeting wrapped up.