

## COMMITTEE STAFF SUMMARY FOR JULY 21, 2016

**9. BYCATCH WORKGROUP****Today's Item****Information** **Direction** 

Receive an update on the progress of the Fisheries Bycatch and Incidental Take Workgroup (BWG).

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions**

- BWG first meeting May 18, 2016; BWG, Santa Barbara
- **Today's progress update** **Jul 21, 2016; MRC, Petaluma**

**Background**

On May 18, 2016, the BWG held its first meeting in Santa Barbara with 14 members of the public attending (see staff summary in Exhibit 1). In preparation for future meetings, BWG subgroups were formed to work on specific topics for future BWG consideration, and FGC staff agreed to provide a draft workgroup work plan for BWG members to review for submittal to the MRC. At this meeting, staff will provide an update on work plan drafting progress and next steps.

**Significant Public Comments (N/A)****Recommendation**

Discuss and provide direction to workgroup on work plan focus, if warranted.

**Exhibits**

1. [Bycatch workgroup meeting summary, May 18, 2016](#)

**Committee Direction/Recommendation (N/A)**

## MEETING SUMMARY AND KEY OUTCOMES

### Marine Resources Committee Bycatch Workgroup Kickoff Meeting

May 18, 2016 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Santa Barbara Harbor Community Room  
107 Harbor Way  
Santa Barbara, CA

#### **Meeting Overview:**

The kick-off meeting was intended to provide a common background and understanding, lay an operational foundation for the Bycatch Workgroup (BWG), identify common themes, set work group goals, discuss possible work products, and identify next steps. BWG members agreed on ground rules for communication and participation without modification. Fish and Game Commission (Commission) staff provided a “refresher” overview of Marine Resources Committee (MRC) bycatch discussions including previously identified areas of concern, possible mechanisms for addressing concerns, and identified potential direction or product outcomes for the BWG relative to Commission authority using existing regulatory language and frameworks.

Group discussion yielded outcomes that can be categorized by core themes and areas of agreement across BWG membership, work groups, work products, and next steps (*outlined in Part I below*). Key outcomes by agenda topic are provided in Part II.

#### **PART I**

##### **Core Themes:**

- Communication standard: establish open e-mail list and file sharing site
- Recommendations should be made on sound scientific principles
- Recognize the BWG as an opportunity to increase public understanding of bycatch and bycatch issues (i.e., not all bycatch are dead discards)
- Ensure the development of work products is transparent and inclusive
- Clearly identify when consensus or dissent exist
- How to build capacity to collect bycatch data and increase data streams
- Explore what tools currently exist for addressing bycatch issues and reducing discard mortality
- Incorporate input from Tribes early and effectively
- There are many different understandings of what bycatch is or is not
- Identify areas of uncertainty (e.g., is a species considered bycatch if the target species changes or is in multi-target fishery)
- Many ideas for areas of BWG focus and work products offered (e.g., update Master Plan bycatch section, reevaluate how multi-species fisheries are defined or characterized relative to “incidental” marketable take, review available data, develop a bycatch reduction work plan)

### Areas of Agreement:

- Need to identify clear and specific goals for the BWG
- Goals will help to inform product development
- Supports having Commission staff provide a DRAFT work plan for the BWG
  - Use BWG-suggested goals as starting point
  - Intent to have a draft ready for the July MRC meeting
- Utilize DFW staff and data sets to help inform products
- Establish a common set of working definitions of bycatch, target, incidental, and unacceptable
- Identify and build upon areas of overlap with Federal and Pacific state efforts
- Any products developed through a subgroup of the BWG will be brought to the entire BWG for discussion and input

### Action Items

- DRAFT work plan (Commission Staff)
- Develop initial definitions for bycatch, target, incidental, and unacceptable (Christopher Voss, Diane Pleschner-Steele, Mick Kronman).
- Identify areas of overlap for federal and pacific state efforts on bycatch issues (Mike Conroy)
- Seek funding to off-set participation costs (volunteers??)
- Scientific literature background research (Geoff Shester)

### Next Steps:

- Schedule check in phone meeting for status report on product development
- Set next meeting date (possibly early July in order to report to MRC on July 21)
- Solicit and coordinate input time-frame for identified work products

## PART II

### Meeting Agenda Outcomes

1. Welcome, introductions, and agenda review

**Commission staff welcomed attendees, round-table introductions and sign-in sheet distributed.**

2. Establish basic operating rules, procedures, and guiding principles

**Presentation by Commission staff to solicit feedback on suggested ground rules for participation and communication; ground rules were accepted by the group without modification.**

3. Understanding the role of the BWG: Review background and workgroup scope

**Commission staff provided an overview of previous MRC guidance that the BWG adhere to relevant State legislation (Marine Life Management Act) and**

regulations (Title 14 and Fish and Game Code), and focus on State-managed fisheries under direct Commission authority as top priority, followed by State fisheries under State legislative authority, for considering bycatch issues.

## **LUNCH**

4. Brainstorming: What are the desired outcomes for you and for the BWG

**Round table where each participant identified desired specific goals for individual constituency and the BWG specifically.**

5. Discussion: Setting objectives and priorities for the BWG

**Priorities identified for work products and next steps based on the brainstorming discussion. Common goal to increase the understanding of bycatch to improve public understanding on bycatch related issues.**

6. Discuss next meeting dates

**No formal meeting date set. A variety of options for the venue for the next meeting were discussed. Some emphasized exploring “low carbon footprint” options (webinar, teleconference, email), while others highlighted the value of in-person meetings. Appropriate venue may vary at different project stages.**

7. Meeting wrap-up and next steps

**Establish sub-groups to: begin working on common definitions for terms associated with bycatch but not defined in state law, compile status of parallel bycatch efforts by the Federal and pacific states, and explore scientific literature and background. Sub groups to bring products back to group via e-mail and in hard copy at next meeting. Commission staff to distribute a DRAFT work plan to the BWG for comment with the intent that it be provided to the MRC at the July 21 meeting in Petaluma.**

Adjourn