



National Marine Fisheries Service, Northwest Region
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PUBLIC NOTICE

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This public notice describes two NMFS-funded opportunities for west coast longline fishermen to address seabird bycatch in groundfish fisheries.

1: Free Streamer Lines for West Coast Longline Fishermen

NMFS is making free streamer lines (see figure below) available to any west coast longline vessel seeking to reduce seabird bycatch and protect bait from seabird predation. This program is part of an overall effort to support voluntary adoption of seabird avoidance gear and reduce seabird mortality in west coast groundfish fisheries. This program stems in part from a requirement by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the Endangered Species Act that the take of endangered short-tailed albatross in West Coast Groundfish fisheries should be kept to an average of not more than two birds over a 2-year period. While protecting birds, streamer lines also protect longline baits. Streamer lines are available to west coast longline fishermen through LFSI in Seattle: 800 647-2135 or j.eik@lfsinc.com. Starting in 2014 they will also be available from Eureka to Westport at Englund Marine stores and through LFSI.

For more information on the USFWS requirement to limit take of short-tailed albatross in the west coast groundfish fisheries, see: https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seabirds/esa/pcgf_biop1112.pdf

2: Cooperative Research Opportunity for Longline Vessels

WA Sea Grant is recruiting longline vessels to host research on seabird avoidance in the sablefish longline fisheries along the west coast. Streamer lines are used in longline fisheries throughout the world to reduce seabird bycatch and to save baits for fish. This research is intended to refine the design of streamer lines specifically for west coast groundfish fisheries. By working closely with fishermen, researchers hope to account for the unique characteristics of west coast groundfish fisheries in the design specifications of streamer lines. This research may inform the future development of regulations to protect short-tailed albatross. Participating vessels will be compensated on a per day basis. The priority for the remainder of 2013 is to work with vessels 55 feet and over; however, all interested vessels should apply as the priority will shift to smaller vessels in 2014. Interested persons should contact Ed Melvin at 206-543-9968 or edmelvin@uw.edu.

