

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON AMENDMENT 22: LIMITING
ENTRY IN THE OPEN ACCESS GROUND FISH FISHERY

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) heard LB Boydston's presentation on California's proposal for limiting open access. The GAP has several points for consideration by the Council during this process.

The GAP believes that the current proposal does not adequately capture the purpose and needs of Washington, Oregon, or California. Additional time should be provided to allow the individual states to define the purpose and need for their open access fisheries. Each state has different objectives that need to be met – one size does not fit all adequately. One more meeting in the proposed time line would provide the extra time and put the final meeting on preferred alternatives in Foster City next year. This would provide a central location for affected fishermen to attend.

The GAP also supports full transferability of permits. The forced buyback and mandatory fishing provisions should be dropped from this and any future open access (OA) permitting process. Forcing people to fish to maintain a permit, or in the future buy another permit to stay in the fishery, causes many unnecessary hardships.

The final analysis of permitted OA fishery should take into account the distribution of permits between states and ports. Many other questions came up during discussion that may need to be analyzed during the process such as: 1) would nearshore permitted boats that have landed federal trip limits need a B permit to continue landing these fish? 2) Would nearshore boats who have landed only lingcod qualify for a B permit? 3) Potential discard affects from boats that now have only shelf, or near shore permits.

A sablefish endorsement for the B permit also needs to be analyzed.

The GAP would like to see an analysis of a fourth option under Table 9. Apply qualifying criteria using the most recent year participation (with minimum landing requirements) combined with a history of past multi-year landings to determine initial and long-term fleet size objectives without future capacity reduction measures. Landings should be analyzed in terms of a range of values both in dollars value and amount of poundage caught from 1994 to 2006.