

7.0 CONCLUSIONS OR FINDINGS OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

This action would set 2002 fishery specifications and the management measures designed to rebuild overfished stocks through constraining direct and incidental mortality, to prevent overfishing, and to achieve as much of the OYs as practicable for healthier groundfish stocks managed under the FMP. Seven stocks managed under the FMP have been determined by NMFS as overfished: lingcod, bocaccio, POP, canary rockfish, cowcod, darkblotched rockfish, and widow rockfish. The Council has also adopted precautionary harvest specifications and management measures for yelloweye rockfish as the Council expects NMFS will declare yelloweye rockfish overfished in January 2002. Under Magnuson-Stevens Act requirements for protecting overfished species, managing to keep directed and incidental catch of overfished species at levels allowing those species to rebuild their populations has become the Council's first priority for setting annual specifications and management measures for all West Coast groundfish. For 2002, commercial landings limits and recreational bag limits are recommended to be reduced to protect overfished species. These fisheries have been operating under protective measures for several years.

Based on the biological, physical, and socioeconomic impacts of the alternatives assessed in this document, it has been determined implementation of the management alternatives would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement for the proposed action is not required by Section 102 (2) (C) of the National Environmental Policy Act or its implementing regulations.

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA

Date