

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
PRELIMINARY PREFERRED MANAGEMENT MEASURE ALTERNATIVES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a report from Ms. Kelly Ames and Mr. John DeVore, Council staff; Groundfish Management Team (GMT) members; and tribal representatives to inform our discussion about management measures for the 2017-18 biennial management process.

For reference, the GAP followed the action item checklist for this agenda item.

1) Revisions: Updates to selected RCA coordinates in California

→ The GAP is satisfied with the measures in this action.

2) Off-the-top deductions: Confirm or modify amounts adopted in November 2015 and March 2016 for groundfish mortality in Tribal, exempted fishing permit (EFP), non-groundfish fisheries, and research activities

→ The GAP anticipates Tribal representatives will suggest modified deductions by the June 2016 PFMC meeting. We anticipate requests for increases in widow rockfish (from 100 to 200 mt; longnose skate (from 135 mt to 150 mt); and canary rockfish (from 35 mt to 50 mt). The GAP understands tribal fishermen have been increasingly targeting longnose skate and this deduction should satisfy treaty tribes' fishing behavior. Regarding canary, the GAP appreciates the tribes' avoidance strategies and ability to react quickly to changing fishing conditions.

3) ACT: Adopt preliminary ACTs for cowcod (4 mt), California scorpionfish (111 mt), and other species as necessary

→ The GAP agrees with these ACTs.

4) HG: Adopt preliminary HGs for species managed within a complex for

- **Blackgill rockfish** within the Slope Rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat. in 2017 (120 mt)
- **Blue rockfish south** of 42° N lat. within the Nearshore Rockfish Complexes north and south of 40°10' N. lat. (305 mt in 2017, 311 mt for 2018)

→ The GAP agrees with these HGs.

5) Allocations: Adopt preliminary 2-year trawl and non-trawl allocations for

- **Overfished species:** bocaccio, cowcod, and yelloweye rockfish; Preliminary analysis uses the September 2015 scorecard

- **Canary:** trawl (53%) and non-trawl (47%) allocation; based on the September 2015 scorecard. See also Agenda Item F.6, Attachment 2
- **Big skate:** trawl (95%) and non-trawl (5%) allocation
- **Longnose skate:** trawl (90%) and non-trawl (10%) allocation
- **Shelf Rockfish north 40°10' N. lat.:** trawl (60.2%) and non-trawl (39.8%) allocation
- **Shelf Rockfish south 40°10' N. lat.:** trawl (12.2%) and non-trawl (87.8%) allocation

→ The GAP agrees with everything above as listed in [Agenda Item F.3, Attachment 1](#) and or the September 2015 scorecard with the *exception* of bocaccio rockfish and canary rockfish, as noted below:

- Bocaccio rockfish: The GAP agrees with moving 15 percent into the trawl sector, as identified on page 2 of [Agenda Item F.3.a, Supplemental CDFW Report](#).
- Canary rockfish: The GAP spent a lot of time discussing canary rockfish allocations, especially in light of the [Council's motion under Agenda Item F.3](#). Ultimately the GAP recommends the Groundfish Management Team's range of alternatives under this agenda item be analyzed prior to the June 2016 Council meeting, as the alternatives are likely sufficient to cover the needs of both the trawl and non-trawl sectors. In addition, the GAP suggests the mothership (MS) sector set-aside to 30 mt, as recommended on in Table 1 on page 3 in [Agenda Item F.6, Supplemental WDFW Report](#).

6) Allocations: Adopt preliminary canary allocations for the shorebased IFQ, CP, and MS sectors, analysis uses the September 2015 scorecard, see also Agenda Item F.6, Attachment 2

→ As in Item No. 5, the GAP suggests the range of alternatives in the GMT recommendations under this agenda item will be sufficient to cover the allocations for the trawl sectors. We anticipate subsequent analysis between now and June will provide clarity for choosing a final alternative.

7) Set-aside: Adopt preliminary set-asides for Pacific whiting at-sea sectors

→ A majority of the GAP suggests the following set-asides, as outlined in Table 1 on page 3 in [Agenda Item F.6, Supplemental WDFW Report](#), for the CP and MS sectors for widow, darkblotched and Pacific Ocean perch (POP) rockfish.

Stock	Catcher-Processor	Mothership
Darkblotched Rockfish	25	20
Widow Rockfish	411.5	290.5
Pacific Ocean Perch	20	15

The GAP understands these set-asides depart from the hard allocation scheme established as part of Amendment 21. However, the at-sea sectors have been constrained by insufficient amounts of some of these choke species and changing these allocations to set-asides could alleviate reactionary decisions on behalf of the sectors and the Council, especially as these species continue to rebuild.

It is the GAP's understanding this would require a plan amendment and likely will not be in place by Jan. 1, 2017, when the other biennial specifications and management measures are expected to be in place. However, it may be in place by the start of the whiting seasons in May 2017.

The GAP recommends that if this can be accomplished by the start of the May 2017 whiting season while at the same time causing no delay to the complete biennial harvest specifications and management measures package, ensuring a Jan. 1, 2017 implementation date, it is an option that should be explored.

8) HG or Shares: Adopt preliminary 2-year within non-trawl HGs or shares for:

- **Overfished species:** bocaccio, cowcod, and yelloweye, analysis uses the September 2015 scorecard
- **Canary rockfish:** analysis uses the September 2015 scorecard, see also Agenda Item F.6, Attachment 2
- **Blackgill south of 40°10' N. lat. in 2018**
 - 60% limited entry and 40% open access fixed gears
 - 70% limited entry and 30% open access fixed gears
- **Sablefish south of 36° N lat.**
 - 55% limited entry and 45% open access fixed gears
 - 75% limited entry and 25% open access fixed gears
- **Nearshore Rockfish North of 40°10' N. latitude**
 - Consider the state-specific ranges analyzed (Table 4-8)
 - Consider a Federal HG for the area 42° to 40°10' N. latitude

→ The GAP agrees with most of these range of alternatives with specific alternatives as our preferred options:

- For blackgill, the GAP's preferred option is 60% limited entry and 40% open access fixed gears. This is more in line with historical catch between the 2 sectors. The GMT will have to craft new trip limit options more in line with this allocation.
- For sablefish, the GAP's preferred option is 70% limited entry and 30% open access fixed gears, as listed noted on [Page 5 of Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#), for the reasons listed in that report. *(Note: This is different than the options listed in the action item checklist, above.)*
- For nearshore, the GAP prefers Option 2 of [Table 4-8 on page 53 in Agenda Item F.3, attachment 1](#) (the No Action alternative is less responsive to recent assessments):

Table 4-8. Range of Nearshore Rockfish north of 40° 10' N. latitude HGs.

Stock	State	Option		
		No Action	Option 1	Option 2
Nearshore Rockfish North of 40°10' N. Lat.	WA	13.2	25.6	16.9
	OR	60.5	36.2	46.1
	CA	29.6	41.4	40.2

- 9) **Season structure, shorebased IFQ:** Allocations based on final preferred ACLs, 2016 RCA structure, big skate trip limits

→ The GAP agrees with the trip limits listed in Tables 4-13 and 4-14 of [Agenda Item F.3, Attachment 1](#). These are preferred trip limits for 2017 and 2018 only. The GAP strongly recommends the methodology for determining the big skate OFL be revisited before the Council begins developing harvest specifications for 2019 and beyond. The OFL estimated for the next management cycle is based on a method where the trawl survey biomass estimate was multiplied by an assumed natural mortality rate. This OFL is overly conservative given that the trawl survey extends to 55 meters depth and big skate are distributed to the beach. The GAP recommends review of a new methodology, such as the geospatial method proposed by the NMFS Northwest Fishery Science Center last year, to better estimate a sustainable harvest level for big skate.

- 10) **Season structure, at-sea sectors:** Amendment 21 allocations for darkblotched, POP, and widow based on final preferred ACLs

→ The GAP has no comment, as these are automatic.

- 11) **Season structure, non-nearshore:**

Same as 2016, except trip limit options for

- Sablefish N LE and OA
- Sablefish S LE and OA
- Blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' LE and OA in 2018
- Boccaccio south of 40°10' N. lat. for LE and OA
- Canary trip limits (the same limits would also apply to vessels in the nearshore fishery)
- Yellowtail rockfish for LE and OA
- Shelf rockfish from 40°10' to 34°27' N. lat. for OA

→ The GAP recommends the following:

- Sablefish N, LE and OA: No action, as listed in Table 4-26 in [Agenda Item F.3, attachment 1](#)
- Sablefish S, LE and OA: LE, 1,700 lbs./week and OA, 300 lbs. daily/1,600 weekly/3,200 bimonthly as listed in Table 4-27 in [Agenda Item F.3, attachment 1](#). Fishermen in this region travel up to 80 miles offshore to pursue sablefish and expenses run very high.
- Blackgill rockfish: The GAP suggests new trip limits based on the assumption

of a change in the blackgill allocation in Item No. 8 (60% LE/40% OA). The GAP suggest 2,000 lbs/2 mo. for LE (Note: this is 1,000 lbs./2 mo. *less than* the CDFW-preferred Option 2b as listed in Table 7 on [Page 3 of Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#)); and 800 lbs./2 mo. for open access (Note: this is 100 lbs./2 mo. *less than* the CDFW-preferred Option 2b, as listed in Table 8 on [Page 3 of Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#)).

- **Bocaccio:** For the limited entry sector, the GAP supports Option 1 (1,000 lbs. per 2 months) for the area between 40°10' N lat. and 34°27' N lat. and Option 2 (in the table below) for the area south of 34°27' N lat. (Table 9 from [Page 4 of Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#)). For the open access sector, the GAP supports option 1 (500 lbs. per two months; Table 10 [Page 4 of Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#)) for the area between 40°10' N lat. and 34°27' N lat. and 500 lbs. per two months for the south of 34°27' N lat.

The GAP also supports removing bocaccio from the aggregate trip limit between 40°10' N lat. and 34°27' N lat. to reduce discarding as the stock continues to rebuild and encounters increase.

Table 9. Bocaccio bi-monthly trip limits (lbs) for limited entry south of 40°10' N lat.

40°10' – 34°27'	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
No Action	500 lb / 2 mo					
Option 1	1,000 lb / 2 mo					
South of 34°27'						
No Action	750 lb	CLOSED	750 lb / 2 mo			
Option 1	1,250 lb	CLOSED	1,250 lb / 2 mo			
Option 2	1,500 lb	CLOSED	1,500 lb / 2 mo			

Table 10. Bocaccio bi-monthly trip limits (lbs) for open access south of 40°10' N lat.

40°10' – 34°27'	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
No Action	200 lb	CLOSED	100 lb / 2 mo	200 lb/2 mo		
Option 1	500 lb	CLOSED	500 lb / 2 mo			
Option 2	800 lb	CLOSED	800 lb / 2 mo			
South of 34°27'						
No Action	250 lb	CLOSED	250 lb / 2 mo			
Option 1	400 lb	CLOSED	400 lb / 2 mo			
	500 lb	CLOSED	500 lb / 2 mo			
Option 2	800 lb	CLOSED	800 lb / 2 mo			

- **Canary rockfish:** The GAP supports the statements in [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#), regarding canary rockfish: trip limits of 300 lbs./2 months for limited entry and 300 lbs./2 months for open access should be sufficient to allow retention while also discouraging targeting.
- **Yellowtail rockfish:** The GAP supports the CDFW preferred options for yellowtail rockfish for LE and OA, as listed in tables 5 and 6 of [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#): 1,000 lbs./month for limited entry and 500 lbs./month for open access.

- Shelf rockfish: The GAP supports the CDFW-preferred Option 1 in Table 11 from [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#) for the open access sector between 40°10' N lat. and 34°27' N lat. This trip limit is expected to keep projected impacts within allowable limits.

Table 11. Shelf rockfish Summary of bi-monthly trip limits (lbs) for open access between 40°10' N lat. and 34°27' N lat.

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
No Action	300 lb	CLOSED	200 lb / 2 mo		300 lb / 2 mo	
Option 1	400 lb	CLOSED	400 lb / 2 mo			
Option 2	500 lb	CLOSED	500 lb / 2 mo			

12) **Season structure, nearshore:**

Same as 2016, except trip limit adjustments for

- Canary trip limits (Table 4-47)
- Black rockfish from 42° to 40°10' N. lat. for LE and OA (Table 4-50)
- California Scorpionfish for LE and OA (Table 4-52)

→ The GAP recommends the following:

- Canary trip limits: The GAP prefers 300 lbs./2 months for LE and 300 lbs./2 months for OA coastwide.
- Black rockfish, LE and OA: The GAP supports Option 2, the same one supported by CDFW as listed in Table 4 of [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#)

Table 4. Summary of black rockfish bi-monthly trip limits (lbs) for limited entry and open access north of 40°10' N. lat.

	Trip Limits (pounds)					
	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
No Action	8,500 lb /2 mo			6,000 lb /2 mo		
Option 1	8,000 lb /2 mo					
Option 2	7,000 lb /2 mo					
Option 3	6,000 lb /2 mo					

- California scorpionfish: The GAP supports Option 1 in Table 12 of [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#) for the limited entry and open access sectors south of 34°27' N lat. The commercial fishery was unexpectedly closed early in 2014 due to an overage in the recreational sector. Since that time, the recreational season has been restricted and has remained within allowable limits. Although few commercial fishermen target California scorpionfish, the few that do indicate this target opportunity is extremely important especially around the holidays.

Table 12. Summary of limited entry and open access bi-monthly trip limits (lbs) for California scorpionfish. Bold text indicates the GAP preferred option.

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6
No Action	1,200 lb	Closed		1,200 lb / 2 mo		
Option 1	1,500 lb	Closed		1,500 lb / 2 mo		
Option 2	1,700 lb	Closed		1,700 lb / 2 mo		

13) **Season structure, treaty fisheries:**

Same as 2016, except

- Sablefish discard mortality reduced from 1.6 to 1.5 percent
- Midwater trawl: Landings of widow rockfish must not exceed 20 percent (increased from 10) of the weight of yellowtail rockfish landed. 200 mt annual vessel limit for yellowtail
- For Dover sole, English sole, Other Flatfish, and arrowtooth flounder trip limits will be established in tribal regulation only and adjusted in-season to stay within the overall harvest targets and overfished species limits.

→ The GAP discussed the tribal report that wasn't available at the time but is listed now as [F.6.a, Supplemental Tribal Report](#). The GAP agrees with everything in that report, includes removing limits for some species and removing the percentage of species as they relate to landings of target species. Instead, the tribes plan to manage to set-asides – the amounts for which are in the tribal report – which make it easier to write the tribal regulations and easier to manage using inseason strategies and rotating closures based on results from individual vessels' fishing tactics.

14) **Season structure, WA recreational:**

→ The GAP agrees with the season dates, bag limits and lingcod closed area as listed on Pages 1 and 2 of [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental WDFW Report](#), for all the reasons listed therein. To summarize:

Season structure

Marine Catch Areas 1, 2, and 3: Bottomfish and lingcod seasons would open on the second Saturday in March and continue through the third Saturday in October.

Marine Catch Area 4: Bottomfish season would open on the second Saturday in March and continue through the third Saturday in October; lingcod season would remain status quo (i.e., April 16 through October 15).

Bag limits

Marine Catch Areas 1 and 2: Aggregate bag limit of 12 groundfish which includes a sub-limit of 10 rockfish, including up to 1 canary rockfish, 2 lingcod, and 2 cabezon (i.e., status quo with additional canary rockfish sub-limit).

Marine Catch Areas 3 and 4: (Status Quo) Aggregate bag limit of 12 groundfish which includes a sub-limit of 10 rockfish, 2 lingcod, and 1 cabezon

Lingcod area closure modification

Marine Catch Area 1: (Alternative 1) Revise the current deepwater lingcod closure by moving the southern boundary northward five nautical miles. Specifically, fishing for, retention, or possession of lingcod is prohibited seaward of a line connecting the following coordinates: 47°31.70' N. lat., 124°45.00' W. lon. (Queets River), to 47°38.17' N. lat., 124°30.00' W. lon., to 47°38.17' N. lat., 124°21.00' W. lon., to 46°33.00' N. lat., 124°21.00' W. lon. (See Attachment 1, which compares this recommendation with status quo.)

15) Season structure, OR recreational:

→ The GAP is satisfied with the following ranges of alternatives.

Same as 2016, except

- *Bag Limits Options*
 - *2016 Limits: 10 marine fish bag limit, one of which can be canary*
 - *Option 1: 10 marine fish bag limit, no restrictions on canary*
- *The 10-inch kelp greenling length limit may be removed*
- *Increase Stonewall Bank closure*

16) Season structure, CA recreational

→ The GAP agrees with the options listed in addition to an alternative as proposed in [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report \(Part I\)](#). This new option appears to be a combination of Options 2 and 3 as listed below. We also support the bag limits that are listed on pages 3 and 4 of [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report \(Part I\)](#).

- *Option 1: 2016 structure*
- *Option 2: Longer seasons and fewer depth restrictions in the winter north of Point Arena*
- *Option 3: Increases depth of fishing by 10 fm north of Point Conception*
- *Option 4: Allows all depth, but only for 3 months*

Sub-bag Limits:

- *Black rockfish: Option 4 maintains the 2016 limit of 5, all other options require reductions that range from 2-4*
- *Lingcod: Reduction from 3 to 2*
- *Bocaccio: Ranges from 3-10*
- *Canary: Ranges from 1-5*

17) New management measure (trawl, non-trawl): Big skate FMP classification from ecosystem component to “in the fishery” (final action taken November, 2015)

→ The GAP has no comment on this as it already has been discussed and final action was taken in November 2015.

- 18) **New management measure (trawl, non-trawl):** Select preliminary preferred management for starry flounder
- No Action: Manage starry flounder with stock-specific harvest specifications
 - Alternative: Manage starry flounder within the Other Flatfish Complex
 - Preliminary preferred trawl and non-trawl allocations
- The GAP supports the no action alternative.
- 19) **New management measure (trawl):** Allow transfer of shorebased individual fishing quota pounds for canary, darkblotched, POP, and widow to the mothership sector
- The GAP has no comment on this alternative at this time.
- 20) **New management measure (non-trawl, CA):** New inseason process outside a Council meeting
- The GAP has no comment on this alternative at this time.
- 21) **New management measure (CA rec):** Allow petrale sole to be retained, along with species in the Other Flatfish complex, at any depth during the seasonal depth closures
- The GAP supports this management measure as described on pages 5 and 6 of [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report](#), for the reasons outlined in that report. It does not require an allocation.
- 22) **New management measure (CA rec):** Nine new overfished species hotspot closures
- The GAP supports this management measure as described on pages 5 of [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report](#), for the reasons outlined in that report.
- 23) **New management measure (OR rec):** Allow flatfish retention at any depth during the seasonal depth closure
- The GAP supports this management measure.

Suggested management measures

The GAP also suggested adding two management measures for analysis:

1. Non-trawl RCAs in California

→ The GAP supports the proposal on page 1 of [Agenda Item F.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 2](#), summarized below, with the exception of modifying the seaward RCA boundary south of 34° 27' N lat. from 150 fm to 125 fm. The GAP does not support this change:

GAP supports non-trawl RCA boundaries as follows:

- *42° N lat. to 40° 10' N lat. - maintain status quo (30 fm to 100 fm)*
- *40° 10' N lat. to 34° 27' N lat. - modify the shoreward RCA boundary from 30 fm to 40 fm; modify the seaward RCA boundary from 150 fm to 125 fm*
- *South of 34° 27' N lat. - modify the shoreward RCA boundary from 60 fm to 75 fm;*

2. Removal of daily vessel limits in the IFQ fishery for overfished species (OFS) that are rebuilt

→ The GAP supports removing the daily vessel limit for canary rockfish in the IFQ fishery since it has now been rebuilt. We addressed this in our [Agenda Item F.1.c Supplemental GAP Report](#) and request it be included in the 2017-18 biennial management process as it moves forward. Furthermore, we suggest the Council consider a process by which this becomes automatic as other species are removed from the OFS list.