

FISHERIES IN 2015-2016 AND BEYOND: STOCK COMPLEX RESTRUCTURING

After consideration at the June and September 2013 Council meetings, the Council adopted alternatives for analysis in consideration for restructuring the slope rockfish complexes north and south of 40°10' N lat. at the November 2013 Council meeting (Agenda Item C.8.a, Attachment 1). During the briefing at the March 2014 Council meeting updating progress on the 2015 and 2016 groundfish regulatory process, it was noted that delays in getting the harvest specifications adopted had greatly inhibited analyses of these slope rockfish complex alternatives. At that meeting, in recognition of workload realities, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recommended analysis of only one alternative for restructuring slope rockfish complexes: removing rougheye and shortraker rockfish from the existing complexes and managing these species in a new coastwide complex. NMFS further committed to having an analysis in the advance briefing book, which is provided in Agenda Item C.8.a, Attachment 2.

At this meeting, the Council is tasked with adopting a preliminary preferred alternative for slope rockfish complexes. The Council should also consider which alternatives can be fully analyzed in the 2015-2016 specifications Environmental Impact Statement, recognizing workload limitations needed to achieve the objectives under the adopted process and schedule (Agenda Item C.4.a, Attachment 8). The Council should also consider advisory body reports and public comment under this agenda item before deciding the preliminary preferred alternative.

Council Action:

Adopt a preliminary preferred alternative for slope rockfish complexes.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item C.8.a, Attachment 1: Slope Rockfish Stock Complex Reorganization Alternatives.
2. Agenda Item C.8.a, Attachment 2: Creating a Coastwide Rougheye/Shortraker Complex: An Alternative to Continued Management Within the Slope Rockfish Stock Complexes.
3. Agenda Item C.8.a, Attachment 3: Excerpted Portions of Appendix B of the Preliminary Draft 2015-2016 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Environmental Impact Statement Relevant to Slope Rockfish Complex Management.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt a Preliminary Preferred Alternative for Slope Rockfish Stock Complexes

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