

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON BIENNIAL HARVEST
SPECIFICATIONS FOR 2015-2016 AND BEYOND GROUND FISH FISHERIES

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the March Briefing Book report on proposed overfishing limits (OFLs) for cowcod south of 40°10' N Lat., the Oregon and Washington sub-stocks of kelp greenling and the Washington sub-stock of cabezon (Agenda Item D.5.a, Attachment 1). The GMT also heard a presentation from Dr. E.J. Dick on updates to the China, copper, and brown rockfish OFLs. We offer the following comments.

The GMT understands that we will have corrected harvest specifications for the nearshore rockfish complex, including the range of Council-requested China rockfish harvest guidelines, early next week. In addition, the GMT will have updated cabezon harvest specifications for Washington sometime in the near future. The GMT has found it challenging to evaluate a range of management measures and produce estimates of projected mortality from our recreational and commercial fisheries necessary for the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) given the dynamic nature in the harvest specifications for these species. State representatives on the GMT note that these and other delays in receiving harvest specifications have also made it difficult to provide information to our recreational and commercial stakeholders, and get their input on season structures and management measures that may be required to stay within these harvest limits. Prior to this cycle, harvest specifications have been adopted during the November Council meeting and few, if any, corrections occur prior to final action.

PFMC
03/10/14