

ENFORCEMENT CONSULTANTS REPORT ON
RECREATIONAL MID-WATER ROCKFISH FISHERY

The Enforcement Consultants (EC) has reviewed the Recreational Mid-Water Rockfish Fishery proposal for Oregon and offers the following comments related to the suggested management measures:

Area Allowance: The proposal recommends that a Mid-Water fishery with gear restrictions be open seaward of 40 fathoms, creating a 10 fathom buffer between this fishery and the current recreational groundfish fishery, which is restricted to angling shoreward of the 30 fathom line. The EC appreciates and supports such a buffer. The 30 and 40 fathom lines are well-known to Oregon enforcement and are delineated on current navigational equipment.

Bag limits: The EC supports a consistent bag limit between this proposed fishery and the current Oregon recreational groundfish fishery that occurs inside 30 fathoms. A different bag limit would create loopholes for enforcement, potentially compromising the integrity of recreational groundfish management.

Gear Requirements: The gear requirements outlined in this proposal were vetted through the Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) process, including comment by the EC requesting a measureable leader length. Enforcement had no issues inspecting the gear requirements during the EFP's operational time period. History has shown that the recreational angler can have difficulty adapting to new gear restrictions, leading to a spike in enforcement actions. To counter this possibility, the EC recommends a high level of public outreach and education should this proposal move forward.

The EC also notes that while this fishery appears viable in Oregon, further analysis by the EC may be necessary prior to implementation in other states.

PFMC
06/21/13