

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
CONSIDERATION OF INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) met with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to discuss possible inseason adjustments for the 2014 season. The GMT discussion was led by Mr. Bob Leos. The GAP offers the following recommendations and comments on proposed inseason adjustments to ongoing groundfish fisheries.

The Southern California Charter Boat fleet and Sportfishing Association of California (SAC) have withdrawn their requests for inseason changes to season and areal restrictions, thus these requests were not reviewed by the GAP.

A request from the fixed gear open access (OA) sector north of 36° N. Lat. to open the 2014 fishing season with a larger sablefish trip limit than the “no action” alternative was discussed. The open access fishermen are requesting a weekly limit of 800 lb. and a bi-monthly limit of 1,600 lb. The “no action” trip limits would leave fishermen with very narrow profit margins. Dr. Sean Matson has analyzed the 800 lb. weekly/1,600 lb. bi-monthly limits and the model estimates a 99 percent attainment. The higher attainment figure is due to an improving market for sablefish which the GMT statement will provide greater detail on. The GAP and GMT will be able to look at reducing the trip limits through inseason actions next year, should there be an issue with excessive catch.

To keep things simple at this point, the GAP is recommending going with the GMT Alternative 1 for all fixed gear sablefish sectors both north and south of 36° N. Lat. to start the 2014 fishing season. Those limits are as follows:

Limited Entry Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery North of 36° N. Latitude

The GAP supports **GMT Alternative 1, (1 landing per week of up to 950 lb., not to exceed 2,850 lb. per 2 months).**

Open Access Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery North of 36° N. Latitude

The GAP supports **GMT Alternative 1, (300 lb. per day, or 1 landing per week of up to 800 lb., not to exceed 1,600 lb. per 2 months).**

Limited Entry Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery South of 36° N. Latitude

The GAP supports **GMT Alternative 1, (2,000 lb. per week)**

Open Access Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery South of 36° N. Latitude

The GAP supports **GMT Alternative 1, (300 lb. per day, or 1 landing per week of up to 1,600 lb., not to exceed 3,200 lb. per 2 months).**

San Francisco Fishermen's Cooperative-Dan Platt/midwater vertical hook and line gear exempted fishing permit (EFP)

The EFP sponsors are requesting an increase in the yelloweye set-asides for 2014, from 0.01 metric tons (22 pounds), to 0.03 metric tons (66 pounds). The GAP supports this request.

The GAP also reviewed the public comment received for a request to increase the open access trip limits for bank rockfish (slope rockfish component). This was a unique request, as it involved the use of set gillnet fishing gear. The GAP has concerns about the potential impacts to blackgill rockfish, as this fishery would be taking place in similar habitats and water depths that blackgill inhabit. After further discussion with the GMT, the GAP believes this request needs more analysis and that analysis should be put off until the March or April meetings in 2014 due to GMT workload planning.

PFMC
11/05/13