

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL COMMENTS ON  
STATUS OF FISHERIES AND INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) discussed the landings to date and the projected landings for the balance of the year with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT). The GAP supports the GMT recommendations for changes in trip limits for both the open access and limited entry fisheries as presented on Supplemental GMT Report G.6.

The GAP had lengthy discussion about the trip limit management line at Cape Mendocino. This line divides the Monterey and Eureka statistical areas. This is an area of the coast that is relatively low for rockfish abundance and has been used to divide the *Sebastes* complex between north and south. Rockfish caught in the Eureka statistical area are limited by the *Sebastes* north trip limits even though these fish are counted against the *Sebastes* south optimum yield. The location of this line runs through an area which is fished by hook-and-line as well as trawl fishermen from the nearby port of Eureka. The GAP recommends this line be moved twenty miles to the south to 40°10' N latitude.

The GAP also discussed the occurrence of Sablefish less than 22 inches in the trawl fishery in the Conception area. In this area, Sablefish are slower growing and smaller at age than Sablefish to the north. Currently, the amount of Sablefish under 22 inches that may be landed is restricted to 500 pounds per trip. This has led to discards of fish that otherwise could be landed. The GAP recommended the restriction on landing Sablefish under 22 inches be removed for the Conception area.

Concern was expressed over the catch of immature fish, as well as interest in exploring mechanisms for reducing the catch of small individuals.

PFMC  
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