

REBUILDING PLANS FOR CANARY ROCKFISH AND COWCOD

Situation: In 1999, stock assessments were prepared for canary rockfish (coastwide) and cowcod (Conception area) that indicated these two stocks have fallen into overfished status. In early January 2000, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) notified the Council of its responsibility to prepare rebuilding plans for each stock. These plans must be completed within one year. Although the technical analyses for these rebuilding plans have not yet been prepared, the Council needs to begin considering the elements to be included in the plans and the process for developing them. In order to avoid resorting to emergency rulemaking to implement the plans, the Council may need to take final action in September.

If the Council wishes to consider allocating either stock among the various harvest sectors, the issue must be discussed at a minimum of three Council meetings. Based on Council discussions at the March 2000 meeting about canary rockfish catches in the pink shrimp fishery, it appears allocation may be a part of the canary rockfish plan.

The Council will need to adopt a process and schedule for these required rebuilding plans. Draft rebuilding analyses for these two stocks are expected to be available at the June 2000 meeting. Until then, the Council could consider the rebuilding harvest levels will be similar to the current acceptable biological catches and optimum yields. Questions that should be considered at this time include:

- Who will work with the various constituent groups and begin the necessary outreach programs?
- Will state-to-state allocations be necessary?
- Is it possible that seasons or area management will be appropriate?

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt draft process and schedule for preparing canary rockfish and cowcod rebuilding plans.**

Reference Materials:

1. Proposed schedule for developing rebuilding plans for canary rockfish and cowcod (Supplemental Attachment B.10.a.).

PFMC
03/20/00