

**Groundfish and Nearshore Fisheries Management
Public Hearings - Sacramento
October 10, 2000**

Attendance: 35 people

Summary of Public Response

CPFV owners and operators were concerned about the continued use of the MRFSS data for in season catch estimates. They encourage the Department to develop a new CPFV logbook that will capture more specific catch information about the nearshore fishery. They also support having onboard observers, but they would also like to observe on the commercial boats.

The southern California fishing community is concerned it is being regulated by fishery independent data collected north of Point Conception. The results of these surveys are being used to regulate groundfish statewide. More money is needed in southern California for fishery independent studies.

In general, there was a lot of support for localized fishery management.

Reducing the number of hooks from three to one would force the CPFV industry to shift fishing effort from deep water to shallow water rockfish. A suggestion was made to have a maximum weight requirement when fishing for midwater shelf rockfish.

The recreational contingent supports increasing the lingcod minimum size to 28" over reducing the daily bag limit to one fish. Many individuals indicated they would lose an important customer base if their customers could only keep one fish per angler.

CPFV operators indicated the current proposed lingcod management measures would force them to use live bait for lingcod.

Additional time closures would put many CPFV owners and their landings out of business. Last years regulations resulted in a 20% decrease in business.

Time block closures would deflated the exvessel price paid for premium live finish because of the potential glut of fish when the season is open. Trap fishermen support short period closures spread over a years time.

Nearshore fishermen feel they are being regulated out of the fishery by anecdotal information. A 50% harvest reduction would put them out of business.

One nearshore fishermen suggested increasing the commercial minimum size of greenling *spp.* and keep the current recreational minimum size.

Some individuals expressed concern over the definition of nearshore. Most agreed with

the one mile demarcation but thought 40 fathoms was too broad.

A representative for central California sport free divers association indicated he was concerned about the decrease in size and number of nearshore rockfish. His group supports ITQs for commercial fishers and suggested reducing the catch rate by restricting the number of hooks or poles.

Gear restrictions; requiring nearshore fishermen to use rod-and-reel gear verses other gears would result in a high catch rate for blue and black rockfish. They die very easily and are not typically sought by the markets.

Trawlers support increasing trip limit periods to reduce the discard rate of sensitive species.

Why are trawlers fishing on the shelf when commercial longliners and recreational boats are being excluded.

**Groundfish and Nearshore Fisheries Management
Public Hearings - San Luis Obispo
October 11, 2000**

Attendance: ~100

Summary of Public Response

Concerned time closures as they relate to offshore fishes will cause a shift in effort towards nearshore species.

One individual supported cuts in bag limits for recreational fishers and reduced OY's for commercial fishers over time closures.

The following is a list of proactive activities the Department should be concerned about:
Artificial enhancement of the nearshore fishes

- Habitat protection and enhancement

- Buy back program for displaced groundfish fishermen

- Socioeconomic impacts of it's proposed regulations

- Provide a list of the publications the Department cites when justifying management proposals

- Identify point and non-point pollution sources.

The Department needs to collect more accurate field data. The current CPFV logbooks are insufficient and the MRFSS data is less than creditable.

Concerned the Department has not investigate the sociaeconomic impacts of it's proposed regulations. When you close down fisheries you impact whole communities.

Punch cards and ITQs were recommended as potential management tools.

Some people supported area closures, but not time closures. Time closures would force fishermen to fish in unsafe conditions to make a living.

Cowcod landings are down because there is not a market for them. They are too large for the current market demand. Cowcod generally do not mix with other species of rockfish and can be regularly taken when targeted.

Commercial fishermen do not support a halibut or leopard shark ban in the proposed closed areas. They are concerned sculpin will be impacted unless the four month closure is approved.

Some individuals were concerned about management measure (7). A majority of the nearshore fishing occurs in isolated areas along the coast. The catch is often transported to the buyers before market receipt can be written up.

Nearshore fisheries management regulations should be equilateral between commercial and recreational fishers.

The public is concerned that they are being excluded from the nearshore FMP development process.

The Department web page should contain information about these management measures and upcoming venues. Public notice of these meetings and others held by the Department are announced at the last minute.

Participants would like to know what management measures the Department will recommend to the commission before the final meeting, so they can negotiate constructively with the Department.

Management issues need to be handled at a regional level versus statewide management.

Current area time closures have resulted in a 20% decrease in revenue for the port San Luis CPFV fleet. They would like the Department to consider creating three management zones: southern, central, and northern.

Nearshore OY's should be based on data collected from 1980 thru 1999 because of the swing in landings from a fishery dominated by recreational fishers in the 1980s to commercial dominance in the 1990s.

Limited entry permits for the nearshore fishery should be based on individuals' historical landings, not by a control date.

**Groundfish and Nearshore Fisheries Management
Public Hearings - San Diego
October 19, 2000**

Attendance ~ 110 people

Groundfish Open Discussion

Administrators of the MRFSS indicated that their data should not be used for in season management, so why does the Department rely on it?

What data did you use to generate your catch estimates? The current CPFV logbooks do not capture species specific information to make quantitative management decisions according to the authors of a DFG technical report.

Many CPFV owners and operators are outraged that the Department is going to regulate them out of business with inaccurate data.

What fishery independent data does the Department have for deep water rockfish taken in southern California?

What type of fishery dependent data does the Department collect?

Why does the Department want to create such a large protected area for cowcod, when the logbooks provide specific catch location information? The Department should only close those areas specific to high cowcod catches.

The rockfish count has been down in recent years in southern California because CPFV operators have been targeting white seabass and yellowtail.

Southern California anglers catch relatively few lingcod, cabezon, or greenlings, so why should they be faced with the same restrictions as those anglers in central and northern California?

The DFG is filtering information before it gets to the commissioners. The commissioners are not being informed accurately about the issues at hand.

Open Discussion of Nearshore finfish options

How does the Department plan to deal with the transport of live finfish from Oregon into California? What type of records are being kept?

Recent nearshore live finfish regulations have resulted in a destabilization of the market. No new regulations should be enacted until the market stabilizes.

Onboard observers are needed for both the commercial and CPFV fleets.

How much money will California fishermen receive from the disaster relief fund?
Trap fishermen would like to see some sort of regional approach to management of live

finfish.

Some CPFV operators support the rebuilding plan for bocaccio, but they were concerned the rebuilding plan was acting as a shield for other species not declared overfished.

What type of catch and release experiments have been conducted by the DFG on deep water rockfish? Recommends the Department ask industry people to help with these types of experiments.

Many people expressed concern that an economist has not been consulted about the impact of the proposed regulations.

There was opposition to prohibiting the take of sheephead in the proposed area closures and to increasing the minimum size of sheephead. Closing the offshore islands and banks to live finfish industry will cause a shift in effort to the nearshore islands.

Four to six month time closures would put CPFV and tackle shops that support them out of business, and there would likely be a decrease in license sales.

Commercial fishermen support IFQ program or other individual limits such as pounds or days fished.

Nearshore trapper supports increasing minimum size for nearshore commercial species. He supports weekend closures over block closures. He would like to harvest the product when it is worth the most amount of money.

Formal Testimony

The CPFV industry is skeptical about the data being used to regulate them out of business. The emergency closure for November and December would not impact the southern California fleet. They rarely make trips offshore that late in the year. There has not been a customer base since last years rockfish restrictions. They support using data collected during the eighties over the nineties for nearshore allocation allotments. In addition, they support a reduction in bag limit and reducing the number hook-per-line. They would like to see more money spent on the MRFSS survey.

Representatives of the CPFV industries indicated many of the landings will go out of business in addition to there affiliates (tackle shops, motels, and restaurants) if the commission adopts the four to six months closures.

Regional management is needed to address the specific geographic management issues. Why should the commercial and recreational industries be impacted statewide by local issues?

Lobster fishermen are concerned the vague language used to describe the one mile (nearshore) area closure and gear restrictions would put them out of business.

Exempted species and gear need to be identified in the language.

The Department needs to hire an economist to address the socioeconomic impacts of the proposed 2001 regulations. Did the Department notify general license holders about these proposed regulations and the meetings to discuss them?

The time and money spent on nearshore interim management measures has been wasted. The Department could have used that money for meaningful research.

What is being done to monitor private boat owners?

CALIFORNIA RECREATIONAL

1. Move southern management line to Point Conception; retain Cape Mendocino line.
2. Bag limits: two bocaccio, one canary, two lingcod, ten rockfish, no cowcod retention.
- 3.a. Minimum size: lingcod 26", bocaccio 10", cabezon 15", scorpionfish 10", greenlings 12".
- 3.b. Retain filet lengths and skin-on for cabezon and lingcod, *and rockfish.*
4. Hooks: two (down from three).
5. 2001 anticipated recreational catches (coastwide): bocaccio 48 mt, canary 44 mt, lingcod 350 mt, cowcod 1.7 mt (bycatch south of Point Conception).
6. Season for rockfish including scorpionfish and lingcod:
 - South: Closed: January through February (and November through December if necessary to stay within bocaccio and cowcod OYs, except open for nearshore minor rockfish inside 20 fathoms around islands and along coast. Cowcod closure in effect all year.
 - Central: Closed March through June except open for nearshore minor rockfish inside 20 fathoms during May through June.
 - Northern: Same as Oregon.
7. Cowcod closure: Alternative 2 in Exhibit C.1.c, Supplemental CDFG Overheads (8 sided): *provision for a transportation corridor 33° latitude, 1 mile area vessels must be underway during transit*
Closed to all federal groundfish except open to nearshore minor rockfish, cabezon, and greenlings (inside 20 fathoms).

Write letter to California Fish and Game Commission requesting closures for prawn trawl, ocean whitefish, and other species as appropriate.

CALIFORNIA LIMITED ENTRY AND OPEN ACCESS NONTRAWL COMMERCIAL

1. Same management lines as recreational.
2. Minimum sizes: same as recreational, except same as Oregon north of Mendocino for lingcod.
3. 2001 anticipated catches (coastwide): bocaccio 52 mt, canary 44 mt, lingcod 261 mt, cowcod 0.7 mt (bycatch).
4. Season for shelf and nearshore rockfish, scorpionfish, and lingcod is the same as recreational; slope is always open for slope species.
5. Cowcod closure: same as recreational. No cowcod retention.
6. Trip limits may be changed inseason to stay within OYs (see Exhibit C.9.c).