

GROUNDFISH MANAGEMENT TEAM COMMENT ON
FULL RETENTION MEASURES

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) continues to endorse mandatory retention of shelf and slope rockfish as a potential management tool and discussed how best to move forward with its consideration. The GMT could certainly add detail to the list presented in GMT Exhibit F.9 at the April Council meeting describing the possible benefits and costs of such a program; however, no matter how inclusive that list became, it would still lack the critical element of industry perspective. The GMT feels a more diverse group needs to be tasked with the development and critique of specific elements of any potential program. Specifically, the GMT feels such a group should contain representation from enforcement as well as the harvesting and processing sectors of the fishery. Recognizing budget and travel constraints, the GMT recommends a small sub-group consisting of representatives from the GMT, the GAP, and the Enforcement Consultants be convened to more carefully evaluate industry and enforcement impacts. Where possible, meetings of the sub-group should be held in conjunction with Council meetings or regularly scheduled GMT meetings.

The GMT also notes that two experiments may be conducted this year at the local level that may provide useful information to assist any possible development of a coastwide program. As part of the federal observer program, National Marine Fisheries Service is proposing a pilot program allowing retention and forfeiture of some amount of trip limit overage on a voluntary basis, while an exempted fishing permit (EFP) being proposed by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife would require full retention of rockfish by participating vessels during the two-month EFP window. Both programs would provide extremely valuable information in the development of any possible coastwide program.

PFMC
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