

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON
MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR 2002 AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - FINAL ACTION

As directed by the Council, the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) has been meeting jointly with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to develop final 2002 management measures for Council consideration. The management measures we are proposing are based on the optimum yield levels approved by the Council; the bycatch/discard rate guidance provided by the Council which used the analysis developed by NMFS; and the various social and economic needs of fishery participants and local coastal communities. We would like to thank the GMT - and especially Dr. Jim Hastie - for their cooperative spirit and willingness to develop workable management measures.

Regarding trip limits for limited entry and open access vessels, the GMT has provided a chart showing the proposed levels for 2002. For the sake of brevity, we will not include that chart in this statement, but we do endorse it and urge the Council to approve it. The following are our comments on other management measures.

Sablefish Daily-Trip-Limit Fishery

We recommend the following regulatory proposal:

The daily-trip-limit (DTL) fishery should be open January 1 to December 31 for both limited entry and open access gears.

During the primary sablefish season, vessels with sablefish endorsements may not participate in the DTL fishery until the start of the next 24-hour period after completing offload of the final tier limit.

Pink Shrimp Fishery

We recommend that the pink shrimp fishery operate under the following limits:

Canary rockfish - April 1 through April 30, 50 lbs/month;
May 1 through October 31, 200 lbs/month
Sablefish - April 1 through October 31, 2,000 lbs/month
Lingcod - April 1 through October 31, 400 lbs/month
All other species - April 1 through October 31, 500 lbs/day, with a cumulative limit of 1,500 lb/trip

Washington Recreational Fishery

We recommend the following:

The fishery will be open January 1 through December 31 with the following limits and sublimits:

Rockfish - Bag limit of 10 rockfish with a sublimit of either 2 canary rockfish or 1 canary rockfish and 1 yelloweye rockfish. Retention of yelloweye rockfish prohibited if Pacific halibut have been retained on the same fishing trip.

If the Washington recreational yelloweye rockfish harvest guideline is projected to be exceeded based on inseason monitoring and catch tracking, Washington will prohibit recreational groundfish fishing outside a line approximating the 25 fathom curve that will be delineated by a series of way points defined by latitude and longitude and will prohibit the retention of yelloweye rockfish.

Lingcod - the fishery will be open March 16 through October 15, with a 2 fish daily limit and a minimum size of 24 inches.

The GAP notes the Washington recreational fishery has demonstrated the ability to avoid canary rockfish and that similar avoidance (which will be encouraged by the combined bag limit) can occur in regard to yelloweye rockfish. A majority of the yelloweye rockfish taken in the 2001 fishery were a secondary target of the Pacific halibut fishery. Prohibiting retention of yelloweye on Pacific halibut trips will substantially reduce yelloweye harvest without causing a discard problem.

Oregon Recreational Fishery

We recommend the following:

The fishery will be open January 1 through December 31 with the following limits and sublimits:

Rockfish - A bag limit of 10 fish with no more than 1 canary rockfish and 1 yelloweye rockfish. Retention of yelloweye rockfish is prohibited during all-depth halibut open days if Pacific halibut have been retained. If the yelloweye rockfish harvest guideline is projected to be exceeded based on in-season monitoring, action will

be taken to prohibit recreational groundfish fishing outside of the 25 fathom curve.
Lingcod - Bag limit of 1 fish with a 24 inch minimum length.

California Recreational Fishery

During the course of the meeting, representatives of commercial and recreational fisheries in California met to develop parallel regulations for 2002. The group spent many long, contentious hours together, but eventually developed a proposal that was acceptable to everyone. Unfortunately, that proposal is not the one before the Council today. Several members of the GAP have expressed concern that - if we are going to have a deliberative process - the output of that process should be considered by the Council. Otherwise, there is no sense in user groups wasting their time coming to meetings.

I. Northern Area (40' 10' to Oregon border)

All Waters: Rockfish and Lingcod

Open: January - December

10 rockfish bag limit with a 2 bocaccio, 1 canary, 1 yelloweye (2 fish per vessel), sublimit.

2 lingcod with a 24 inch minimum length.

II. Central Area (Point Conception to 40' 10')

All Waters: Rockfish (including sculpin, a.k.a. California scorpionfish) and Lingcod

Open: January - February, July - August

10 rockfish bag limit with a 2 bocaccio, 1 canary, 1 yelloweye (2 fish per vessel), sublimit.

10 fish sculpin bag limit separate from 10 fish rockfish limit. 2 lingcod with a 24 inch minimum length.

Inside 20 fathoms: Rockfish (including sculpin) and Lingcod

Open: May - June, September - October

10 rockfish bag limit of which no more than 2 may be shelf rockfish other than bocaccio, canary, cowcod, or yelloweye. Bocaccio, canary, cowcod and yelloweye retention prohibited.

10 fish sculpin bag limit separate from 10 fish rockfish limit. 2 lingcod with a 24 inch minimum length.

III. Southern Area (Mexico border to Point Conception except Cowcod Conservation Areas)

All Waters: Rockfish (including sculpin) and Lingcod

Open: March - October

10 rockfish bag limit with a 2 bocaccio, 1 canary, 1 yelloweye (2 fish per vessel), sublimit. 10 fish sculpin bag limit separate from 10 fish rockfish limit. 2 lingcod with a 24 inch minimum length.]

IV. Cowcod Conservation Areas (CCA's): Same as Southern Area except open only inside ~~25~~ fathoms.

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Correction made
by Rod Moore
during his
presentation.
11-2-01