

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON
YELLOW EYE ROCK FISH PROTECTION NEAR HALIBUT HOTSPOT AREA

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received information on proposed voluntary yelloweye rockfish protection measures from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

The GAP notes that information leading to an existing closed area and the proposed voluntary measures was provided by recreational and commercial fishermen. The GAP applauds WDFW's use of anecdotal data to achieve management goals and suggests that other fisheries management agencies recognize the importance that anecdotal data can have in properly designing management measures. Scientists and managers have an under-utilized resource in the first hand knowledge of fishermen and processors and should follow WDFW's lead in using that knowledge.

Further, the GAP is pleased to see that WDFW is attempting to use voluntary compliance as a first step. A similar method was used by Oregon in promoting use of fish excluder devices in the shrimp fishery. Giving users the incentive to comply by fully including them in the management process is often far more productive than immediately instituting mandatory measures.

The GAP fully supports WDFW's efforts in developing voluntary measures for yelloweye rockfish protection and urges all affected fishermen to do their part to contribute to such sound fisheries management.

PFMC
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