

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) discussed various options for management measures for the trawl fishery, including implementing a 50-fathom depth restriction north of 40°10' beginning in May. The GMT received a number of concerns from industry relative to this restriction, including:

- Summer is the primary molting period for Dungeness crab. Molting crab are extremely soft-shelled and are vulnerable to trawl-induced mortality. Concentration of effort in the nearshore area could risk harm to the Dungeness crab resource. Gear conflicts between the trawl and Dungeness crab fisheries would also be intensified.
- The area inside of 50 fathoms is a nursery ground for a number of groundfish species. Concentrating the trawl fleet in this area could result in unanticipated harmful effects on these juvenile fish.
- While the canary bycatch rate inside of 50 fathoms is currently modeled upon catches of vessels historically used to fishing in the nearshore area, forcing vessels unfamiliar to fishing in this area to do so might result in an increase in this canary bycatch rate.

Additionally, the GMT notes that the states of California and Washington do not allow trawling inside of three miles, further increasing the concentration of trawl effort inside 50 fathoms. However, the GMT believes that the regulations can differ among states relative to the inshore opportunities.

The GMT also discussed other proposals for inseason adjustments and has the following recommendations:

Retention of Rockfish by Salmon Troll Vessels

The GMT concurs with the GAP recommendation regarding the retention of yellowtail rockfish in the salmon troll fishery, north of 40°10' only. When the GMT developed the estimated mortality of overfished rockfish species last fall (i.e., in the "bycatch scorecard"), there was a projected estimate of 1.6 mt of canary mortality for the salmon troll fishery. This estimate was viewed as unavoidable mortality while the salmon troll fishery was targeting salmon within and outside the Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA); therefore, the yellowtail retention allowance is not expected to result in increased impacts to canary rockfish.

Minor Corrections to RCA Boundaries

The GMT has reviewed the proposed changes to the coordinates for the fixed gear-RCA north of 40°10'. The GMT does not recommend implementing these changes as the coordinates would result in moving the line into depths shallower than 100 fathoms which would likely result in increased impacts to yelloweye and canary rockfish.

Recreational Fishing for Southern Slope Rockfish

The GMT opposes the proposal for a southern slope recreational fishery, primarily because bycatch mortalities for overfished rockfish that would result from this new fishery have not been accounted for.

Clarification of Management Line Changes for the "B" Platoon

The GMT again concurs with the GAP on this issue. It is our understanding that "B" Platoon vessels would be allowed to fish under the regulations that were in place for "A" Platoon vessels in period 2, until May 15th. The calculated bycatch projections for the trawl fleet in period 2 account for effort by the "B" Platoon vessels in the first two weeks of May.

EFPs

The GMT discussed the proposed exempted fishery permits (EFPs) that were approved by the Council for trawl north of 40°10'—specifically the Washington Trawl Arrowtooth EFP and the Oregon Selective Flatfish EFP. Both of these EFPs require at-sea monitoring and are subject to EFP caps for overfished rockfish. The EFP caps previously captured in the bycatch scorecard were based on projections with a smaller RCA. In both EFPs, all tows prosecuted within the trawl RCA are considered "directed flatfish tows," by default. As such, all canary rockfish caught within the RCA count against the EFP cap. In order to conduct these EFPs, the states of Washington and Oregon are proposing increasing the canary EFP caps.

The overall amount of canary rockfish set aside for EFPs in 2003 by the Council was 6.5 mt. The estimated amount of canary rockfish that is needed to conduct all of the Council-approved EFPs, including the new California nearshore flatfish EFP, is 8.5 mt. According to the GMT's best estimate of canary mortalities in all fishing sectors, all of these EFPs can be accommodated while staying within the canary rockfish OY of 44 mt without further restricting other fisheries. Therefore, the GMT recommends that the Council increase the EFP set aside for canary rockfish from 6.5 mt to 8.5 mt. The GMT believes that the information obtained through these EFPs will be valuable and could benefit the trawl fleet in the future.

Estimated mortality (mt) of overfished West Coast groundfish species by fishery in 2003.

Fishery	Bocaccio 1/	Canary	Cowcod	Darkblotched	Lingcod 7/	POP	Whiting	Widow	Yelloweye
Limited Entry Groundfish									
Trawl- Non-whiting 2/	9.1	8.5		107.5	73.8	97.6	1,800	1.8	1.5
Trawl- at-sea whiting 2a/		4.1		5.0	0.3	9.0	95,300	182.0	0.0
Trawl- shoreside whiting		0.5		1.5	0.2	0.2	50,900	30.0	
Fixed Gear	0.1	0.5	0.1		20.0				1.0
Recreational Groundfish									
WA		1.5			35.0				3.5
OR		9.3			105.0			4.0	3.7
CA (N)		0.5			195.0			1.0	0.1
CA (S)	5.0	2.7			20.0			0.0	0.4
Tribal									
Midwater Trawl		1.1		0.0	0.9	0.0	0	45.0	0.0
Bottom Trawl				0.0		0.0			
Troll		0.5		0.0	0.9	0.0			0.1
Fixed gear		0.7		0.0	3.4	0.0		0.0	3.0
Open Access									
Groundfish directed	0.2	0.3	0.0		50.0				0.5
CA Halibut	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.1
CA Gillnet 3/	0.5								
CA Sheepshead 3/									
CPS- wetfish 3/	0.5								
CPS- squid 4/ 5/									
Dungeness crab 3/				0.0					
HMS 3/		0.0	0.0	0.0					
Pacific Halibut 3/	0.0	0.0		0.0	UR	0.0	0	0.0	0.5
Pink shrimp	0.1	0.5		0.0	0.5	0.0	1	0.1	0.1
Ridgeback prawn	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Salmon troll	0.2	1.6			0.3			0.0	0.2
Sea Cucumber	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Spot Prawn (trawl)									
Spot Prawn (trap)									
Research: Based on two most recent NMFS trawl shelf and slope surveys with expanded estimates for south of Pt. Conception									
	2.0	1.0		1.6	3.0	3.0	200	1.5	0.6
EFPs: 6/									
CA: NS FF trawl	0.5	0.5	0.2						0.5
OR: selective FF trawl		4.0		3.1	13.0			1.0	1.2
WA: AT trawl		3.0		3.0	2.0	10.0		3.0	0.4
WA: dogfish LL		0.5		0.0	0.4	0.0	0	0.0	2.0

Estimated mortality (mt) of overfished West Coast groundfish species by fishery in 2003.

Fishery	Bocaccio 1/	Canary	Cowcod	Darkblotched	Lingcod 7/	POP	Whiting	Widow	Yelloweye
WA: pollock		0.5		0.4	0.0	0.4	0	3.0	0.4
EFP Subtotal		8.5							
TOTAL	18.8	41.9	0.4	122.1	523.7	120.2	148200	272.4	19.8
2003 OY	< 20	44.0	2.4	172.0	651.0	377.0	148200	832.0	22.0

Shaded cells represent either NA- Not applicable; TR- Trace amount (<0.01 mt); UR- Not reported in available data sources.

1/ South of 40°10' N. lat.

2/ Using observer data, all landings are results of modeling GMT Option 1

2a/ Calculated using five-year average (1998-2002); includes tribal at-sea whiting

3/ Mortality estimates are not hard numbers, based on their GMT's best professional judgement.

4/ Bycatch amounts by species unavailable, but bocaccio occurred in 0.1% of all port samples and other rockfish in another 0.1% of all port

5/ Expected landed catch only. Discard/total mortality estimates not available.

6/ The Council capped the 2003 canary rockfish set-aside for all the EFPs in combination at 6.5 mt to derive an expected total catch of 44 mt of canary rockfish in 2003.

7/ Lingcod total reflects total catch, not mortality

GMT trip limit recommendations

Proposed **groundfish trawl** trip limit changes for implementation May 1 (A-platoon)
 [depth lines to be implemented as soon as possible]

North of 40°10'

Option 1

Move outside line N of 40°10' from 250 fm to 200 fm (does not supercede period 6 petrale opening)
 Move inside line N of 40°10' from 100 fm to 50 fm (closed inside 250 fm until new line implemented)

	Poundage limits per 2-month period		
	Current period 3	New: periods 3 to period 6	If small footrope used anytime in period
Sablefish	7,000	10,000	3,000
Longspine	9,000	14,000	0
Shortspine	2,400	2,800	0
Dover sole	25,000	31,000	12,500
Arrowtooth	60,000	200,000	5,000
Other flatfish	100,000	100,000	20,000
Petrale sublimit	30,000	30,000	10,000
		(deeper than 200 fm)	

Raise yellowtail bycatch limit to 10,000 lb/2-months, subject to current percentage limits

Option 2

Move outside line N of 40°10' from 250 fm to 200 fm (does not supercede period 6 petrale opening)
 North of 40°10', close fishery shoreward of the outside line

	Poundage limits per 2-month period	
	Current period 3	New: periods 3 to period 6
Sablefish	7,000	10,000
Longspine	9,000	14,000
Shortspine	2,400	2,800
Dover sole	25,000	31,000
Arrowtooth	60,000	200,000
Other flatfish	100,000	100,000
Petrale sublimit	30,000	30,000
		(deeper than 200 fm)

difference between the 2 could potentially be less than 1 mt per canary - per Jim Hastie 4:34pm 4-10-03

connected per Dr. Hastie 4:58pm 4-10-03

It is expected that the new lines at 50 fm and 200 fm would be in place before the end of May.

closure for remainder of the year

GMT trip limit recommendations (cont.)

Proposed **groundfish trawl** trip limit changes for implementation May 1 (A-platoon)
 [depth lines to be implemented as soon as possible]

South of 40°10'

Move outside line N of 38° from 250 fm to 200 fm (does not supercede period 6 petrale opening)

South of 38°, move outside line from 150 fm to 200 fm (does not supercede period 6 petrale opening)

South of 40°10', Close fishery shoreward of 200 fm in period 4

	Poundage limits per 2-month period		
	Current period 3	New: periods 3, 5, 6	period 4 south of 38°
Sablefish	7,000	10,000	12,000
Longspine	9,000	14,000	16,000
Shortspine	2,400	2,800	3,100
Dover sole	25,000	31,000	35,000
Other flatfish	70,000	70,000	70,000
Petrале sublimit	10,000	20,000	20,000

40°10'
 ←
 Correction
 made by
 Mike Barnes
 5:32pm
 (4-10-03)