

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON
ADOPTION OF 2005-2006 MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP), after receiving guidance from the Council and discussing various options with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT), offers the following sets of options for 2005 - 2006 groundfish management. The GAP recommends adopting these along with the options presented by the GMT in order to have an appropriate range for public review.

LIMITED ENTRY TRAWL (non-whiting)

1. In general, specify trawl bimonthly trip limits reflecting low, medium, and high OY's that seek to minimize the area of the Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA), while maximizing the opportunity to harvest those species of groundfish that are available to be harvested and minimizing the take of those species that are considered to have low levels of abundance.
2. Examine use of the selective flatfish trawl (now known as the "butterfly trawl") shoreward of the RCA north of 40°10'.
3. Examine opportunities to eliminate any trip limit differentials for areas shoreward and seaward of the RCA.
4. Examine the option of converting the the Oregon Trawl Discard Reduction Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) into regulations as an inseason adjustment for 2006.
5. Examine the option of converting the Washington arrowtooth flounder EFP into regulations.

LIMITED ENTRY TRAWL (whiting)

For 2005 and 2006, the whiting fishery will continue to be managed under the provisions of the Pacific groundfish fishery management plan, with allocations between three sectors (on-shore, catcher-processor, mothership) and a tribal set-aside. In the on-shore sector, an early season opportunity will be available for whiting harvest in northern California. The GAP notes that the regulatory regime for Pacific whiting may change substantially once the U.S./Canada Treaty on Pacific Hake/Whiting is implemented by the U.S. The U.S. will be allowed to harvest up to 73.88% of the coastwide acceptable biological catch (ABC), as provided by the Treaty.

In order to minimize interception of widow rockfish in the whiting fishery, two options should be examined:

- A) continue existing management measures involving use of observers on catcher-processors and motherships, private services that monitor bycatch, and voluntary arrangements among shore plants and boats;
- B) use the measures described above but add a series of closure areas which can be identified on the basis of latitude / longitude way points connected by straight lines and which encompass areas of high historical widow rockfish bycatch;

The GAP examined and rejected the idea of reducing widow rockfish bycatch by limiting fishing to certain hours. The periods when higher bycatch occurs are not uniform and cannot easily be identified or enforced. In order to ensure adequate enforcement, productive fishing times with low bycatch will have to be closed off. Interrupting product flow to at-sea processors will impose a significant economic impact.

LIMITED ENTRY FIXED GEAR, north of 40°10'

In general, the limited entry fixed gear fishery will continue to be managed through a combination of depth and gear restrictions, harvest limits, trip limits, size limits, and closures designed to prevent overfishing, while achieving the optimum yield.

1. Examine Rockfish Conservation Area boundaries identical to the range of options in 2004, plus 150 fathoms.
2. Set cumulative limits for all species identical to trawl limits, with the following exceptions:
 - A) nearshore rockfish identical to open access limits;
 - B) examine alternatives for longspine and shortspine thornyheads -
 1. limits identical to trawl limits
 2. limits reduced from trawl limits by the proportion of the trawl limit increase due to trawl buyback

LIMITED ENTRY FIXED GEAR, between 40°10' and 34°27'

1. Examine EFP opportunities to fish for chilipepper deeper than lines of 75, 100, and 125 fathoms in the area of 38° to 34°27'.
2. Set cumulative limits for all species identical to trawl limits, with the following exceptions:
 - A) for minor shelf species, limits of 300 lbs / 2 mos with closures consistent with nearshore open access;
 - B) examine alternatives for longspine and shortspine thornyheads -
 1. limits identical to trawl limits
 2. limits reduced from trawl limits by the proportion of the trawl limit increase due to trawl buyback

C) examine harvest alternatives for chilipepper rockfish with closures consistent with nearshore open access. Since canary rockfish move into shallow water (less than 75 fathoms) in this area, data from fisheries that were allowed prior to canary rockfish being designated overfished can be instructive.

D) examine harvest alternatives for bocaccio rockfish with closures consistent with nearshore open access. Canary rockfish are not generally present deeper than 75 fathoms; the RCA boundary in the south was constructed primarily for bocaccio savings. *South of 40/10*

LIMITED ENTRY FIXED GEAR, south of 34°27'

1. Examine a high OY option which would involve a year-round fishery out to 60 fathoms, closures of historic canary hot spots, and reduction in harvest limits or time closures when harvest limits are approached.
2. Examine a medium OY option which is the same as the high OY option, except with a 10 month fishery. *low*
3. Examine a ~~medium~~ OY option which is the same as the high OY option, except with a ~~10~~ month fishery. *8*

OPEN ACCESS, north of 40°10'

In general, the open access fishery will continue to be managed through a combination of depth and gear restrictions, harvest limits, size limits, trip limits, and closures designed to prevent overfishing while achieving the optimum yield.

1. Provide no retention of canary or yelloweye rockfish.
2. Provide no retention of lingcod in periods 1, and 6, with an option of a period 2 closure.

OPEN ACCESS, 40°10' TO 34°27'

1. Provide closures as appropriate for minor shelf rockfish, bocaccio, and lingcod
2. For minor slope rockfish, remove the landing cap of 25% of the weight of sablefish landed in the area between 40° 10' and 38°.

OPEN ACCESS, south of 34°27'

Option 1: establish the same range of trip limits and closures as provided for the limited entry fixed gear fishery in this area.

Option 2: establish differential trip limits for limited entry fixed gear and open access fisheries in this area.

WASHINGTON RECREATIONAL FISHERY

1. Lingcod, canary rockfish, and yelloweye to be managed on a state harvest guideline basis.
2. Black rockfish be managed on a status quo basis.

OREGON RECREATIONAL FISHERY

1. Implement gear restrictions and/or release techniques to reduce the impact of overfished rockfish species if successful techniques are developed, researched, reviewed, and accepted. Impacts not to exceed harvest guidelines on overfished species.
2. If information is available, move from large offshore RCA closures to closing “hot spots” of known canary rockfish and yelloweye concentrations or open “cold spots” of areas known to have no or low concentrations of canary rockfish and yelloweye rockfish impacts not to exceed harvest guidelines on overfished species.

CALIFORNIA RECREATIONAL FISHERY, IN GENERAL

If information is available, move from large offshore RCA closures to closing “hot spots” of known canary rockfish, yelloweye rockfish, and scorpionfish concentrations or open “cold spots” of areas known to have no or low concentrations of canary rockfish, yelloweye rockfish, and scorpionfish impacts, not to exceed harvest guidelines on overfished species.

CALIFORNIA RECREATIONAL FISHERY, 40°10' TO OREGON BORDER

1. High OY Option: Open all year, 10 rockfish bag limit of 5 black, 3 cabezon or greenling in any combination, two other species. Additional bag limit of 2 lingcod.
2. Medium OY option: Open May through September each year, same bag limit as High OY option.

3. Low OY option: Same as Medium OY, with an additional closure during any of the months of June, July, and August.
4. Under all options, no retention of canary or yelloweye rockfish will be allowed. Fishing will be contained inside 30 fathoms, with the option to move the fishery to inside 20 fathoms if canary rockfish catch approaches limits by midseason. Retention of ling cod to be banned if the harvest limit is near attainment.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR CENTRAL ROCKFISH AND LINGCOD MANAGEMENT AREA

1. Under all options, no retention of canary, cowcod, or yelloweye allowed.
2. In general, the fishery will be managed with a combination of season closures, bag limits, length limits, and depth restrictions. In order of priority, the months for openings are:
 - A) July through October top priority.
 - B) Add additional months in this order: November, June, December, January, February, May, March, and April.

HIGH OPTION:

<u>Months</u>	<u>Bag Limit RF</u>	<u>Lingcod</u>	<u>Depths</u>
12	10	2/24"	20/30/40/50 fm

MEDIUM OPTION:

<u>Months</u>	<u>Bag Limit RF</u>	<u>Lingcod</u>	<u>Depths</u>
8	10	2/24"	20/30/40 fm

LOW OPTION:

<u>Months</u>	<u>Bag Limits RF</u>	<u>Lingcod</u>	<u>Depths</u>
6	10	2/24"	20/30/40 fm

All options will include sand dab and flatfish (using same restricted gear) during closures.

Sub-option A: Allow shore and diver fishing during offshore closure.

Sub-option B: Close shore and diver fishing during offshore closure.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR SOUTHERN ROCKFISH AND LINGCOD MANAGEMENT AREA

1. Under all options, no retention of canary, cowcod, or yelloweye allowed.
2. In general, the fishery will be managed with a combination of season closures, bag limits, length limits, and depth restrictions. In order of priority, the months for openings are:
 - A) March through August top priority.
 - B) September and October second priority.
 - C) Add additional months in this order: November then December

HIGH OPTION:

<u>Months</u>	<u>Bag Limits RF</u>	<u>Lingcod</u>	<u>Depths</u>
12	10	2/24"	20/30/40/50/60 fm

MEDIUM OPTION:

<u>Months</u>	<u>Bag Limit RF</u>	<u>Lingcod</u>	<u>Depths</u>
10 (March-Dec)	10	2/24"	20/30/40/50/60 fm

LOW OPTION:

<u>Months</u>	<u>Bag Limits RF</u>	<u>Lingcod</u>	<u>Depths</u>
8 (March-Oct)	10	2/24"	20/30/40/50/60 fm

All options will include sand dab and flatfish (using same restricted gear) during closures.

Sub-option A: Allow dive and shore fishing during offshore closures.

Sub-option B: Close dive and shore fishing during offshore closures.

Scorpionfish

Option 1: Open 6 months, July through December. 10 fish bag limit, 10" min size limit.

Option 2: Open 4 months, March-April, Nov-Dec, 5 fish bag limit, 10" min size limit.

