

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM (GMT) REPORT
ON STATUS OF 2004 FISHERIES AND INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS

As mentioned in Exhibit C.3.a., Supplemental GMT Report, the GMT received an update on the National Marine Fisheries Service observer data for trawl and limited entry fixed gear fisheries targeting sablefish, and catch projection models for canary rockfish in California recreational fisheries. The GMT also updated the bycatch scorecard to reflect the changes in trawl, limited entry fixed gear, open access, the inseason action taken in March relative to widow rockfish in the whiting fishery and lingcod in the California recreational fishery, Oregon recreational catch projections based on 2003 catch data, Washington recreational canary catch projections based on 2003 catches, and California recreational catch projections for canary and lingcod based on using the adjusted 2003 catch model. In reviewing the updated catch projections, the GMT has identified management issues and developed alternatives for inseason adjustments for the Council's consideration and focused its recommendations to be in line with the Council guidance provided on inseason adjustments (Attachment 1).

LIMITED ENTRY TRAWL

With regard to the trawl fishery, modeling projections for 2004 apply the updated observer data combined with a reduction in effort as a result of the trawl buyback program. The GMT recommends the Council adopt the alternative in Attachment 2 as part of inseason action for the trawl fishery. Under this alternative, the estimated impacts are 10.1 mt of canary rockfish and 104.7 mt of lingcod.

In addition, the GMT recommends the Council adopt the following inseason measures for limited entry trawl:

North of 40°10'

- Move the deep trawl RCA boundary from 200 fms to 150 fms in Periods 3 through 6
- Increase minor slope rockfish trip limits to:
8,000 lbs/2 mo. in Periods 3 through 6

South of 40°10' to U.S./Mexico border

- Increase chilipepper rockfish trip limits with large footrope only to:
12,000 lbs/2 mo. in Periods 3 and 4
8,000 lbs/2 mo. in Periods 5 and 6

South of
Between 40°10' and 38°

- Increase minor slope rockfish and splitnose to:

50,000 lbs/2 mo. minor slope + 50,000 lbs/2 mo. splitnose in Periods 3 through 6

These additional limited entry trawl alternatives are expected to have increased impacts to bocaccio rockfish, darkblotched, and POP; however, the GMT believes these impacts can be accommodated within the current amounts available in the bycatch scorecard. The GMT will provide the Council with an updated scorecard with the results of inseason action by the end of this week.

LIMITED ENTRY FIXED GEAR

An analysis of bycatch and discard for the fixed gear fisheries is contained in Attachment 3. Based on this analysis, the GMT recommends that the non-trawl RCA boundaries remain unchanged for 2004 (100 fms N. of 40°10' and 150 fms S. of 40°10'). The GMT also recommends the following inseason adjustments for limited entry fixed gear:

- Increase the sablefish tier limits in the primary sablefish fishery to:

Tier 1 - 69,600 lbs

Tier 2 - 31,600 lbs

Tier 3 - 18,100 lbs

South of
Between 40°10' and 38°

- Increase minor slope rockfish and splitnose to be consistent with the trawl limits:

50,000 lbs/2 mo. minor slope + 50,000 lbs/2 mo. splitnose in Periods 3 through 6

The GMT is not recommending any other changes to limited entry fixed gear trip limits, and is not recommending any changes to the open access trip limits.

To evaluate the increases in both the limited entry trawl and fixed gear trip limits for minor slope rockfish, splitnose, and chilipepper, the GMT strongly encourages the NMFS Observer Program to collect observer data on those fisheries in an effort to collect much-needed bycatch information. These observer data (collected through August) can then be available for management in April 2005 and could result in providing continued higher trip limits in 2005.

CALIFORNIA RECREATIONAL

The GMT reviewed 2002 and 2003 canary rockfish catch data from the California recreational fisheries, and two different models for projecting 2004 catches based on those data. The catches

in 2003 were very high, especially in Wave 4 (July-Aug); it is thought that a portion of the catch in Wave 4 was the result of the fishery having been closed for the previous 8 months, creating a “derby” style fishery. One model creates an adjusted 2003 dataset by using the effort from Wave 5 (Sept-Oct) in 2003 to adjust catches for all waves in 2003 to those expected under a fishery with a similar structure to the 2002 season. This results in a reduced catch in Wave 4 to account for the “derby” response and added projected catches for the closed periods. The second model uses the adjusted 2003 catches and averages those with the 2002 catch data.

The application of an averaged 2002 and adjusted 2003 dataset would be to account for annual catch variability in the California recreational fishery, whereas application of the adjusted 2003 catch data alone would serve to be the most precautionary approach should the high effort levels estimated for 2003 be repeated in 2004.

The GMT recommends using the model with the adjusted 2003 catches only to project 2004 catches. This results in a catch estimate for the 2004 California recreational fishery of 17.49 mt. The catches modeled in September 2003 for the 2004 season projected a catch of 8.1 mt. Based on the Council guidance provided, the GMT recommends the following inseason management action to reduce the canary impacts in the California recreational fishery:

	INSEASON ACTION	CANARY impact		LINGCOD savings*	
		Adjusted 03	Avg 02-03	per option(s)	cumulative
1	set depth at <20 fm wave 5-6 40°10' to Pt. Conception	17.49	11.76	0	0
2	Add 30 fm closure May-Dec N. of 40°10'	14.74	10.03	8.1	8.1
2	set depth at <40 fm waves 3-6 S. of Pt. Conception	14.57		0.28	8.38
3	Add may-july closure from 40°10' to Pt. Lopez (36°?)	10.60	7.01	39.65	48.03
4	Add July closure from Pt. Lopez to Pt. Conception	9.98			
5	Add Nov-Dec closure from 40°10' to Pt. Lopez (36°?)	9.32	6.68	28.9	76.93

* Same under both models

OTHER ISSUES

The GMT had a considerable amount of discussion relative to the Council’s intent to set aside a “buffer” for lingcod with the March inseason action to provide for uncertainty in the California recreational catch projections. The GMT would appreciate Council guidance on this issue as well as whether “buffers” should be specified in the scorecard as amounts held in reserve for precautionary purposes. The GMT recommends that a discussion of the use of “buffers” also include whether the intent is to hold the “buffer” in reserve for all fishing sectors, or whether they are sector-specific.

GMT Recommendations

1. Adopt the GMT recommended inseason action for the trawl fishery.
2. Adopt the increased sablefish tier limits for the primary sablefish fishery and the recommended trip limit increases for minor slope rockfish and splitnose S. of 40°10'.
3. Adopt a combination of alternatives for inseason management to reduce the canary impacts in the California recreational fishery.
4. Provide guidance on the use of “buffers” for overfished species.

Based on Council Guidance, GMT Estimated Impacts with Inseason Action

4/6/04 14:02

Fishery	Bocaccio a/	Canary	Cowcod	Dkbl	Lingcod	POP	Widow	Yelloweye
Limited Entry Groundfish								
Trawl- Non-whiting	45.0	10.1	0.5	73.5	104.7	90.7	2.5	0.3
Fixed Gear	13.4	0.9	0.1	0.8	20.0	0.3	0.5	2.5
Whiting								
At-sea whiting motherhips		0.9		1.4	0.3	1.7	59.7	0.0
At-sea whiting cat-proc		1.3		7.6	0.4	10.1	84.6	0.4
Shoreside whiting		0.4		0.5	0.7	0.4	29.9	0.0
Tribal whiting		4.7		0.0	0.5	1.5	37.1	0.0
Open Access								
Groundfish directed	10.6	1.0	0.1	0.2	70.0	0.1		0.6
CA Halibut	0.1			0.0	2.0	0.0		
CA Gillnet b/	0.5			0.0		0.0	0.0	
CA Sheephead b/				0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0
CPS- wetfish b/	0.3							
CPS- squid c/								
Dungeness crab b/	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0		
HMS b/		0.0	0.0	0.0				
Pacific Halibut b/	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.5
Pink shrimp	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.1
Ridgeback prawn	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Salmon troll	0.2	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.2
Sea Cucumber	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Spot Prawn (trap)								
Tribal								
Midwater Trawl		2.3		0.0	0.1	0.0	40.0	0.0
Bottom Trawl		0.5		0.0	9.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Troll		0.5		0.0	1.0	0.0		0.0
Fixed gear		0.3		0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	2.3
Recreational Groundfish								
WA		1.72			65.0			3.5
OR		6.77			109.7		1.4	3.2
CA	62.8	9.32	1.8		287.6		1.4	1.4
Research: Based on 2 most recent NMFS trawl shelf and slope surveys, the IPHC halibut survey, and LOAs with expanded estimates for south of Pt. Conception.								
	2.0	1.0		1.6	3.0	3.0	1.5	1.1
Non-EFP Total	135.1	43.8	2.5	85.6	689.8	107.8	258.7	16.2
EFPs e/								
CA: NS FF trawl	10.0	0.5	0.5		20.0			0.5
OR: DTS f/		0.1		6.0		18.0		0.1
WA: AT trawl		1.5		3.0	4.5	8.5	5.5	0.5
WA: dogfish LL		0.1		0.5	2.0	0.5	0.5	1.0
WA: pollock g/		0.1					1.5	0.1
EFP Subtotal	10.0	2.3	0.5	9.5	26.5	27.0	7.5	2.2
TOTAL	145.1	46.1	3.0	95.1	716.3	134.8	266.2	18.4
2004 OY	250	47.3	4.8	240	735	444	284	22
DIFFERENCE	104.9	1.2	1.8	144.9	18.7	309.2	17.8	3.6
Percent of OY	58.0%	97.5%	62.5%	39.6%	97.5%	30.4%	93.7%	83.5%
Key	= either not applicable; trace amount (<0.01 mt); or not reported in available							

CA Rec Lingcod Savings	76.9
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a/ South of 40°10' N. lat.

b/ Mortality estimates are not hard numbers; based on the GMT's best professional judgement.

c/ 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 samples (and squid fisheries usually land their whole catch). In 2001, out of 84,000 mt total landings 1 mt was groundfish. This suggests that total bocaccio was caught in trace amounts.

d/ These estimates have not been revised pending GMT review of the estimation methodology.

e/ Values are proposed EFP bycatch caps, not estimates of total mortality. The EFP is terminated inseason if the cap is projected to be attained early.

f/ The darkblotched rockfish and Pacific ocean perch caps are not defined yet for this EFP but are expected to be lower than the placeholders in this scorecard.

g/ Whiting impacts are deducted from the shoreside sector only.

GMT preferred option for May revisions to Limited Entry Trawl trip limits

Trip limits AREA	PERIOD	RCA BOUNDARIES		TARGET SPECIES BI-MONTHLY LIMITS									
		inline	outline	Sablefish	Longspine	Shortspine	Dover	Arrowtooth	Petrale	OtherFlat	Slope Rock		
N. of 40°10'	1	75	150	9,300	15,000	3,100	67,500	No Limit	No Limit	No Limit	100,000	4,000	
	2	60	200	9,300	15,000	3,100	67,500	150,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	4,000	
	3	60	150	16,000	18,000	4,500	32,000	150,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	8,000	
	4	75	150	16,000	18,000	4,500	32,000	150,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	8,000	
	5	75	150	16,000	18,000	4,500	32,000	150,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	8,000	
	6	75	150	11,000	18,000	4,500	50,000	No Limit	No Limit	No Limit	100,000	8,000	
if small footrope used	1	75	150	2,000	1,000	1,000	10,000	4,000	10,000	10,000	30,000		
	2	60	200	2,000	1,000	1,000	10,000	4,000	10,000	10,000	30,000		
	3	60	150	10,000	1,000	3,000	27,000	11,000	30,000	30,000	80,000		
	4	75	150	10,000	1,000	3,000	27,000	11,000	30,000	30,000	80,000		
	5	75	150	10,000	1,000	3,000	27,000	11,000	30,000	30,000	80,000		
	6	75	150	5,000	1,000	1,000	18,000	8,000	20,000	20,000	70,000		
38°-40°10'	1	75	150	11,200	15,000	3,000	39,000	No Limit	No Limit	No Limit	100,000	10,000	
	2	75	150	11,200	15,000	3,000	39,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	100,000	10,000	
	3	100	150	14,500	18,000	4,500	49,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	120,000	50,000	
	4	100	150	14,500	18,000	4,500	49,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	120,000	50,000	
	5	75	150	14,500	18,000	4,500	49,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	120,000	50,000	
	6	75	150	14,500	18,000	4,500	49,000	No Limit	No Limit	No Limit	120,000	50,000	
S. of 38°	1	75	150	11,200	15,000	3,000	39,000	No Limit	No Limit	No Limit	100,000	40,000	
	2	75	150	11,200	15,000	3,000	39,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	100,000	40,000	
	3	100	150	14,500	18,000	4,500	49,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	120,000	50,000	
	4	100	150	14,500	18,000	4,500	49,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	120,000	50,000	
	5	75	150	14,500	18,000	4,500	49,000	10,000	20,000	20,000	120,000	50,000	
	6	75	150	14,500	18,000	4,500	49,000	No Limit	No Limit	No Limit	120,000	50,000	

Bycatch	Lingcod	Canary	POP	Widow	Darkblotched	Yelloweye	Bocaccio	Cowcod
North of 40°10'	68.7	9.2	90.7	2.4	60.8	0.1	0.0	0.0
South of 40°10'	36.0	0.8	0.0	0.1	12.7	0.2	45.0	0.5
Total	104.7	10.1	90.7	2.5	73.5	0.3	45.0	0.5

Target species catch	Sablefish	Longspine	Shortspine	Dover	Arrowtooth	Petrale	OtherFlat	Slope Rock
North of 40°10'	2,446	522	589	4,666	1,724	2,155	3,859	360
South of 40°10'	620	256	260	1,969	211	237	2,247	400
Total	3,065	778	848	6,634	1,936	2,392	6,106	760

GMT Analysis of Fixed Gear Bycatch and Discard

	Seaward boundary of the RCA at 150 fm (South of 40°10')			Seaward boundary of the RCA at 100 fm (North of 40°10')					
	Coastwide summary	Gear rates and bycatch Longline	Pot	Combined bycatch	Coastwide summary	Longline	Pot	Combined bycatch	Coastwide bycatch
Total catch allocated (mt)	2,755				2,755				
Observed sablefish discard rate	18.49%	19.24%	17.82%		15.6%	14.12%	18.01%		
Discard mortality percentage of landed mt + discarded mt	4.3%	4.5%	4.2%		3.6%	3.2%	4.2%		
Assumed discard mortality (mt)	120				98				
Landed catch target (mt)	2,636				2,657				
Amount allocated to:									
DTL (mt)	395				399				
Primary fishery (mt)	2,240				2,258				
Primary fishery tier limits (lb)									
Tier 1	69,067				69,624				
Tier 2	31,394				31,647				
Tier 3	17,940				18,084				
Percent of total catch, by area	10.5%	90%	10%		89.5%	60%	40%		
Percent of area catch, by gear	289.29	260.36	28.93		2,465.82	1,479.49	986.33		
Estimated distribution of total catch, by area									
Bycatch ratios ²									
Lingcod		0.391%	0.159%			0.400%	0.151%		
Widow rockfish		0.001%	0.000%			0.001%	0.000%		
Canary rockfish		0.041%	0.000%			0.042%	0.000%		
Yelloweye rockfish		0.087%	0.000%			0.089%	0.000%		
Bocaccio rockfish ⁴		0.000%	0.000%			0.000%	0.000%		
Cowcod rockfish ⁴		0.000%	0.000%			0.000%	0.000%		
Pacific ocean perch		0.017%	0.000%			0.017%	0.000%		
Darkblotched rockfish		0.041%	0.009%			0.041%	0.009%		
Projected bycatch impacts (mt)									
Lingcod		1.0	0.0	1.1		5.9	1.5	7.4	8.5
Widow rockfish		0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Canary rockfish		0.1	0.0	0.1		0.6	0.0	0.6	0.7
Yelloweye rockfish		0.2	0.0	0.2		1.3	0.0	1.3	1.5
Bocaccio rockfish ⁴		0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cowcod rockfish ⁴		0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pacific ocean perch		0.0	0.0	0.0		0.3	0.0	0.3	0.3
Darkblotched rockfish		0.1	0.0	0.1		0.6	0.1	0.7	0.8

¹ As in previous years, the rate of mortality for discarded sablefish in the fixed-gear fishery is assumed to be 20%.

² The bycatch ratios are calculated by dividing the total catch of each species by the total poundage of sablefish that was caught.

³ Year specific tonnages combined using the following weights: 2003: 0.45, 2002: 0.35, 2001: 0.2.

⁴ Please note that the observer data on which these rates are based include no observations from south of Ft. Bragg, CA, so these are likely underestimates of true bycatch.