

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
INITIAL CONSIDERATION OF STATUS OF FISHERIES AND INSEASON
ADJUSTMENTS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) met with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to discuss preliminary proposals for inseason adjustments.

The GAP is aware that there may be proposals forthcoming for adjustments to Oregon and California recreational fisheries and will comment on them when received.

The GAP understands a technical change needs to be made to the regulations governing the limited entry fixed gear and open access California deeper nearshore fisheries, which were published with an incorrect trip limit. The GAP has no objection to the change.

The GAP and the GMT had some initial discussions on modifications to the limited entry trawl fishery north of 38° in order to reduce darkblotched rockfish catch, at which time the GAP provided the GMT with suggested priorities on ways to deal with the problem. We also discussed re-allocation of unused mothership whiting quota to the shore-based and catcher-processor sectors. Unfortunately, we subsequently discovered that the darkblotched catch had reached a level which would preclude the re-allocation and which will require severe actions to be taken in regard to the limited entry trawl fishery.

The GAP recognizes that we have no choice under the law, but to take the actions which will be recommended by the GMT. Nevertheless, we believe it is important for the Council to recognize the significant economic impact these actions will have.

In regard to the limited entry trawl fishery, fishermen will mostly lose the opportunity to harvest petrale sole in November and December. This has long been an important winter fishery which benefits fishermen and processors. Restricting vessels to deeper areas will likely cause us to forgo catches of slope rockfish and species in the deepwater complex. Again, these are important winter fisheries.

By not re-allocating the unused whiting catch, approximately 15 vessels and their crews will lose delivery opportunities. Close to 400 workers in processing and distribution facilities in Oregon and Washington will not be getting an extra two weeks of pay; in some cases, workers that were laid off at the end of the primary shore-based whiting season will not be re-hired. A very conservative estimate of the community impact for just the shore-based fishery is forgone revenue of \$2.3 million in Oregon and Washington; added to this is the forgone revenue from the catcher-processor sector, which we cannot determine.

Again, the law dictates what must be done, but we all should be aware of the cost to our coastal communities.

PFMC
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