

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
FINAL CONSIDERATION OF 2004 INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS

In the wake of developments regarding darkblotched attainment that emerged at the September Council meeting, members of the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) met recently with Mr. William Daspit, manager of the Pacific Coast Fisheries Information Network (PacFIN), a program run by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. The focus of this meeting was to explore potential improvements in the Quota Species Monitoring (QSM) system, which is relied upon by the GMT for tracking inseason progress in the commercial groundfish fishery. Subsequently, Mr. Daspit met with the GMT on Monday this week to discuss changes in QSM that would enhance the ability of the GMT to monitor total catch in the shoreside groundfish fishery.

Historically, the QSM system evolved as a mechanism for providing the GMT with estimates of landed catch for key species in advance of the availability of fishtickets. It is important to note that while PacFIN has provided this service to the GMT, the GMT itself has been responsible for guiding the development of this tool. Since the inception of QSM, Mr Daspit and his staff have accommodated numerous GMT requests for changes to data processing methods or reporting that have improved the usefulness of this system for tracking inseason progress.

Over the past few years, the GMT has worked to incorporate improved accounting of discards into model projections of fishery performance and into management measure recommendations provided to the Council. However, the QSM reports provided to the GMT have continued to track only year-to-date **landed** catch. Working together, the GMT and PacFIN have developed a plan for enhancing this reporting system to combine landed catch estimates with discard rate information from the GMT's bycatch models. Procedures will be implemented to apply rates of discard only to fisheries and species where full retention is not required, and discard rates provided to PacFIN will reflect prevailing GMT assumptions regarding discard survival. These changes will allow QSM reports, beginning in 2005, to include estimates of **total**, as well as landed, catch for most included species. Tribal landings/catch will be separated from other State of Washington data. Commercial total catch targets will be included in each report to help ensure that attainment status is evaluated correctly. A prototype of the proposed report format is attached to this statement.

As a result of these improvements, it will be much easier for the GMT to identify situations in which early attainment of a commercial total catch target and/or a total catch OY appears likely. However, the GMT cautions that while this enhanced monitoring tool will reduce the likelihood of management surprises, it will not eliminate the possibility. Even prior to the heightened restrictions of the past five years, the June/September Council schedule, in conjunction with unexpectedly high summer landings, resulted in actions at past September meetings to close fisheries or dramatically reduce trip limits.

As stated in our September final inseason report to the Council, the GMT will communicate on a monthly basis via email to review commercial and recreational catches. The GMT is especially

concerned about deviations from harvest targets that might occur between June and September. If there are any “red flags” that are identified between Council meetings via this email discussion, then the GMT will have a conference call work session to share data and communicate issues to Council staff. Council staff can then inform Council members of these issues to determine if there are recommendations for state and/or federal action. The Council could also implement a mechanism for NMFS to take management action during this interval if information reviewed by the GMT indicates that catches are tracking too far from anticipated targets.

The GMT discussed the appropriate timing of considering inseason actions which would liberalize management measures. The GMT recommends the Council adopt a policy such that, in general, inseason adjustments which would relax regulations not be considered prior to the June Council meeting. The GMT believes inseason adjustments should remain on every Council agenda, so the Council has the opportunity to adopt more restrictive measures, if necessary. As such, the Council would have the opportunity to consider liberalizing regulations in March and April, if there are exceptions to this policy which would warrant consideration (for example, in response to a data correction).

PFMC
11/04/04

| | Landed Catch | | | Discard Mortality | WA Tribal | At Sea | Total Mortality | 2004 Target | TWL Model Proj thru period |
|---------------------------|--------------|-----|-------|-------------------|-----------|--------|-----------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| | Wash | Ore | Calif | | | | | | |
| Longspine THDS | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Shortspine THDS (V&C&E&M) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| TWL Sable (V&C&E&M) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Dover sole | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Petrale | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| English Sole | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Arrowtooth Flounder | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Remaining Flatfish | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Tribal Sablefish | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| NTW Primary Sable* | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| NTW DTL Sable* | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| CP NTW Sabl Pri | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| CP NTW Sabl DTL | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Sablefish Conception | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Lingcod | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Spiny Dogfish | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Widow Rockfish | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Darkblotched RCKFSH | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Canary rockfish | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| POP (V&C&E) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Yellowtail (V&C&E) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Cabazon (V&C&E) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| (V&C&E) UNSP RCKFSH | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Yelloweye (V&C&E&M) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| Black Rockfish, Nor. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Kelp Greenling, Nor. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Near-shore RF, Nor. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Shelf rockfish, Nor. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Slope rockfish, Nor. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| TWL Bocaccio (MT&CP) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |
| NTW Bocaccio (MT&CP) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Chilipepper (MT&CP) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Splitnose RF (MT&CP) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Cabazon (MT&CP) | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| (MT&CP) UNSP RCKFSH | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Black Rockfish, So. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Kelp Greenling, So. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| CA Scorpionfish, So. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| N-S RF: Shallow, So. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| N-S RF: Deep, So. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Shelf rockfish, So. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | |
| Slope rockfish, So. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X |