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Subject: DFG Announces Additional Recreational Groundfish Opportunities

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DFG Announces Additional Recreational Groundfish Opportunities

The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) today announced changes to the 2005 recreational groundfish season, which provides expanded opportunities to anglers in state waters. At the request of the Fish and Game Commission, DFG Director Ryan Brodrick approved modifying the recreational groundfish fishing season for 2005.

The in-season adjustments follow the receipt of new data from the California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS), which was implemented in 2004 to provide more timely and accurate estimates of recreational catch and effort in ocean waters. CRFS data are available on a monthly basis to help manage California's recreational fisheries.

"The California Recreational Fisheries Survey is the best scientific method available for evaluating all forms of recreational ocean fishing," said Brodrick. "To the extent that these data support additional fishing opportunities, the Department will make those opportunities available."

Brodrick cautioned, however, that fishing opportunities could be restricted in the future if new CRFS data show that species are being caught at levels greater than allowed. The changes to the recreational groundfish seasons and depths by area are as follows:

- Northern Management Area (California/Oregon border to near Cape Mendocino): Open May 1 through December from 0-30 fms (0-180 feet).
- North-Central Management Area (Near Cape Mendocino to Pigeon Point): Open July 1 through December from 0-20 fms (0-120 feet).
- Monterey South-Central Management Area (Pigeon Point to near Lopez Point): Open July 1 through December from 0-20 fms (0-120 feet).
- Morro Bay South-Central Management Area (near Lopez Point to Point Conception): Open May 1 through September from 0-40 fms (0-240 feet).
- Southern Management Area (Point Conception to U.S.-Mexico border): Open April 16 through December from 0-60 fms (0-360 ft.), except during September and October when fishing is restricted to 0-30 fms (0-180 feet).

These adjustments apply only to state waters (0-3 nautical miles from shore) pending action by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, which is scheduled to decide on April 8, whether they will be extended into federal waters (3-200 nautical miles from shore).

For more detailed information about the modified recreational groundfish fishing season, visit the DFG's Web site, at www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/bfreqs2005.html.

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