

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
REPORT ON CONSIDERATION OF INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS

For 2005 and 2006, the Washington recreational harvest target for yelloweye rockfish was 3.5 mt and, for canary rockfish, it was 1.7 mt. The Council adopted these targets to be implemented as recreational harvest guidelines, which are shared with Oregon.

In July, working with recreational catch data through the end of June, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) anticipated that the harvest target for canary rockfish would be exceeded. To address this projected overage, WDFW took inseason action to prohibit the retention of bottom fish seaward of a line approximating 30 fms off the majority of the coast (from Cape Flattery south to Leadbetter Pt.), beginning August 5, 2005. WDFW anticipated that this action would significantly reduce canary (and subsequently, yelloweye) rockfish impacts.

However, port sampling data from July through September indicates that catches were even higher than originally projected. As such, the final catch estimates for the Washington recreational fishery are 5.2 mt of yelloweye rockfish and 1.88 mt of canary rockfish, which exceed the harvest targets for these two species.

To help ensure that the Washington harvest targets for canary and yelloweye rockfish are not exceeded in 2006, WDFW recommends the following inseason actions be taken:

Neah Bay and La Push (Marine Areas 3 and 4)

- Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod deeper than a line approximating 20 fms from May 22, 2006, through September 30, 2006 on days that halibut fishing is closed (i.e., except June 22 and 24, and all other days halibut fishing is open).

Westport (Marine Area 2)

- Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod deeper than a line approximating 30 fms from March 18, 2006, through June 15, 2006.

It is anticipated, based on the data from 2005, that these measures will result in catches that achieve, but not exceed, the Washington recreational harvest targets. WDFW will monitor the catches inseason, consult with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife on the attainment of the shared harvest guideline, and will recommend further inseason action, as appropriate.

PFMC  
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