

## **Preliminary Practical Range of Management Specification Options for California's 2007-2008 Commercial and Recreational Groundfish Fisheries**

### **COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL**

#### Specific Fishing Area Prohibitions

Proposals for changing the Cowcod Conservation Areas boundaries and for incorporating hot spots into the management specifications are still being developed.

### **COMMERCIAL**

Most commercial groundfish fishery options will be covered under the general range of federal commercial options. For the nearshore fishery and cabezon, greenling and sheephead, regional allocation or setting of regional TACs will not be considered for 2007-08. Commercial management options will implement regional needs where possible and include the following considerations:

#### Cabezon, Greenlings, and California Sheephead:

- Cabezon: Prioritize even distribution of trip limits throughout season.
- Greenling, and Sheephead: Status quo trip limits

#### Nearshore Rockfish and Lingcod:

##### *Coastwide:*

- Consider reduced RCA closure (i.e., allow access to deeper water) between OR/CA border and Pt. Conception (34°27' N latitude)
- Lingcod:
  - Status quo spawning closure is Nov-Apr.
  - Consider shortening duration of nesting closure when nearshore is open (i.e., allow lingcod retention in Nov, Dec, Jan or Feb)
  - Consider incidental take allowance during part or all of nesting closure (e.g., 100 lb/ 2 mo)

##### *North of 40°10' N latitude:*

##### Minor nearshore rockfish options:

- Near-status quo trip limit options
- Consider lower limits at late summer period (there are currently lower limits Mar-June; extend to July-Aug)
- Consider differential trip limits for federal LE vs OA vessels (lower OA limits due to higher OA effort)

##### *South of 40°10' N latitude:*

- Keep status quo 10-month season with Mar-Apr closure
- Shallow nearshore rockfish options:
  - Consider lowering highest limits to avoid early attainment (i.e., set trip limits between 300 lb and 500 lb per two months depending on seasonal priorities)

- Deeper nearshore rockfish options:
- Near-status quo options with different limits seasonally north and south of Pt. Conception (34°27' N latitude) due to regional preferences in seasonal opportunities.
- California scorpionfish:
  - Increase trip limits all open months due to higher OY in 2007-08
- Consider revising outer boundaries of the Cowcod Conservation Area to provide blackgill fishing opportunities

## **RECREATIONAL**

The California Department of Fish and Game is proposing a range of options for structuring the 2007-2008 recreational groundfish fisheries with the intent of remaining within harvest guidelines (HGs), particularly for species under rebuilding plans. This range of options includes the following:

- I. Continued non-retention of cowcod, canary and yelloweye rockfish statewide
- II. Management specifications which are structured around constituent's preferred fishing season while still providing as much fishing opportunity as possible.
- III. Alternatives that allow for more access to deeper waters paired with bycatch reduction tools (hot spots, gear restrictions)
- IV. Use of closed seasons, depth restrictions, bag limits, and size limits in combination to manage recreational catch to specified harvest limits. Range of possible options listed below.

### Management Specifications to Consider Changing for 2007-2008 *Seasons and Depth Restrictions*

#### North Coast Region

Seasons: 7 - 9 months open for groundfish fishing  
 Depth restrictions: 0-20 fm, 0-30 fm, or 0-40 fm  
 Status Quo: 8 months at 0-30 fm

#### North-Central Coast Region

Seasons: 5 - 7 months open for groundfish fishing  
 Depth restrictions: 0-20 fm, 0-30 fm, or 0-40 fm  
 Status Quo: for the area between 40° 10' N. lat. and 37° 11' N. lat., 6 months at 0-20 fm

#### Monterey South-Central Coast Region

Seasons: 5 - 7 months open for groundfish fishing  
 Depth restrictions: 0-20 fm, 0-30 fm, or 0-40 fm  
 Status Quo: for the area between 37° 11' N. lat. and 36° 00' N. lat., 6 months at 0-20 fm

#### Morro Bay South-Central Coast Region

Seasons: 5 - 7 months open for groundfish fishing  
 Depth restrictions: 0-30 fm, 0-40 fm, or 0-60 fm  
 Status Quo: for area between 36° 00' N. lat. and 34° 27' N. lat., 5 months at 0-40 fm;  
 Scorpionfish retention during all months when rockfish open

#### South Coast Region

Seasons: 9-11 months open for groundfish fishing; status quo 10 months; 9-12 months open for CA scorpionfish

Depth restrictions: 0-30 fm and 0-60 fm; status quo 0-30 fm and 0-60 fm

Status Quo: 2 months at 0-30 fm and 8 months at 0-60 fm

In 2005, CA scorpionfish retention for 1 month at 30 fm and 2 months at 60 fm (not open for all months that rockfish open); in 2006, retention during months that rockfish open

North, Central and South RLMA

- Lingcod nesting closure: 3-4 months (for spawning period within January, February, March and December)

### *Bag limits*

Within 20 finfish bag limit, the following ranges would be analyzed with the option for differential bag limits for boat and shore anglers (with diver limits set to those of shore anglers):

- Lingcod 2-3; status quo 2 fish
- Bocaccio south of 40° 10' N. lat. 1 – 2; status quo 1 fish

### *Size limits*

Lingcod 22 -26 inches TL; status quo of 24 inches TL

### *Filet size limits*

Lingcod filet size changed if size limit changed; status quo: 16 inches and must bear an intact 1 inch square patch of skin

## Management Specifications to Consider Keeping Status Quo for 2007-2008

### *Bag limits*

- RCG (all rockfish, cabezon, kelp greenling, and rock greenling) keep as 10 per bag with following sub-bag limits:
  - Bocaccio north of 40° 10' N. lat. status quo 2 fish
  - Cabezon status quo 1 fish
  - Greenlings (all species of the genus *Hexagrammos*) status quo 1 fish
  - Black Rockfish status quo 10 fish
  - Blue Rockfish status quo 10 fish
- Scorpionfish status quo 5 fish
- "Other flatfish" status quo: 20 fish except for Pacific sanddab and starry flounder which have no bag limit

### *Size limits*

Bocaccio status quo: 10 inches TL

Cabezon status quo: 15 inches TL

Kelp greenling (and other species of the genus *Hexagrammos*) status quo: 12 inches TL

California scorpionfish status quo: 10 inches TL

*Filet size limits*

All others (except lingcod): status quo

*Gear restrictions*

Rockfish status quo: limit of 2 hooks and 1 line

Lingcod status quo: limit of 2 hooks and 1 line

“Other flatfish” status quo: limit of up to 12 hooks, “Number 2” or smaller, which measure no more than 11 mm point to shank, and up to 2 pounds of weight per line

*Specific Fishing Area Prohibitions*

Farallon Islands: Status Quo

Recreational fishing for groundfish prohibited between the shoreline and the 10-fm (18-m) depth contour around the Farallon Islands except that recreational fishing for “other flatfish” is permitted given the restrictions described above

Cordell Banks: Status Quo

Recreational fishing for groundfish prohibited in waters less than 100 fm (183 m) around the Cordell Banks as defined by specific latitude and longitude coordinates except that recreational fishing for “other flatfish” is permitted given the restrictions described above