

Proposed Management Measures for the 2007-08 Oregon Recreational Groundfish Fishery

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife proposes the following regulatory options be considered for its recreational fishery in 2007 and 2008. The options vary based on the allowable impact of overfished species. The season duration and expected impacts on yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish, the two most constraining species, are detailed in Figure 1.

Option 1 – Status Quo

Season: Open all year at all-depths except open only shoreward of the 40-fathom line from June 1 through September 30. (New – Stonewall Bank RCA closed to retention of groundfish)

Daily Bag Limit:

Marine fish*: 6
Lingcod: 2
Sanddab: 25

Minimum length limits:

Lingcod: 24-inches
Cabezon: 16-inches
Greenling spp: 10-inches

Option 2

Season: Open all year but open only shoreward of 40-fathom line.

Daily Bag Limit:

Marine fish (all flat fish species excluded)**: 5
Lingcod: 3
Flat fish spp: 25

Minimum length limits:

Lingcod: 24-inches
Cabezon: 16-inches
Greenling spp: 10-inches

Option 3

Season: Open all year but open only shoreward of 40-fathom line January 1 through May 30 and Sept. 1 through December 31 and shoreward of 25-fathom line June 1 through August 31.

Daily Bag Limit:

Marine fish*: 5
Lingcod: 3
Sanddab: 25

Minimum length limits:

Lingcod: 24-inches
Cabezon: 16-inches
Greenling spp: 10-inches

Option 4

Season: Open all year but open only shoreward of 20-fathom line.

Daily Bag Limit:

Marine fish*: 5
Lingcod: 3
Sanddab: 25

Minimum length limits:

Lingcod: 24-inches
Cabezon: 16-inches
Greenling spp: 10-inches

Option 5

Season: Open July 1 through Labor Day but only shoreward of 20-fathom line.
Stonewall Bank closure area expanded in Pacific halibut fishery.

Daily Bag Limit:

Marine fish*: 10
Lingcod: 2
Sanddab: 25

Minimum length limits:

Lingcod: 22-inches
Cabezon: 16-inches
Greenling spp: 10-inches

* marine bag includes rockfish, greenling, cabezon and other species excluding lingcod, sanddab, Pacific halibut, salmon species, perch species, sturgeon, striped bass, offshore pelagic species, and bait fish (herring, smelt anchovies and sardines). No retention of yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish.

**marine bag includes rockfish, greenling, cabezon and other species excluding lingcod, flat fish, Pacific halibut, salmon species, perch species, sturgeon, striped bass, offshore pelagic species, and bait fish (herring, smelt anchovies and sardines). No retention of yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish.

Potential Inseason Changes

The following are suggested management measures that could be implemented inseason if the 2007 (or 2008) fishery does not proceed as expected.

Reduce the duration of offshore closure periods if the total season length is reduced due to management of nearshore species. Impacts not to exceed harvest guidelines on overfished species.

Although retention of canary and yelloweye rockfishes in recreational fisheries is prohibited, bycatch mortality of released fish is still large enough to constrain the fishery for other groundfish species. The large offshore RCA closure is an example of how these recreational fisheries are affected by bycatch of overfished species, especially yelloweye and canary rockfish. To help alleviate this constraint without increasing bycatch mortality, perhaps the large offshore RCA closures can be modified to close areas of known canary rockfish and yelloweye concentrations OR open areas known to have no or low concentrations of canary rockfish and yelloweye rockfish. Identification of these potential areas depends on adequate information about the distribution and abundance of these species. Review of NOAA Fisheries historical triennial surveys, International Pacific Halibut Commission surveys, and other data sources may provide such information.

Similarly, other means to reduce bycatch mortality, especially of overfished species, may include gear restrictions and/or release techniques. For example, the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife is presently studying the effects of sub-surface release on survival of rockfish. If successful techniques are developed and accepted, their use may alleviate the current constraints from bycatch mortality on recreational fisheries. Other examples could include modifications of terminal gear, perhaps hook size or shape, to avoid or reduce capture of overfished species.

Management measures:

Oregon has a responsive port based monitoring program through their Ocean Sampling Recreational Boat Survey (ORBS) and regulatory processes in place to track harvest and take actions inseason if necessary. Inseason actions include changes to size limits, bag limits (including non retention), seasons, depths and area closures.

Depth management will be the main inseason tool for controlling canary rockfish and yelloweye rockfish harvest as retention is prohibited. Offshore closures may be implemented inseason at 30, 25, or 20 fathoms as the presence of these two species is reduced nearshore and release survival increases. Other options include area closures (for federally managed species they would be based on established management lines for salmon and Pacific halibut fisheries). Bag limit changes may be implemented to adjust expected catch to achieve season duration goals. Non-retention and size restrictions are the likely inseason tool to use for lingcod, cabezon and greenling as release survival is very high. They may also be used to reduce harvest on nearshore species, such as black rockfish. In addition to inseason options, total closure of the groundfish recreational fishery may be implemented to stay within harvest limits.

Figure 1. Season structure along with expected yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish impacts for various 2007-08 Oregon recreational fishery options

Option	Month													Yelloweye	Canary
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	LDay	S	O	N	D	EST OR Rec (mt)	EST OR Rec (mt)
1	GF open all depth					GF open <40 fm					GF open all depth			4.3	5.5
2	GF open <40 fm													3.6	4.2
3	GF open <40 fm				GF open <25 fm				GF open <40 fm					3.2	3.8
4	GF open <20 fm													2.4	2.8
5	CLOSED				GF open <20 fm				CLOSED					1.9	1.7