

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON
PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT MEASURE ALTERNATIVES
FOR 2007-08 GROUND FISH FISHERIES

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) supports the following preliminary management measure alternatives to be approved for public review at the Pacific Fishery Management Council's April meeting.

RECREATIONAL

WDFW held public meetings on December 8, 2005, January 11, 2006, and February 23, 2006, to develop and discuss recreational bottomfish proposals for 2007 and 2008. Based on the input provided, we are not proposing any changes to the bottomfish bag limit or lingcod season dates, which are listed below.

The intent of the proposed preliminary alternatives is to reduce incidental catch of overfished rockfish, primarily yelloweye, while anglers are targeting halibut and lingcod. Based on research by Albin and Karpov (1995), there is expected to be higher survivability of rockfish released from shallower depths (i.e., 20 fathoms or less). There is also expected to be a reduced encounter rate of yelloweye rockfish in shallower depths (i.e., 30 fathoms or less).

Bottomfish Bag Limits

All Areas: 15 bottomfish aggregate bag limit, which includes a sublimit of 10 rockfish, and 2 lingcod with a 24-inch minimum size limit, but does not include halibut (which has a daily bag limit of 1). Retention of canary and yelloweye rockfish is prohibited, regardless of area caught.

Lingcod Seasons

Marine Areas 1-3: Open the Saturday closest to March 15 (which is March 17 in 2007 and March 15 in 2008) through the Saturday closest to October 15 (which is October 13 in 2007 and October 18 in 2008).

Marine Area 4: Open April 16 through October 13 in 2007 and open April 16 through October 15 in 2008.

Area Closures

For all options, the "C-shaped" yelloweye rockfish conservation area in the north coast would remain in effect.

The proposed preliminary range of 2007-2008 management measure alternatives that WDFW supports for public review include:

Statewide – Lingcod Minimum Size Limit

Status quo (2006 season) – There is a minimum size limit of 24 inches for lingcod.

Option 1

Reduce the minimum size limit for lingcod to 20 inches in Marine Areas 1-4.

North Coast (Washington Marine Areas 3 and 4)

Status quo (2006 season) – Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 20 fathoms from May 22 through September 30, except on days that halibut fishing is open (e.g., June 22 and 24). The retention of canary and yelloweye rockfish is prohibited. It is prohibited to fish for, retain, or possess bottomfish and halibut in the “C-shaped” yelloweye rockfish conservation area.

Option 1

Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 20 fathoms from May 1 through June 30, except on days that halibut fishing is open, and from August 1 through September 30; prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 10 fathoms during the month of July.

Option 2

Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 10 fathoms during the months of May and September; close the North Coast to halibut fishing, except in Area 4B; prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 20 fathoms from June 1 through August 31.

Option 3

Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 10 fathoms during the months of May, August and September; close the North Coast to halibut fishing, except in Area 4B; prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 20 fathoms from June 1 through July 31.

Option 4

Add another yelloweye rockfish conservation area off the northern coast, which would be closed to recreational bottomfish and halibut fishing, as defined by the following coordinates:

Beginning at 48°11.7’N. lat., 125°13.03’W. long.,

Then to 48°16.43’N. lat., 125°07.55’W. long.,

Then to 48°14.72’N. lat., 125°01.84’W. long.,

Then to 48°09.07’N. lat., 125°07.51’W. long., then back to the point of origin.

Note: Options 2, 3, and 4 would require changes to the Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan as well as the bottomfish regulations.

South Coast (Washington Marine Area 2)

Status quo (2006 season) – Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 30 fathoms from lingcod opening day (March 18 in 2006) through June 15. The retention of canary and yelloweye rockfish is prohibited.

Option 1

Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 30 fathoms from lingcod opening day through July 31.

Option 2

Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 30 fathoms from lingcod opening day through August 31.

Option 3

Prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 30 fathoms from lingcod opening day through July 31; prohibit retention of rockfish and lingcod seaward of a line approximating 20 fathoms from August 1 through September 30.

Columbia Area (Washington Marine Area 1)

There is very little yelloweye and canary rockfish (0.03 mt and 0.02 mt, respectively, in 2005) caught in Marine Area 1; therefore, WDFW proposes to keep the status quo bottomfish fishing regulations in place through 2007 and 2008. These are: Prohibit retention of bottomfish, except sablefish and Pacific cod, with halibut onboard from May 1 through September 30. The retention of canary and yelloweye rockfish is prohibited.

COMMERCIAL

WDFW reviewed data available from the International Pacific Halibut Commission survey, the Washington submersible survey, a state charter boat ride along program, a state salmon troll observer program, and longline logbook data (provided voluntarily) to develop management tools to reduce the impacts to yelloweye from commercial fixed gear fisheries, and would support the following management measures for public review, as placeholders. We plan to solicit feedback from the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel and key constituents at the April meeting and between April and June.

Limited Entry and Open Access Fixed Gear – North of 40°10' N. lat.

Status quo – “C-shaped” yelloweye rockfish conservation area closed to recreational bottomfish and halibut fishing; portions of the area are closed via the federal non-trawl rockfish conservation area (RCA) boundaries; area seaward of the non-trawl RCA is a voluntary area to be avoided for limited entry and open access fixed gear; entire “C-shaped” area is a voluntary area to be avoided for other fisheries (e.g., salmon troll).

Option 1

Apply “C-shaped” yelloweye rockfish conservation area closure to all limited entry and open access fixed gear fisheries and the salmon troll fishery.

Option 2

Add another yelloweye rockfish conservation area off the northern Washington coast, which would be closed to limited entry and open access fixed gear fisheries and the salmon troll fishery, as defined by the following coordinates:

Beginning at 48°11.7’N. lat., 125°13.03’W. long.,

Then to 48°16.43’N. lat., 125°07.55’W. long.,

Then to 48°14.72’N. lat., 125°01.84’W. long.,

Then to 48°09.07’N. lat., 125°07.51’W. long., then back to the point of origin.

Note: Options 1 and 2 would require changes to the Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan as well as the groundfish regulations.

Option 3

Consistent with the salmon troll regulations off Oregon, allow the retention of lingcod in the salmon troll fishery when fishing shoreward of a line approximating 30 fathoms north of 40°10’N. lat.

Option 4

Prohibit the retention of lingcod in the salmon troll fishery shoreward of the non-trawl RCA seaward boundary (i.e., shoreward of 100 fathoms north of 40°10’ N. lat. under status quo).

Preliminary WDFW Proposed Management Measure Alternatives
 (Updated: 3/15/06)

BF = Bottomfish fishery; Hal = Halibut fishery; Non-hal = Fisheries other than halibut

North Coast	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Jan	BF Open	Closed	Closed	Closed
Feb	BF Open	Closed	Closed	Closed
Mar	BF Open	BF Open	BF Open	BF Open
Apr	BF Open	BF Open	BF Open	BF Open
May	1-21: BF Open 22-31: Open < 20 fms	Hal days: BF Open Non-hal: Open < 20 fms	Closed	Closed
Jun	Hal days: BF Open Non-hal: Open < 20 fms	Hal days: BF Open Non-hal: Open < 20 fms	Open < 20 fms	Open < 20 fms
Jul	Open < 20 fms	Closed	Open < 20 fms	Open < 20 fms
Aug	Open < 20 fms	Open < 20 fms	Open < 20 fms	Closed
Sep	Open < 20 fms	Open < 20 fms	Closed	Closed
Oct-Dec	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed

South Coast	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Jan	BF Open	Closed	Closed	Closed
Feb	BF Open	Closed	Closed	Closed
Mar	1-17: BF Open 18-31: Open < 30 fms	1-15: BF Open 16-31: Open < 30 fms	1-15: BF Open 16-31: Open < 30 fms	1-15: BF Open 16-31: Open < 30 fms
Apr	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms
May	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms
Jun	1-15: Open < 30 fms 16-30: BF Open	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms
Jul	BF Open	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms	Open < 30 fms
Aug	BF Open	BF Open	Open < 30 fms	Open < 20 fms
Sep	BF Open	BF Open	BF Open	Open < 20 fms
Oct-Dec	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed

Columbia River	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Jan	BF Open			
Feb	BF Open			
Mar	BF Open			
Apr	BF Open			
May	No bottomfish, except sablefish & P. cod w/halibut onboard; Otherwise, BF Open			
Jun				
Jul				
Aug	BF Open			
Sep	BF Open			
Oct-Dec	Closed			

**Preliminary WDFW Proposed Management Measure Alternatives
 Estimated Canary Rockfish Impacts
 (Updated: 3/15/06)**

Hal = Halibut trips; BFO = Bottomfish-only trips (no halibut and/or no salmon onboard)
 (% reduction in discard mortality assumed as a result of depth restriction)
 Assumes 100% discard mortality on halibut trips and a 66% mortality on non-halibut trips

North Coast	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Jan	0	0	0	0
Feb	0	0	0	0
Mar	0	0	0	0
Apr	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
May	Hal: 0.22 BFO: 0.16 (25%)	Hal: 0.22 BFO: 0.11 (50%)	0	0
Jun	Hal: 0.10 BFO: 0.14 (50%)	Hal: 0.10 BFO: 0.14 (50%)	Hal: 0.17 (25%) BFO: 0.14 (50%)	0.38
Jul	0.16 (50%)	0	0.16 (50%)	0.16 (50%)
Aug	0.10 (50%)	0.10 (50%)	0.10 (50%)	0
Sep	0.03 (50%)	0.03 (50%)	0	0
Oct-Dec	0	0	0	0
Total	0.96	0.75	0.62	0.59

South Coast	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Jan	0	0	0	0
Feb	0	0	0	0
Mar	0	0	0	0
Apr	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
May	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
Jun	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
Jul	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
Aug	0	0	0	0 (50%)
Sep	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01 (50%)
Oct-Dec	0	0	0	0
Total	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23

Cumulative Impacts

	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
North Coast	0.96	0.75	0.62	0.59
South Coast	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23
Columbia	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Total	1.21	1	0.87	0.84

**Preliminary WDFW Proposed Management Measure Alternatives
Estimated Yelloweye Rockfish Impacts
(Updated: 3/15/06)**

Hal = Halibut trips; BFO = Bottomfish-only trips (no halibut and/or no salmon onboard)
Assumes 100% discard mortality across all trip types > 20 fms
Open < 20 fms = 50% mortality and 25% lower encounter rate

North Coast	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Jan	0	0	0	0
Feb	0	0	0	0
Mar	0	0	0	0
Apr	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
May	Hal: 0.85 BFO: 0.23	Hal: 0.85 BFO: 0.16	0	0
Jun	Hal: 0.51 BFO: 0.21	Hal: 0.51 BFO: 0.21	Hal: 0.38 BFO: 0.21	Hal: 0.38 BFO: 0.21
Jul	0.46	0	0.46	0.46
Aug	0.29	0.29	0.29	0
Sep	0.11	0.11	0	0
Oct-Dec	0	0	0	0
Total	2.72	2.19	1.4	1.11

South Coast	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Jan	0	0	0	0
Feb	0	0	0	0
Mar	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Apr	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
May	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21
Jun	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Jul	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21
Aug	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.005
Sep	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.003
Oct-Dec	0	0	0	0
Total	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.51

Cumulative Impacts

	2006	2007-2008		
		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
North Coast	2.72	2.19	1.4	1.11
South Coast	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.51
Columbia	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
Total	3.27	2.74	1.95	1.65