

**THE GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM (GMT) REPORT ON OPEN ACCESS (OA)
 LIMITATION: PLANNING FOR A POSSIBLE FMP AMENDMENT**

The GMT discussed the Council timeline for implementing Open Access Limitation relative to current high priority issues and the pros and cons of proceeding along the prescribed timeline. The GMT prioritized OA limitation relative to the other workloads (e.g. TIQ, intersector allocation, and Amendments 10 and 15) and outlined the potential economic and resource conservation benefits (see table below), recognizing that all the items are important and should not be overlooked. The items are not independent processes, but rather integrated processes, thus it may be beneficial and efficient to proceed with some processes concurrently.

Rank	Potential Economics Benefits	Rank	Potential Conservation Benefits
1	Trawl IQ	1	Trawl IQ
2	Intersector Allocation	1	Open Access Limitation
3	Amendment 10	2	Amendment 10
4	Amendment 15	3	Amendment 15
5	Open Access Limitation	4	Intersector Allocation

The GMT recommends proceeding with the OA limitation process sooner rather than later. Fishery managers cannot currently identify all of the vessels participating in the OA groundfish fishery, which constrains the ability to effectively model catches in this fishery and project harvest limit attainment. However, with expansion of vessel monitoring system (VMS) to the OA fleet in early 2007, fishery managers will be able to identify OA participants. OA limitation would better control the number of participants and would facilitate a more reliable tracking of catch, particularly for rebuilding species.

The GMT supports OA limitation as a true limitation program, rather than a simple registration program, as the latter would add complexity to management and do little to achieve conservation goals.

The GMT also recognized a fast track approach could take away time from working on other equally or higher priority items, such as trawl IQ, under the suggested open access implementation timeline of January 1, 2009. Additionally, adding this timeline to the existing workload could compromise the quality of the program, particularly regarding the qualifying criteria. The GMT recommends incorporating the current state limited entry permits, including but not limited to those permitted under the Oregon and California's commercial nearshore fisheries.