

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON
PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT MEASURE ALTERNATIVES
FOR THE 2009-2010 OREGON RECREATIONAL GROUND FISH FISHERIES

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) met with their Sport Advisory Committee (SAC) to develop and discuss preliminary recreational groundfish fishery proposals for 2009 and 2010. The alternatives proposed in this report are based on SAC input and preliminary impact modeling, and vary based on the allowable impact of yelloweye rockfish. The season duration and expected impacts on yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish, the two most constraining species, are detailed in Figure 1. These options are in addition to the no fishery scenario.

Season *

- Option 1. Open all year at all-depths except open only shoreward of the 40-fathom line from April 1 through September 30 (status quo).
- Option 2. Open all year shoreward of the 25-fathom line.
- Option 3. Open April 1 through September 30 shoreward of the 30-fathom line.
- Option 4. Open all year at all-depths except open only shoreward of the 40-fathom line from April 1 through September 30 (status quo). Required reductions in yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish impacts to be achieved by reducing the Pacific halibut catch. An estimated 1.9 mt of yelloweye rockfish and 2.3 mt of canary rockfish would be impacted by the Oregon sport fishery, all trip types combined, if the 2008 catch limit of Pacific halibut was reduced by 60 percent.
- Option 5. Open all year at all-depths except only shoreward of the 20-fathom line from May 1 through September 30.

* All Options: Stonewall Bank YRCA closed to fishing for, taking, or retaining groundfish and Pacific halibut; recreational vessels in possession of groundfish and halibut may transit the YRCA without fishing gear in the water Groundfish retention prohibited if a halibut is on the vessel on days open to all-depth halibut fishing in the area north of Humbug Mountain; except sablefish is allowed to be retained in the area of Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain and sablefish and Pacific cod are allowed to be retained in the area north of Cape Falcon. Shore based fisheries targeting or incidentally encountering groundfish are allowed year round.

Figure 1. Season structure along with expected yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish impacts for various 2009-10 Oregon sport fishery options

Option	Month												Yelloweye RF	Canary RF
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	EST OR Sport (mt)	EST OR Sport (mt)
1	GF open all depth			GF open <40 fm						GF open all depth			2.4	2.5
2	GF open <25 fm												1.9	2.1
3	CLOSED			GF open <30 fm						CLOSED			1.9	2.1
4	GF open all depth			GF open <40 fm; Halibut reduced 60%						GF open all depth			1.9	2.3
5	GF open all depth			GF open <20 fm						GF open all depth			1.7	1.9

Daily Bag Limits (all options)

Marine fish** = range 8 to 10

Lingcod = 2

Flatfish (excluding Pacific halibut) = 25

** marine fish bag limit includes rockfish, greenling, cabezon and other species excluding lingcod, flat fish, Pacific halibut, salmon, trout, steelhead, perch, sturgeon, striped bass, offshore pelagic species, and bait fish (herring, smelt anchovies and sardines). Retention of yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish are prohibited.

Minimum Length limits (all-options)

Lingcod: 22-inches

Cabezon: 16-inches

Greenling species: 10-inches

Potential Inseason Management Measures

Oregon has a responsive port based monitoring program through their Ocean Recreational Boat Survey (ORBS) and regulatory processes in place to track harvest and take actions inseason if necessary. The following are suggested management measures that could be implemented inseason if the 2009 (or 2010) fishery does not proceed as expected.

Inseason management tools include changes to size limits, bag limits (including non retention), seasons, closing days per week, depth and area closures, and gear restrictions. The fishery is managed to not exceed harvest guidelines on overfished species.

Overfished Species

Depth management will be the main inseason tool for controlling yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish catch. Offshore closures may be implemented inseason at 40, 30, 25, or 20 fathoms as the presence of these two species is reduced nearshore and release survival increases at shallower depths. Other options include latitudinal area closures based on established management lines for salmon and Pacific halibut fisheries. Duration of off shore closures and area affected may be adjusted dependant on the allowable catch limit of Pacific halibut (increase or decrease from the 2008 level). Additionally, the duration and size of offshore closure periods may be adjusted if the total season length is modified due to inseason management actions addressing harvest guidelines of non-overfished groundfish.

Although retention of canary rockfish and yelloweye rockfish in recreational fisheries is currently prohibited, bycatch mortality of released fish is 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 these overfished species. To help alleviate this constraint without increasing bycatch mortality, the large offshore RCA closures may be modified inseason to close areas of known canary rockfish and yelloweye rockfish concentrations OR open areas known to have no or low concentrations of canary rockfish and yelloweye rockfish. Currently, there is one Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (YRCA) located off Newport, Oregon, referred to as the Stonewall Bank YRCA (coordinates below). Work is currently being conducted on identification of additional areas to be included for analysis. Specific area proposals may be available at the April Council meeting, or included in the final Environmental Impact Statement.

The Stonewall Bank YRCA was implemented through the 2007-2008 biennial management process. Multiple alternatives for size of the YRCA were analyzed at that time, and allows for expansion of the area inseason. For the 2009-2010 fisheries, the same alternatives are proposed for use. The location of the status quo YRCA is:

Stonewall Bank YRCA (2007-2008; proposed for 2009-2010)

ID	Longitude	Latitude
1	124°24.92	44°37.46
2	124°23.63	44°37.46
3	124°21.80	44°28.71
4	124°24.10	44°28.71
5	124°25.47	44°31.42
Returning to the first point		

Stonewall Bank YRCA alternatives under consideration:

Alternative 1.

ID	Longitude	Latitude
1	124°29.99	44°41.71
2	124°21.60	44°41.68
3	124°17.01	44°27.66
4	124°17.01	44°25.22
5	124°30.11	44°25.27

Returning to the first point

Alternative 2.

ID	Longitude	Latitude
1	124°30.00	44°41.68
2	124°15.38	44°41.68
3	124°15.80	44°34.87
4	124°14.43	44°33.74
5	124°16.99	44°27.66
6	124°30.00	44°27.66

Returning to the first point

Similarly, other means to reduce bycatch mortality, especially of overfished species, may include gear restrictions and/or release techniques. For example, ODFW is presently studying the effects of sub-surface release on the 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 requiring long leaders or weight restrictions, to avoid or reduce capture of species with harvest constraints.

Non-overfished Species

Bag limit changes may be implemented to adjust expected catch of non-overfished species to achieve season duration goals. Non-retention and size restrictions are inseason tools to reduce catch for species such as cabezon and greenling, both under state harvest guidelines, as release survival is very high. These tools may also be used to reduce harvest on other nearshore species due to improved survival of release in shallow depths. In addition to inseason options, total closure of the groundfish recreational fishery may be implemented to stay within harvest guidelines.

Directed yellowtail rockfish and/or flatfish fisheries may be implemented inseason in the event of a closure or management action affecting the nearshore recreational groundfish fishery due to attainment of species harvest guidelines or state harvest caps, as were conducted in 2004. Fisheries will be monitored to ensure that impacts to yelloweye and canary rockfish are not in excess of the harvest guidelines.