

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON THE TENTATIVE  
ADOPTION OF THE 2009-2010 RECREATIONAL GROUND FISH FISHERY  
SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

*Advice from the Oregon Sport Advisory Committee*

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) met with members of its Sport Advisory Committee (SAC) on May 28, 2008 to discuss the proposed management measures for the 2009-2010 Oregon recreational groundfish fishery. As an advisory, SAC provides management advice specific to the sport groundfish and halibut fisheries, and is comprised of representatives of the charter and private sectors of the sport fishery, as well as a representative of port commissions. Membership is distributed coastwide in an effort to have representation of each of the coast areas and includes members from inland areas along the Willamette Valley and areas south.

At this meeting, ODFW staff summarized the Council preferred harvest levels for species that constrain the Oregon sport groundfish fishery (primarily yelloweye, canary and black rockfish) and the range of management measures that are proposed for this fishery. The comments received from the series of public meetings that were held in late April and early May were also detailed (Agenda Item F.4.b;ODFW Report), and the same questions posed to the public in those meetings were asked of SAC. A schematic of the management measures provided for the EIS is provided for reference in Figure 1. The following summary represents the consensus opinions of SAC:

1. Do you prefer a year round season to a short season which has less offshore closures and a larger marine bag limit?

The majority of SAC members confirmed the desire for a year round season even if it meant reduced offshore opportunity. A minority preferred a shorter season. SAC confirmed the importance of season length versus bag limit as witnessed by the state imposed 6-fish marine daily bag limit in place since 2006 (the marine bag is primarily composed of rockfish, greenlings and cabezon). In past SAC meetings they advised against adopting a bag limit less than 5-fish.

2. How many fish do you recommend for the lingcod daily bag limit?

SAC members discussed the desirability of being able to adjust the lingcod bag limit in season to 3-fish if either the Pacific halibut quota or the marine bag limit is reduced. They recommended adopting a 3-fish bag limit under federal regulations and a 2-fish bag limit under state rule to start out the 2009 season. They also discussed the desirability of allowing the retention of lingcod taken incidentally in the directed halibut fishery.

3. How many fish do you recommend for the marine daily bag limit?

The unanimous preference for SAC was 10-fish if the bag limit does not restrict the year long season duration. SAC members were aware of the recent black rockfish stock assessment and

likely increase in OY. SAC noted that Oregon has had the lowest limit in the rockfish bag limit of any state under Pacific Fishery Management Council jurisdiction. They recommended adopting a 10-fish bag limit under federal regulations to allow flexibility to increase the bag inseason if a lower limit is adopted under state rules.

4. Should the Pacific halibut season catch limit be voluntarily reduced so as to free up yelloweye rockfish impacts for the groundfish fishery?

SAC members indicated a strong preference for not voluntarily reducing the allowable harvest of Pacific halibut in the Oregon recreational fishery. They indicated that if the International Pacific Halibut Commission reduced the catch available to Area 2A then the groundfish season should be liberated in some fashion to help counter the negative economic effect (i.e., increased lingcod bag limit, more offshore groundfish opportunity, maintain year round season, etc.).

5. Should the Stonewall Bank Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (YRCA) be increased in size?

The advice from SAC was not to increase the size of the Stonewall Bank YRCA at this time. They felt the present size of the YRCA was already very disruptive to the groundfish and halibut fishery out of Newport. Concern was expressed that if the YRCA area is increased the potential may be lost for future opportunity to target yellowtail rockfish in the event that gear is developed to allow a targeted fishery, while avoiding yelloweye rockfish encounters. There was great support expressed for allowing the test fishery proposed at the June Council meeting by Wayne Butler and John Holloway (Agenda Item F.3.a. Attachment 4).

Input received during the public meetings included a proposal to allow targeting of sanddab shoreside of 40-fathoms. The 2008 regulations allow for this fishery as the groundfish fishery is open shoreside of 40 fathoms. The options for the 2009-10 Oregon groundfish fishery include offshore closures starting at 25 and 30 fathoms. The request was discussed with SAC and they recommended the sanddab fishery be allowed out to 40 fathoms even if the offshore closure of the groundfish fishery is at a fathom line less than 40 fathoms. They recommended the retention of sanddab and "other flatfish" be exempt from season and depth restrictions.

Figure 1. Season structure along with expected yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish impacts for various 2009-10 Oregon sport fishery options (shore based fisheries open year round)

	Month											OR Sport Yelloweye RF (mt)	OR Sport Canary RF (mt)	Marine Bag Limit *	Lingcod Bag Limit	
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N					D
1	Open all depth					Open <40 fm 6/1-9/30					Open all depth	2.5	2.5	6	2	
2	Open all depth					<40 fm 6/20-8/31**			Open all depth				2.5	2.6	6	2
3	Open all depth			<40 fm 4/1-9/30					Open all depth				2.2	2.3	8	2
4	Open <40 fm											2.0	2.2	10	2	
5	Open <30 fm											1.8	2.0	10	2	
6	CLOSED			Open <25 fm 5/1-9/30					CLOSED				1.6	1.7	10	3
7	Same as option 1, but with a 1 canary rockfish sub bag limit											2.5	10.4	6	2	

\* 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.

\*\* Assumes a 50% reduction in Pacific halibut catch from 2009 levels.