

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON TENTATIVE ADOPTION OF 2009-  
2010 GROUND FISH HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS, MANAGEMENT MEASURES, AND  
REBUILDING PLAN REVISIONS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) has the following comments on harvest specifications issues:

1. Ramp Down Strategy for Yelloweye

The GAP believes there is reasonable justification for altering the current ramp-down strategy for yelloweye. Specifically, the analysis indicates that maintaining a 17 mt optimum yield (OY) for 2009 and 2010 has negligible biological impacts on the stock. However, maintaining 17 mt for two more years has significant economic benefit compared to ramping down to 14 mt in 2009.

2. Yelloweye Catch-sharing

The majority of the GAP does not support revisiting catch sharing for yelloweye rockfish between the commercial and recreational sectors. The GAP is clearly divided over reapportioning yelloweye between the recreational sectors, and these divisions represent an Oregon and Washington position not to take action versus a California position to reapportion the catch.

3. Widow Rockfish Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC)/OY

The GAP reiterates our recommendation to set the widow rockfish OY at the current spawning biomass per recruit (SPR) harvest rate, which provides a 2009 OY of 522 mt which equates to 6 percent of the 2009 ABC (7,728 mt). The health and increasing abundance of the widow stock has been consistently validated over the past several assessment cycles. It is likely the stock will be above B40 before 2009 management measures are implemented. It is clear to the GAP that the widow rockfish resource can easily support the current harvest rate. Given their increasing abundance, it is certain that widow rockfish will be encountered at higher rates in many sectors of the groundfish fishery. Maintaining the current harvest rate will provide flexibility to the Council in balancing widow rockfish impacts in the scorecard. Even a 522 mt OY, which is based on the current harvest rate, will potentially limit the whiting fishery to less than 300,000 mt.

4. Sablefish in the Conception Area

The GAP recommends adopting a coastwide OY for 2009 of 8,423 mt distributed 7,723 mt to the north and 700 mt south of 36°. This split more closely reflects the current fishery and status quo apportionment until there is more information to suggest otherwise. Further, as a precautionary measure an OY of 8,423 mt is only 85 percent of the ABC, whereas in 2008 the OY was 98 percent of the ABC. Regardless of the split the GAP recommends a coastwide OY of 8,423 mt.

5. Longnose Skate

The GAP agrees with the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to manage skates separately from the other fish category.

6. Blue Rockfish

The GAP is supportive of Blue rockfish remaining in the minor nearshore complex and not being managed under a separate ABC/OY.

PFMC  
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