

**OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT DETAILING THE  
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE OREGON RECREATIONAL  
AND COMMERCIAL GROUND FISH FISHERIES  
IN 2009 AND 2010**

This report details Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (ODFW) preferred management measures for the 2009 and 2010 recreational and commercial groundfish fisheries. ODFW recommends the Council adopt the following management measures:

**RECREATIONAL**

ODFW recommends adoption of Alternative 6 (described in Chapter 2 of the preliminary Draft EIS, p. 88), as modified in this report, for the Oregon recreational groundfish fishery in 2009 and 2010.

The preferred season structure (Table 1) for 2009 and 2010 produces a fishery that is open offshore year round, except from April 1 to September 30 when fishing is only allowed shoreward of 40 fathoms (fm). Estimated impacts for yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish associated with this preferred alternative are 2.5 mt for each species.

Table 1: ODFW preferred 2009-2010 Oregon recreational groundfish fishery management measures.

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						
Open all depth			Open <40 fm 4/1-9/30									Open all depth		2.5	2.5	10	3

\* Marine bag includes all species other than lingcod, salmon, steelhead, Pacific halibut, flatfish, surfperch, sturgeon, striped bass, pelagic tuna and mackerel species, and bait fish such as herring, anchovy, sardine and smelt

**Marine Fish Daily Bag Limit:** ODFW recommends adoption of a marine fish daily bag limit of 10 fish in aggregate (as defined above). This will provide management flexibility to make necessary adjustments to the marine fish daily bag limit through the yearly state process, reflecting the progression of the current year’s fishery. The species most affected by adjustments in the marine fish daily bag limit are nearshore rockfish including black rockfish. The fishery will be managed within the black rockfish harvest guideline.

**Lingcod Daily Bag Limit:** ODFW recommends adoption of a lingcod daily bag limit of 3 fish. This will provide management flexibility to make inseason adjustments to the lingcod daily bag limit through state rules if either the Pacific halibut catch limit is less than in 2008 or the marine bag limit is adjusted inseason.

Flatfish Daily Bag Limit: ODFW recommends maintaining a flatfish daily bag limit of 25 fish in aggregate (excluding Pacific halibut).

Minimum Length Limits: ODFW recommends maintaining the existing length limits in place for 2007-08; 22-inches for lingcod; 16-inches for cabezon; and 10-inches for kelp greenling.

Stonewall Bank YRCA: ODFW recommends maintaining the existing Stonewall Bank YRCA prohibiting groundfish retention within a defined area (Table 2), encompassing the high relief rocky habitat of Stonewall Bank, residing approximately 15 miles offshore from Newport, Oregon. This same area is closed to the retention of Pacific halibut. Targeting and retention of Pacific halibut and groundfish would be prohibited in the area year-round.

Table 2. Location of the Stonewall Bank YRCA

ID#	Degrees	Minutes	Degrees	Minutes
1	44	37.46	124	24.92
2	44	37.46	124	23.63
3	44	28.71	124	21.80
4	44	28.71	124	24.10
5	44	31.42	124	25.50

Groundfish retention in the all-depth Pacific halibut fishery: Currently only sablefish may be retained in the Pacific halibut fishery at any depth in the area from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain, Oregon. North of Cape Falcon both sablefish and Pacific cod may be retained at any depth during the Pacific halibut fishery. It is expected that groundfish retention in the all-depth Pacific halibut fishery will be similarly constrained in 2009 and 2010.

Inseason Management: The inseason actions that may be implemented if the 2009 or 2010 Oregon recreational groundfish fishery does not proceed as expected include: length limit adjustments, bag limit adjustments (including non retention), gear restrictions, and season, depth, days per week and area closures.

Depth management will be the main inseason tool for controlling yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish harvest, as retention is prohibited. Offshore closures may be implemented inseason at 30, 25, or 20 fathoms as the presence of these two species is reduced nearshore and release survival increases. ODFW will monitor inseason progress toward recreational harvest targets for yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish. If inseason catch projections indicate that one or both of the state harvest targets may be exceeded, ODFW and WDFW will consult to share catch information. If the states determine that a management response is necessary to avoid exceeding the Oregon-Washington harvest guideline of yelloweye or canary rockfish, then the appropriate agency(ies) will implement inseason management actions to reduce catches, as necessary. Regulations will depend upon the timing of the determination for their need.

Adjustments to the daily marine fish bag limit to no more than 10 fish may be implemented to achieve season duration goals in the event of accelerated or decelerated black rockfish or other nearshore rockfish harvest. The lingcod daily bag limits may be adjusted to no more than 3 fish

in the event the marine bag limit changes or the halibut catch limit is reduced from 2008 levels. Season and/or area closures may also be considered if harvest targets are projected to be attained. Non-retention and length restrictions are the likely inseason tools to use for cabezon and greenling as release survival is very high. They may also be used to reduce impacts on nearshore species, such as black rockfish and other nearshore rockfish species.

Gear restrictions and/or release technique requirements may be implemented to reduce the impact of overfished rockfish species if successful techniques are developed, researched, reviewed, and accepted. Research in this area is currently being conducted and will continue into 2009-10, testing the effectiveness and selectivity of various gears and the survivability of rockfish released at depth.

Directed yellowtail rockfish and/or flatfish fisheries may be implemented inseason, as were implemented in 2004, in the event of a closure of the recreational groundfish fishery due to attainment of target species harvest guidelines or state harvest caps. Specific gear restrictions may be implemented in the event that flatfish remains open during a groundfish closure. Fisheries will be monitored to ensure that impacts to yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish are not in excess of the harvest targets.

In the event that the duration of total season is reduced from 12 months; the nearshore waters are closed to groundfish fishing due to management of nearshore species; or the Pacific halibut catch limit is reduced from 2008 levels, the fishery may be expanded to waters seaward of the RCA that is in effect at the time, promoting directed yellowtail rockfish and offshore lingcod opportunity. Fisheries will be monitored to ensure that impacts to yelloweye rockfish and canary rockfish are not in excess of the harvest targets.

## **COMMERCIAL**

### **Limited Entry Whiting Trawl**

#### Changing the At-Sea Processing Restrictions in the Shoreside Whiting Fishery

ODFW recommends modifying whiting regulations to allow tailing in addition to heading and gutting in the shoreside whiting fishery for vessels that are 75 ft. in length or less. Also, ODFW recommends these vessels be required to provide 100% observer coverage.

This action could provide increased economic incentives by allowing a value-added product to be landed. At least one market has been established with significantly higher value to the fisherman. Currently under the proposed Amendment 10, a small vessel exception has been granted with the requirement for 100% observer coverage, allowing a vessel to sort whiting at-sea, and landing product shoreside. In the event that Amendment 10 is not in place prior to the beginning of the 2009 whiting fishery, ODFW recommends regulations established through the 2009-2010 Specifications process that require this observer coverage.

### **Limited Entry Fixed Gear**

#### RCA Boundaries

Data has shown that yelloweye rockfish impacts in the limited entry fixed gear fishery are higher in the area between Cape Blanco and Cascade Head, therefore ODFW recommends moving the seaward non-trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) boundary from 100 to 125 fm in the area between Cape Blanco and Cascade Head except on days when the directed Pacific halibut fishery is open. When the directed Pacific halibut fishery is open, the seaward boundary would remain at 100 fm. The directed Pacific halibut fishery occurs approximately 3-6 days per year. Additionally, the majority of Pacific halibut is caught between 100 and 125 fm. This is a significant fishery for Oregon, therefore we feel strongly about allowing this opportunity to continue.

## **Commercial Nearshore Fisheries North of 40°10' N. Latitude**

### RCA Boundaries

To reduce impacts to yelloweye rockfish in the commercial nearshore fishery, ODFW recommends setting a 20 fm shoreward non-trawl RCA boundary in the area between 40°10' N lat. and Cape Blanco (43° N lat.) and retain the status quo shoreward boundary of 30 fm north of 43° N lat. Data provided by the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program shows higher yelloweye rockfish bycatch rates in the area between 40°10' N lat. and Cape Blanco. Therefore, ODFW recommends taking action that affects that specific area. The area north of Cape Blanco has been shown to have very low rates of yelloweye rockfish intercepts.

## **ODFW RECOMMENDATIONS**

### Oregon Recreational Groundfish Fishery

- 1. Adopt the status quo season structure as shown.**
- 2. Adopt the bag limit and length limit components as shown.**
- 3. Adopt the inseason management tools as shown.**

### Limited Entry Whiting

- 1. Modify the regulations governing the limited entry whiting fishery to accommodate a small vessel exception, allowing vessels 75 ft. in length or less to head, gut, and tail Pacific whiting at-sea.**
- 2. Require 100% observation for vessels operating under the above small vessel exception.**

### Limited Entry Fixed Gear

- 1. Adopt a seaward boundary for the non-trawl RCA of 125 fm in the area between Cape Blanco and Cascade Head except on days when the directed halibut fishery is open, when the line would remain at 100 fm.**

### Commercial Nearshore

- 1. Adopt a shoreward boundary for the non-trawl RCA of 20 fm in the area between 40°10' N lat. and Cape Blanco (43° N lat.).**
- 2. Adopt a shoreward boundary for the non-trawl RCA of 30 fm north of 43° N lat.**