

CDFG Proposed Recreational Inseason Action

Issue: California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) staff reviewed California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS) inseason data available through August 10, 2008 and total mortality projections through the end of the year. CDFG estimates that approximately 1.3 metric tons (mt) (64%) of yelloweye rockfish have been taken incidentally statewide through August 10, 2008. Without modification to the current season structure, the annual yelloweye HG (2.1 mt) would be exceeded.

Proposed In-season Management Measure: CDFG proposes to close the Northern Management Area and the North-Central Management Area north of Point Arena (38° 57.5' N. lat., Mendocino County) to recreational fishing for rockfish, lingcod, cabezon, greenlings, and other associated groundfish effective Sept. 2, 2008 to keep the catch of yelloweye rockfish within the harvest guideline (Figure 2). The closure would remain in effect through the end of the calendar year. Shore-based anglers and divers would be exempt from the action. Yelloweye rockfish are far less commonly encountered in management areas south of Point Arena and these areas will remain open as their impacts are not projected to result in the HG being exceeded (see Table 1). CDFG has already initiated regulatory action to close the fishery north of Point Arena in state waters (see: http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/pdfs/Sept2008GFclosure_N_NC.pdf.)

CDFG requests that the Council and NOAA fisheries review these changes and take conforming actions to close the recreational fishery in federal waters off California north of Point Arena (38° 57.5' N. lat.). CDFG will be prepared to discuss the need for this action at the September meeting, and will continue to track recreational catches of yelloweye rockfish and other species of interest for the remainder of the season to determine whether any additional regulatory action is necessary to keep catches within federally-established limits.

Figure 1: Status quo 2008 California recreational groundfish season and depth restrictions.

Management Area	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North	CLOSED				Open <20 fm							
North-Central N. of Pt. Arena	CLOSED				Open <20 fm						CLOSED	
North-Central S. of Pt. Arena	CLOSED				Open <20 fm						CLOSED	
Monterey South-Central	CLOSED				Open <40 fm						CLOSED	
Morro Bay South-Central	CLOSED				Open <40 fm						CLOSED	
South	CLOSED	Open <60 fm										

Figure 2: Season and depth restrictions under the proposed inseason action.

Management Area	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North	CLOSED				Open <20 fm May to Sept. 1				CLOSED			
North-Central N. of Pt. Arena	CLOSED				Open <20 fm June to Sept. 1				CLOSED			
North-Central S. of Pt. Arena	CLOSED				Open <20 fm						CLOSED	
Monterey South-Central	CLOSED				Open <40 fm						CLOSED	
Morro Bay South-Central	CLOSED				Open <40 fm						CLOSED	
South	CLOSED	Open <60 fm										

Table 1: CDFG estimates of the distribution of California's 2008 recreational yelloweye rockfish catch (1.3 mt) by groundfish management area through August 10, 2008.

Management Area	Percentage of Estimated Catch
North	32%
North-Central (north of Point Arena)	52%
North-Central (south of Point Arena)	12%
Monterey South-Central	4%
Morro Bay South-Central	0%
South	0%