

ADDENDUM
DRAFT RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES FOR MODIFYING PACIFIC COAST
GROUNDFISH ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

[Agenda Item H.8, Attachment 1](#), Draft Range of Alternatives for Modifying Pacific Coast Groundfish Essential Fish Habitat contained errors relative to the use of the MSA §303(b) discretionary authorities. The use of the MSA §303(b) discretionary authorities to protect benthic habitats, including deep-sea corals, was erroneously included under Alternatives 1a-1f, which are concerned with changes to the EFH Conservation Areas only. This addendum contains corrections to Table 1 and Appendix A; and includes a description of a separate set of alternatives (Alternatives 11a – 11c) for these discretionary authorities.

Table 1. Alternatives as they relate to Purpose and Need.

Purpose	Need	Alternatives that address this purpose
Minimize the adverse effects of fishing on EFH to the extent practicable.	Consider newly updated information on seafloor habitats, the distribution of fishing effort, and the distribution of deep-sea corals as they relate to protecting EFH from the adverse effects of fishing.	Alternatives 1a – 1f Alternatives 2a – 2e Alternatives 3a – 3d
Protect benthic habitats, including deep sea corals, from the adverse effects of fishing.	Consider new discretionary MSA authorities under Section 303(b) that can be used to protect species and habitats, including deep sea corals.	<u>Alternatives 1a – 1f</u> <u>Alternatives 11a-11c</u>
<i>Evaluate and revise the rockfish conservation area (RCA) closures to reduce bycatch of a particular species or species group, primarily those that are overfished.</i>	<i>Consider the RCAs in light of the 2011 implementation of the Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program and the recent declarations that several rockfish stocks have been rebuilt.</i>	<i>Alternatives 4a – 4f (Described in a separate document)</i>
Update the groundfish EFH research and information needs.	Update research and information needs for groundfish EFH based on consideration of new information on seafloor habitats, the distribution of fishing effort, and the distribution of deep-sea corals.	Alternatives 7a and 7b
Develop a more detailed description of the process to review and revise the EFH	Provide for a more efficient process for reviewing and revising groundfish EFH.	Alternatives 8a and 8b

components of the groundfish FMP.		
Revise Appendix B to the groundfish FMP: Essential Fish Habitat.	Consider new information on groundfish EFH habitat components, including major prey species, as it relates to the information in Appendix B of the groundfish FMP.	Alternatives 5a and 5b
Revise Appendix C, Part 2 to the groundfish FMP: The Effects of Fishing on Habitat: West Coast Perspective.	Consider new information on the adverse effects of the groundfish fishery on EFH as it relates to the information in Appendix C, Part 2 of the groundfish FMP.	Alternatives 9a and 9b
Revise Appendix D to the groundfish FMP: Nonfishing Effects on West Coast Groundfish Essential Fish Habitat and Recommended Conservation Measures.	Consider new information on the non-fishing activities that may adversely affect groundfish EFH and conservation measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate those effects as it relates to the information in Appendix D to the groundfish FMP.	Alternatives 6a and 6b

ALTERNATIVE 11: USE MSA §303(b) DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITIES TO PROTECT BENTHIC HABITATS, INCLUDING DEEP SEA CORALS, FROM THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF FISHING.

As noted under “Other Considerations”, the Council may consider using the discretionary authorities under MSA §303(b) to protect benthic habitats, including deep-sea corals, from the adverse effects of fishing. Alternatives 11b, 11c, and 11d are not mutually exclusive.

Alternative 11a: No Action

The No Action Alternative would not use MSA §303(b) discretionary authorities to protect benthic habitats, including deep-sea corals, from the adverse effects of bottom contact fishing gear. Bottom contact gear would not be prohibited in waters deeper than 3500 m and no new protections would be afforded to deep-sea corals, based on their intrinsic value, in west coast waters deeper than 3500m.

Alternative 11b: Moderate habitat protection/moderately reduced fishing opportunities

This alternative would use MSA sections 303(b)(2)(A), 303(b)(2)(B), or 303(b)(12) to protect benthic habitats, including deep-sea corals, by closing waters deeper than 3500 m to bottom contact gear. It is moderately protective because, although there is currently no fishing with bottom contact gear in waters deeper than 3500, it would prevent a bottom contact fishery from developing in these waters. It would not impact current fishing activities because there is currently no bottom trawl fishing taking place deeper than 3500m, and this action would not affect fishing activities shoreward of the 700fm isobath.

Alternative 11c: More habitat protection/reduced fishing opportunities

This alternative would use MSA §303(b)(2)(B) to designate zones of deep-sea corals shoreward of the 700 fm isobath and to prohibit bottom trawling in those zones. Zones considered for closure

under this authority must be identified under MSA §408, the Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program. Because this alternative would close areas where bottom trawling is currently allowed, it could reduce fishing opportunities, depending on where the closures are located.

This table replaces Appendix A, Table 1 in Agenda Item H.8, Attachment 1:

APPENDIX A: Range of Alternatives for Groundfish EFH

Alternative		Least Protective ----- Action Alternatives ----- Most Protective				
1. EFHCAs (benthic habitat protection)	1a. No Action	1b. Eliminate some or all of the existing 34 bottom trawl EFHCAs	1c. Reduce existing EFHCAs spatial extent, to more closely align with priority benthic habitats	1d. Adopt a combination of EFHCA changes with no net change in spatial extent	1e. Expand existing EFHCAs to encompass adjacent priority habitat.	1f. Expand existing EFHCAs to encompass adjacent priority habitat; add new EFHCAs
2. Public Proposals	2a. No Action	2b. Adopt EFHCAs proposed for reopening	2c. Adopt none of the public proposals for new opened areas or for new closed areas		2d. Adopt expansions to existing EFHCAs in the public proposals	2e. Adopt expansions to existing EFHCAs and adopt all EFHCAs in public proposals
3. RCA Habitats	3a. No Action			3b. Add new EFHCAs in trawl RCA, based on habitats likely to be recovered	3c. Add new EFHCAs in trawl RCA, based on presence of priority habitats	3d. Add new EFHCAs in trawl RCA, based on presence of priority habitats and based on habitats likely to be recovered
<i>4. RCA Changes (placeholder – see H.8</i>	<i>4a. No Action</i>	<i>4f. Remove the trawl RCA</i>	<i>4e. Closures for Overfished Species</i>	<i>4d. Closures for Overfished Species and</i>	<i>4c. Closures for Overfished Species, Selected</i>	<i>4b Retain a similar RCA structure;</i>

<i>Attachment 2 for complete descriptions)</i>				<i>Selected IFQ Species Managed in Complexes</i>	<i>IFQ species Managed in Complexes, and Selected Non-IFQ Species</i>	<i>consider pink shrimp trawl areas</i>
5. Revise Appendix B	5a. No Action	5b. Update/revise information in Appendix B of the FMP to reflect new information on Pacific Coast Groundfish life history descriptions, text descriptions of groundfish EFH, and major prey items.				
6. Revise Appendix D	6a. No Action	6b. Add descriptions and conservation measures for new non-fishing activities that may adversely affect EFH.				
7. Information and Research Needs	7a. No Action	7b. Revise Information and Research Needs section of the FMP and move to an appendix.				
8. Review and Revision process	8a. No Action	8b. Update review and revision process and describe elsewhere (e.g., COP).				
9. Revise Appendix C Part 2	9a. No Action	9b. Revise Fishing gear effects described in Appendix C Part 2.				
10. Clarifications and Corrections	10a. No Action	10b. Provide clarifications and correct minor errors from Amendment 19.				
<u>11. Use MSA §303(b) discretionary authorities</u>	<u>11a. No Action</u>	<u>11b. Use MSA §303(b)(2)(A), 303(b)(2)(B), or 303((b)(12) to close waters deeper than 3500 m to bottom contact gear</u>	<u>11c. Use MSA §303(b)(2)(B) to protect deep-sea corals shoreward of the 700 fm isobath.</u>			