

FINAL APPROVAL OF STOCK ASSESSMENTS

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) process for setting groundfish harvest levels and other specifications depends on periodic assessments of the status of groundfish stocks and a report from an established assessment review body or, in the Council parlance, a Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviews this information and makes a recommendation relative to the standards of 1) the best available science, and 2) soundness for use in groundfish fishery management decision-making by the Council. The Council then approves the new assessments and relevant analyses used to set groundfish harvest levels and other specifications for the following biennial management period.

New full assessments for black rockfish in Washington, Oregon, and California were conducted and reviewed in a STAR Panel this summer. The executive summary of these assessments are provided in Agenda Item 1.3, Attachment 1 (**the assessments in their entirety are available on the Council website (electronic only)**). The STAR Panel endorsed the assessments for the Washington and California stocks but did not endorse the Oregon assessment (Agenda Item 1.3, Attachment 2). In September, the SSC recommended all three assessments be reviewed at a mop-up STAR Panel although they did not anticipate that the California and Washington assessments would be re-opened for a full review at the mop-up panel. The mop-up STAR Panel report is provided in Agenda Item 1.3, Attachment 3.

The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee also discussed updated harvest specification projections for yelloweye rockfish and arrowtooth flounder, as well as a proposed methodology for determining overfishing limits for big skate at the mop-up STAR Panel. The report for these analyses will be provided under Agenda Item I.4.

The Council should consider the black rockfish assessments and STAR Panel reports, as well as the advice of the SSC, other advisory bodies, and the public before adopting the new stock assessments for use in groundfish management in 2017 and beyond.

Council Action:

Adopt those black rockfish stock assessments recommended by the SSC.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.3, Attachment 1: Executive Summary of “Assessments of Black Rockfish (*Sebastes melanops*) Stocks in California, Oregon and Washington Coastal Waters.”
2. Agenda Item I.3, Attachment 2: Black Rockfish Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel Meeting Report.
3. Agenda Item I.3, Attachment 3: Scientific and Statistical Committee’s Groundfish Subcommittee Mop-up Stock Assessment Review Panel Meeting report.
4. Agenda Item I.3.b, Public Comments.

Agenda Order:

I.3. Final Approval of Stock Assessments

John DeVore

- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- b. Public Comment
- c. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Stock Assessments for Black Rockfish off Washington, Oregon, and California.

PFMC

10/20/15