

BLACKGILL-SLOPE COMPLEX FINAL REALLOCATION  
AND ACCUMULATION LIMITS

The Council is considering a process to restructure the Slope Rockfish complex south of 40° 10' N. latitude by removing blackgill rockfish from the complex and reallocating the harvestable surplus of both blackgill rockfish and the remaining stocks in the southern Slope Rockfish complex. The Council adopted a purpose and need statement for the proposed action and a range of intersector allocation alternatives for analysis, which was refined at the September 2015 Council meeting. The analysis of the intersector allocation alternatives is provided in a preliminary draft Environmental Assessment (EA; Agenda Item I.6, Attachment 1).

The most recent assessment of blackgill rockfish in 2011 indicated the stock status was in the precautionary zone with a 30 percent depletion rate at the start of 2011. The Council and National Marine Fisheries Service responded by specifying very low cumulative landing limits for the non-trawl sectors to reduce any incentive to target blackgill rockfish. Blackgill rockfish landings in the non-trawl sectors have been at a reduced level since 2013, when the regulation was implemented, indicating targeting behavior in those sectors was effectively reduced; however, apparent targeting of blackgill rockfish in the trawl individual fishing quota fishery continues. This is because trawl quotas are managed at the complex level (i.e., the southern Slope Rockfish complex), and not the individual stock level.

If blackgill rockfish were removed from the complex and managed separately as a quota species, greater management control could be applied to effectively reduce trawl targeting. If this action is to be considered, the Council should also consider a different trawl:non-trawl allocation of blackgill rockfish and the remaining stocks in the southern Slope Rockfish complex. The original Amendment 21 allocation of the southern Slope Rockfish complex (63 percent trawl, 37 percent non-trawl) was influenced by the management of blackgill rockfish in the complex. Blackgill rockfish are readily caught by both trawl and non-trawl gears, while the other stocks in the complex are more trawl-dominant. An allocation of blackgill rockfish alone based on catch history would likely result in a higher non-trawl allocation than the 37 percent allocation currently specified for the southern Slope Rockfish complex. Likewise, an allocation of the southern Slope Rockfish complex with blackgill rockfish removed would likely result in a higher trawl allocation than 63 percent if based on catch history.

The Council should consider the advice of its advisors and the public before 1) adopting a final preferred allocation alternative, and 2) adopting accumulation limits for the affected species.

**Council Action:**

- 1. Adopt a final preferred intersector allocation alternative for blackgill rockfish and the remaining species in the southern Slope Rockfish complex.**
- 2. Consider recommending new accumulation limits for blackgill rockfish and the remaining species in the southern Slope Rockfish complex.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.6, Attachment 1: Draft Environmental Assessment: Allocation of Harvest Opportunity Between Sectors of the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery of Blackgill Rockfish and Other Species Managed in the Slope Rockfish Complex South of 40° 10' N. Latitude.

Agenda Order:

- I.6. Blackgill-Slope Complex Final Reallocation and Accumulation Limits John DeVore
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
  - b. Public Comment
  - c. **Council Action:** Adopt a Final Preferred Intersector Allocation Alternative for Blackgill-Slope Rockfish South of 40° 10' N. latitude and Consider Recommending Accumulation Limit Adjustments

PFMC  
10/22/15