

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE (WDFW) REPORT ON  
BIENNIAL HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS FOR 2017-2018 GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT  
DRAFT PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) would like the Council to consider minor revisions to the within-trawl allocations for darkblotched rockfish and Pacific ocean perch (POP) as it relates to the whiting allocations for these species. It is our understanding that this action would require an amendment to the groundfish fishery management plan and, in order for the Council to consider this action further under Agenda Item I.9, the draft purpose and need for the proposed action as described in Agenda Item I.4, Attachment 1, would need to be revised.

For background, the description of the Council's previous action under Amendment 21 to establish these whiting sector allocations is described in the National Marine Fisheries Service Groundfish Regulations, at 50 CFR 660, Subpart C (May 15, 2015) on pages 81-83, and excerpted below:

§ 660.55 (C)(1)(i):

(i) Trawl fishery allocation. The allocation for the limited entry trawl fishery is derived by applying the trawl allocation percentage by species/species group and area as specified in paragraph (c) of this section and as specified during the biennial harvest specifications process to the fishery harvest guideline for that species/species group and area. For IFQ species other than darkblotched rockfish, Pacific Ocean Perch, and widow rockfish, the trawl allocation will be further subdivided among the trawl sectors (MS, C/P, and IFQ) as specified in §§660.140, 660.150, and 660.160 of subpart D. For darkblotched rockfish, Pacific Ocean Perch, and widow rockfish, the trawl allocation is further subdivided among the trawl sectors (MS, C/P, and IFQ) as follows:

(A) Darkblotched rockfish. Allocate 9 percent or 25 mt, whichever is greater, of the total trawl allocation of darkblotched rockfish to the whiting fisheries (MS, C/P, and IFQ combined). The distribution of the whiting trawl allocation of darkblotched to each sector (MS, C/P, and IFQ) will be done pro rata relative to the sectors' whiting allocation. After deducting allocations for the whiting fisheries, allocate the remainder of the trawl allocation to the nonwhiting fishery.

(B) Pacific Ocean Perch (POP). Allocate 17 percent or 30 mt, whichever is greater, of the total trawl allocation of Pacific ocean perch to the whiting fisheries (MS, C/P, and IFQ combined). The distribution of the whiting trawl allocation of POP to each sector (MS, C/P, and IFQ) will be done pro rata relative to the sectors' whiting allocation. After deducting allocations for the whiting fisheries, allocate the remainder of the trawl allocation to the nonwhiting fishery.

(C) Widow rockfish. Allocate 52 percent of the total trawl allocation of widow rockfish to the whiting sectors if the stock is under rebuilding or 10 percent of the total trawl allocation or 500 mt of the trawl allocation to the whiting sectors, whichever is greater, if the stock is rebuilt. The latter allocation scheme automatically kicks in when widow rockfish is declared rebuilt. The distribution of the whiting trawl allocation of widow to each sector (MS, C/P, and IFQ) will be done pro rata relative to the sectors' whiting allocation. After deducting allocations for the whiting fisheries, allocate the remainder of the trawl allocation to the nonwhiting fishery.