

BIENNIAL HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES
FOR 2017-2018 GROUND FISH FISHERIES

In November 2015, the Council adopted final overfishing limits, acceptable biological catches, and annual catch limits (ACLs) for most stocks and complexes. A range of ACLs was forwarded for more detailed analysis for black rockfish in California, California scorpionfish, canary rockfish, darkblotched rockfish, and widow rockfish. Harvest specifications were also adopted for big skate as the stock will be reclassified in the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) from an ecosystem component species to a species actively managed in the fishery. The Council is scheduled to take final action on harvest specifications at the April 2016 Council meeting.

The Council also provided guidance to facilitate analysis of the integrated alternatives, which combines the ACL alternatives and adjustments to routine management measures. Guidance included two-year allocations for overfished species and canary rockfish, harvest guidelines for selected species, a range of season and area restrictions, and a range of trip limits, daily-bag-limits, and other harvest control measures for key target and constraining bycatch species. Additionally, several new management measures were forwarded for preliminary analysis. Given the expected workload, the Council prioritized the harvest specifications and integrated alternatives analysis, which are necessary to support the January 1 fishery start date. A secondary priority was established for new management measures. The Council is scheduled to develop a preliminary preferred suite of management measures at the April 2016 Council meeting. After a public review period, the Council will take final action at the June 2016 Council meeting.

Council staff, in coordination with the Groundfish Management Team and the Northwest Fisheries Science Center, have prepared an analytical document that describes the impacts associated with the range of 2017-2018 groundfish harvest specifications and adjustments to routine management measures. Additionally, progress was made analyzing the new management measures forwarded for consideration. Under Agenda Item G.3, staff is scheduled to provide an overview of the analysis and answer questions. The briefing is designed to help the Council focus their attention on some of the key issues that will be discussed and decided at the upcoming April and June meetings.

Additionally, the National Marine Fisheries Service is expect to provide a supplemental report detailing the results of the National Environmental Policy Act scoping and providing a schedule for regulation deeming and FMP transmittal.

Council Action:

None.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.3.b, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

G.3 Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures for
2017-2018 Groundfish Fisheries

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- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- b. Public Comment
- c. Council Discussion

PFMC
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