

GROUNDFISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON OREGON MID-WATER SPORT
FISHERY REGULATIONS FINAL ACTION

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received reports from Mr. Patrick Mirick about the proposed midwater sport fishery.

The GAP agrees with the purpose and need statement as stated on pages 15 and 16 in the [Draft Environmental Assessment](#) under this agenda item. We agree with the need to alleviate pressure on nearshore and also provide substitute recreational opportunity in years of poor salmon returns. This seems like an imminent possibility, given the salmon discussions at this meeting, and environmental factors that may persist into 2017.

The GAP also supports the selection of Alternative 1, which is a full season, from April-September and deeper than 40 fathoms. Concerns about risks of bycatch are addressed in the [Draft Environmental Assessment](#) for this agenda item (page 49):

“While there is a possibility that non-observed midwater long-leader bycatch rates may be greater than those observed during the test fishery, actions can be taken to ensure that bycatch stays within acceptable limits. To avoid exceeding established quota allocations and bycatch limits, catch and discard mortality is monitored closely through the ORBS program and reported weekly (one week time lag). If catch is projected to approach an established quota, mechanisms are in place to close the fishery (e.g., within 24 to 48 hours via emergency actions by the state of Oregon).”

Any risks that may be associated with this fishery can be responded to quickly by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife closures within two days.

It is important to note this should not be considered a new fishery; instead it can be considered an effort shift from nearshore areas to the shelf. The midwater sport fishery as proven to be a clean fishery and any shift in effort would reduce the take of yelloweye.

Furthermore, the GAP sees this as a fishery that could be viable in other states in the future.

PFMC
03/13/16