

**GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON CONSIDERATION OF INSEASON
 ADJUSTMENTS, INCLUDING CARRYOVER**

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the latest information on the status of groundfish fisheries and offers the following recommendations and updates. As a reminder, the 2017 harvest specifications and management measures rulemaking was delayed until February 7, and therefore all commercial trip limits from Period 1 in 2016 were in place for the start of Period 1 for 2017. If the cumulative trip limits increased from 2016 to 2017, the increase was effective as of February 7 (i.e. within the same period); if decreased, then the 2017 trip limits are effective as of March 1 (i.e. the following period, Period 2).

Action Items

Observer Requirement to Count and Weigh Overfished Species

As described in the [Situation Summary](#) and in [Agenda Item I.3., Attachment 1](#), observers currently count and weigh all bocaccio, canary rockfish, cowcod, and yelloweye rockfish that are caught. This requirement was implemented in Federal regulations (50 CFR 660.140(h)(1)(i)(A)(3)) as these species had low trawl allocations and therefore annual vessel limits, which could have incentivized discarding after docking when the observer left the vessel. However, due to the increased annual catch limits (ACLs) for bocaccio and canary rockfish in 2017, the incentive to discard these species is expected to decline. Table 1 shows the ACLs and associated annual vessel limits over time for bocaccio and canary rockfish. As shown, the 2017 limits are ~3.5 times higher for bocaccio and ~23 times higher for canary than 2016. Therefore, even if vessels were to catch bocaccio and canary rockfish, given the substantial increase in vessel limits, vessels should be able to have ample quota.

Table 1: Bocaccio and Canary Rockfish ACLs, Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) allocations and Annual Vessel Limits (in quota pounds), 2011-2017.

Year	Bocaccio			Canary Rockfish		
	ACL (mt)	IFQ Allocation (mt)	Annual Vessel Limit (15.4%)	ACL (mt)	IFQ Allocation (mt)	Annual Vessel Limit (10%)
2011	263	60	20,371	102	25.9	5,710
2012	274	60	20,371	107	26.2	5,776
2013	320	74.9	25,429	116	39.9	8,796
2014	337	79	26,821	119	41.1	9,061
2015	349	81.9	27,806	122	43.2	9,524
2016	362	85	28,858	125	44.5	9,810
2017	790	302.4	102,668	1,714	1014.1	223,571

The GMT understands from the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program (WCGOP) that if either bocaccio or canary rockfish becomes a targeted species, observers would be unable to count and weigh every fish due to the large volume. Furthermore, by eliminating the requirement, it may reduce the burden on observers, and industry. The list of species for which this requirement applies may be amended through routine inseason action procedures. **The GMT therefore recommends that the Council remove bocaccio and canary rockfish from the list of species that must be weighed and enumerated, as described in the regulations for the Shorebased IFQ Program.**

Washington Recreational Fishery

The GMT reviewed the Supplemental Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) report ([Agenda Item, I.3.a. Supplemental WDFW Report](#)) and discussed the proposed changes recommended by WDFW. The primary change is to reduce the recreational rockfish bag limit from 10 to 7 rockfish per day, which is needed to keep recreational black rockfish catch under the 2017 and 2018 harvest guidelines. The bottomfish aggregate daily bag limit is also proposed to be reduced from 12 to 9 to maintain a similar relationship between the rockfish bag limit and the aggregate bottomfish limit. In addition to bag limit changes, WDFW is planning to eliminate the lingcod minimum size limit to allow anglers to keep smaller lingcod and potentially reduce time on the water, which may reduce encounters with additional rockfish including yelloweye rockfish (YE) that may need to be discarded. This item is included under Action Items as WDFW is recommending that National Marine Fisheries Service take conforming action on these measures at this meeting. **The GMT recommends the Council adopt the recommendations in the WDFW report.**

Informational Items

International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Expanded Survey Stations Potential Additional Yelloweye Rockfish Impacts

The GMT was informed by the IPHC that they are intending to add survey stations off of Northern Washington and northern California in 2017. The purpose of these additional stations is to: (1) expanded depth range (4 shallow and 2 deeper in CA; 2 shallow in WA); (2) expand further into CA (16 stations); and (3) explore denser grid (DG) stations (26 stations in WA). Based on the proposed stations, IPHC is requesting an additional 0.3 mt of yelloweye rockfish, increasing the projected impacts from 1.1 mt to 1.4 mt. IPHC developed that estimate by using the average yelloweye rockfish number per skate (NPUE) from 2007-2016 for the standard grid (SG) stations (0.720 mt; Table 2), and from 2013-2016 by skate for selected rockfish stations and multiplying it by the total number of new skates in the new DG (0.606 mt; Table 3). Those two values were then added together to get a new estimate of 1.33 mt, which was rounded up to 1.4 mt. The GMT believes this estimate may be high; however, we were unable to derive a more refined estimate. Therefore, the GMT believes the IPHC estimate is the best available. There is currently 2.7 mt residual of yelloweye rockfish in the projected impacts in the 2017 scorecard (Attachment 2). If the IPHC survey projection is increased to 1.4 mt, the residual will be reduced to 2.3 mt, and no other fishery sectors should be impacted by this change at this time. However, the GMT does note that the projected impacts for the IFQ fishery is currently lower than the allocation, but once allocated to the IFQ sector, pounds cannot be reallocated (taken back) inseason. This would make the residual closer to 1.1 mt, if the IPHC survey projected impacts are increased.

Table 2: Estimate of projected yelloweye rockfish impacts from the 2017 IPHC standard grid (SG) survey stations.

Year range for Avg. NPUE	Total 2A skates for 2017, excluding Puget Sound and DG	NPUE for year range	Predicted Catch (No.)	YE avg. wt. (kg) for 2016	Weight (mt)
2007-2016	864	0.27954	242	2.98	0.720

Table 3: Estimate of projected yelloweye rockfish impacts from the 2017 IPHC densified grid (DG) stations.

Catch from 1082 and RI Stations 2013-2016	Skates Fished at 1082 and RI stations 2013-2016	YE per skate at RI 2013-2016	Number of skates in DG region	No. YE predicted for DG stations, using RI rate	YE Avg. Wt. for 2016	Total predicted weight of YE (mt)
159	122	1.30	156	203.31	2.98	0.606

In addition to receiving periodic a preliminary estimate of rockfish catch as the IPHC survey is underway, the Council typically has a preliminary final estimate of total yelloweye rockfish impacts at the September Council meeting each year. At that time, any unused amounts (0.3-0.9 mt; Table 4) have been returned to the scorecard, and could be done so again in 2017.

Table 4: Annual yelloweye rockfish impacts (mt) from the IPHC Standard Stock Assessment Survey and amount of yelloweye rockfish (mt) returned to the scorecard in September.

Year	YE Impacts (mt)	YE returned to scorecard (mt) in September
2009	0.5	0.6
2010	0.3	0.8
2011	0.4	0.7
2012	0.4	0.7
2013	0.4	0.7
2014*	0.8	0.3
2015	0.4	0.7
2016	0.2	0.9
* expanded stations		

Based on the above information, the GMT has updated the projected impacts for the IPHC survey to 1.4 mt, which leaves 2.3 mt residual in the yelloweye rockfish projected impacts. The total projected impacts from the IPHC survey will be available at the September Council meeting, at which time the scorecard will be updated, likely increasing the projected impacts residual.

Sablefish Fixed Gear Fisheries in 2016

In November, the GMT provided updates on the projected 2016 total landings for the primary season and daily trip limit (DTL) sablefish fisheries ([Agenda Item F.3.a, Supplemental GMT Report](#)). Table 5 shows the final estimates of landings, landing target (allocation minus estimated discard), and attainment by sector for 2016.

Table 5: 2016 landing and attainment estimates for fixed gear sablefish fisheries (Pacific Coast Fisheries Information Network (PacFIN) queried on 2/28/2017. Sectors: Limited Entry North of 36° N. lat = LEN; Open Access North of 36° N. lat = OAN; Limited Entry South of 36° N. lat = LES, Open Access South of 36° N. lat = OAS).

Sector	Landings (mt)	Landing Target (mt)	Attainment
Primary	1,365	1,465	93.1%
LEN	206	258	79.8%
OAN	383	425	90.1%
LES	336	581	57.7%
OAS	23	473	4.8%

Daily Trip Limit 2017

Table 6 shows the trip limits in place during Period 1 (due to delay in rulemaking) and the adopted 2017 trip limits for the remainder of 2017.

Table 6: DTL Trip Limits for 2017.

Sector	Trip Limit (Period 1)	Trip Limit (Periods 2-6)
LEN	1,275 lbs. per week, not to exceed 3,375 bi-monthly ^a	1,100 lbs. per week, not to exceed 3,300 bi-monthly
OAN	300 lbs. per day, or 1 landing per week of up to 1,000 lbs., not to exceed 2,000 lbs. bi-monthly	300 lbs. per day, or 1 landing per week of up to 900 lbs., not to exceed 1,800 lbs. bi-monthly
LES	2,000 lbs. per week	
OAS	300 lbs. per day, or 1 landing per week of up to 1,800 lbs., not to exceed 3,200 lbs. bi-monthly	

^aAs of February 7th, the weekly trip limit decreased to 1,125 lbs. per week for the remainder of Period 1.

Since the November Council meeting, the DTL model was updated with final 2016 landings and price data as well as new price indexes to account for inflation for the LEN and LES models that incorporate average price per pound. Based on the trip limits in Table 6 and the updated model, Table 7 shows the projected landings and attainment by sector for 2017 with fish tickets complete through February 28. As a reminder, electronic fish tickets are required for all commercial sablefish landings as of January 1, 2017. Previously, estimates were based on a combination of paper ticket data and “soft” data reported by port samplers (due to lag in paper ticket uploads into

PacFIN). Electronic tickets will allow us to better track each sector in comparison to previous years to assess changes in fishing activity and fine-tune model parameters (e.g. input years, weighting), in combination with industry input.

Table 7: 2017 Projected Landing and Attainment Estimates for DTL fisheries.

Sector	Landings (mt)	Landing Target (mt)	Attainment
LEN	174-216	258	67-84%
OAN	265-340	425	62.5-80.1%
LES	358-464	728	49.2-63.7%
OAS	44	312	14%

Weather conditions appear to have been poor in Period 1 and have affected predicted attainment. However, salmon opportunities are expected to be limited again in 2017 and therefore effort may be at the higher levels seen in 2015 and 2016 during the summer when weather improves.

2016 Scorecard

Attachment 1 shows the final 2016 overfished species scorecard. Updates include final exempted fishing permit (EFP) landings, at-sea landings (tickets 90 percent complete through 11/18/16), and recreational updates for Oregon and California.

2017 Scorecard

Attachment 2 shows the updated 2017 overfished species scorecard. Updates include new projections for the non-nearshore sector based on the model updated with 2015 data and projected yelloweye rockfish impacts for the IPHC stock assessment survey based on the expanded survey stations. The nearshore model was recently delivered by WCGOP and updates will be provided in April.

Attachment 1. Allocations^a and projected mortality impacts (mt) of overfished groundfish species for 2016.

Fishery	Bocaccio b/		Canary		Cowcod b/		Dkbl		Petrale		POP		Yelloweye	
	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts
<i>Date: 11 March 2017</i>														
Off the Top Deductions	8.3	4.1	15.2	14.8	2.0	2.0	20.8	12.6	236.6	261.7	12.0	12.5	5.8	4.1
EFPC/	3.0	0.1	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Research d/	4.6	3.7	4.5	5.8	2.0	2.0	2.1	7.1	14.2	17.7	2.2	3.0	3.3	1.6
Incidental OA e/	0.7	0.3	2.0	1.3	--	--	18.4	5.3	2.4	4.0	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.2
Tribal f/			7.7	7.7			0.2	0.2	220.0	240.0	9.2	9.2	2.3	2.3
Bottom Trawl			0.8	0.8			0.2	0.2	45.4	70.0	3.7	3.7		0.0
Troll			0.5	0.5			0.0							0.0
Fixed gear			0.3	0.3			0.0						2.3	2.3
mid-water			3.6	3.6			0.0							0.0
whiting			4.3	4.9				0.3			7.2	11.1		
Trawl Allocations	85.0	81.9	58.5	45.0	1.4	1.4	308.9	297.9	2,638.4	2,638.4	144.6	134.5	1.1	1.1
-SB Trawl	85.0	81.9	44.5	44.5	1.4	1.4	292.8	292.8	2,633.4	2,633.4	124.2	124.2	1.1	1.1
-At-Sea Trawl			14.0	0.5			16.1	5.1	5.0	5.0	20.4	10.3	0.0	0.0
a) At-sea whiting MS			5.8	0.4			6.7	1.6			10.2	7.2		
b) At-sea whiting CP			8.2	0.1			9.4	3.5			10.2	3.1		
Non-Trawl Allocation	268.7	68.5	51.3	43.6	2.6	0.8	16.3	6.3	35.0		7.5	0.4	12.1	9.6
Non-Nearshore	82.1		3.9					6.1				0.4	0.6	0.7
LE FG				1.0						0.4				
OA FG				0.2										
Directed OA: Nearshore	1.0	0.5	6.9	6.5				0.2		0.0			1.9	1.8
Recreational Groundfish														
WA			3.5	2.4				--		--		--	3.1	3.1
OR			12.0	9.8				--		--		--	2.8	2.7
CA	185.6	68.0	25.0	23.7		0.8		--		--		--	3.7	1.3
TOTAL	362.0	154.5	125.0	103.4	6.0	4.2	346.0	316.8	2,910.0	2,900.1	164.1	147.4	19.0	14.8
2016 Harvest Specification	362	362	125	125	6.0	6.0	346	346	2,910	2,910	164	164	19	19
Difference	0.0	207.5	0.0	21.6	0.0	1.8	0.0	29.2	0.0	9.9	-0.1	16.6	0.0	4.2
Percent of ACL	100.0%	42.7%	100.0%	82.7%	100.0%	70.0%	100.0%	91.6%	100.0%	99.7%	100.1%	89.9%	100.0%	77.9%
Key			= not applicable											
		--	= trace, less than 0.1 mt											
			= Fixed Values											
			= off the top deductions											

a/ Formal allocations are represented in the black shaded cells and are specified in regulation in Tables 1b and 1e. The other values in the allocation columns are 1) off the top deductions, 2) set asides from the trawl allocation (at-sea petrale only) 3) ad-hoc allocations recommended in the 2013-14 EIS process, 4) HG for the recreational fisheries for canary and YE.

b/ South of 40°10' N. lat.

c/ EFPs are amounts set aside to accommodate anticipated applications. Values in this table represent the estimates from the 13-14 biennial cycle, which are currently specified in regulation.

d/ Includes NMFS trawl shelf-slope surveys, the IPHC halibut survey, and expected impacts from SRPs and LOAs.

e/ The GMT's best estimate of impacts as analyzed in the 2015-2016 Environmental Impact Statement (Appendix B), which are currently specified in regulation.

f/ Tribal values in the allocation column represent the the values in regulation. Projected impacts are the tribes best estimate of catch.

Attachment 2. Allocations^a and projected mortality impacts (mt) of overfished groundfish species for 2017.

Fishery	Bocaccio b/		Cowcod b/		Dkbl		POP		Yelloweye	
	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts	Allocation a/	Projected Impacts
Date: 11 March 2017										
Off the Top Deductions	15.4	15.4	2.0	2.0	77.3	27.3	49.4	24.4	5.4	5.8
Additional Buffer					50.0		25.0			
EFPC/	10.0	10.0	0.015	0.015	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.030	0.020
Research d/	4.6	4.6	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.5	5.2	5.2	2.7	3.1
Incidental OA e/	0.8	0.8	0.0	0.0	24.5	24.5	10.0	10.0	0.4	0.4
Tribal f/					0.2	0.2	9.2	9.2	2.3	2.3
Bottom Trawl					0.2	0.2	3.7	3.7		0.0
Troll					0.0					0.0
Fixed gear					0.0				2.3	2.3
mid-water					0.0					0.0
whiting						0.3	7.2	11.1		
Trawl Allocations	302.4	92.7	1.4	0.2	535.6	146.4	220.0	49.5	1.1	0.1
-SB Trawl	302.4	92.7	1.4	0.2	507.6	136.9	198.3	43.0	1.1	0.1
-At-Sea Trawl					16.1	9.5	21.7	6.5	0.0	0.0
a) At-sea whiting MS					11.6	4.5	9.0	1.8		
b) At-sea whiting CP					16.4	5.0	12.7	4.7		
Non-Trawl Allocation	472.2	202.1	2.6	0.0	28.2	5.8	11.6	0.3	13.1	11.8
Non-Nearshore	144.3	16.6		0.0		5.6		0.3	0.8	0.7
LE FG		6.2				5.2		0.3		0.6
OA FG		10.4				0.5		0.0		0.0
Directed OA: Nearshore	1.8	0.6		0.0		0.2			2.1	2.0
Recreational Groundfish										
WA						--		--	3.3	3.1
OR						--		--	3.0	2.8
CA	326.1	184.9		2.2		--		--	3.9	3.2
TOTAL	790.0	310.2	6.0	2.2	641.1	179.5	281.0	74.2	19.6	17.7
2017 Harvest Specification	790	790	6.0	6.0	641	641	281	281	20	20
Difference	0.0	479.8	0.0	3.8	-0.1	461.5	0.0	206.8	0.4	2.3
Percent of ACL	100.0%	39.3%	100.3%	36.9%	100.0%	28.0%	100.0%	26.4%	100.0%	88.4%
Key										

a/ Formal allocations are represented in the black shaded cells and are specified in regulation in Tables 1b and 1e. The other values in the allocation columns are 1) off the top deductions, 2) set asides from the trawl allocation (at-sea petrale only) 3) ad-hoc allocations recommended in the 2013-14 EIS process, 4) HG for the recreational fisheries for canary and YE.

b/ South of 40°10' N. lat.

c/ EFPs are amounts set aside to accommodate anticipated applications. Values in this table represent the estimates from the 13-14 biennial cycle, which are currently specified in regulation.

d/ Includes NMFS trawl shelf-slope surveys, the IPHC halibut survey, and expected impacts from SRPs and LOAs.

e/ The GMT's best estimate of impacts as analyzed in the 2017-2018 Environmental Impact Statement (Appendix B), which are currently specified in regulation.

f/ Tribal values in the allocation column represent the values in regulation. Projected impacts are the tribes best estimate of catch.