



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Fisheries Science Center
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Agenda Item E.1.b
NMFS NWFSC Report 1
September 2017

July 25, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Charles A. Tracy
Executive Director, Pacific Fishery Management Council

Kevin Werner

FROM: Kevin Werner, PhD, MPA
Science & Research Director, Northwest Fisheries Science Center

SUBJECT: Council Recommendations for Discard Mortality Rates to be
Applied to Discards at Sea in the Commercial Nearshore Groundfish
Fishery

In response to the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) letter regarding discard mortality rates in the nearshore fishery (dated June 29, 2017), the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program (WCGOP) will incorporate the new depth bins into their mortality reporting. Council is requesting the >20 fathom depth bin be re-stratified into a 20-30 fathom and >30 fathom bins for nearshore species.

As presented to Council in the NMFS Science Report at the April 2017 meeting (Agenda Item F.1.a, Supplemental NWFSC PowerPoint: Groundfish Science Report) the WCGOP will incorporate the new depth bins in the upcoming 2016 Groundfish Mortality Report. This report is planned to be available in the Briefing Book for the September 2017 Council meeting. While these new depth bins will be used along with Groundfish Management Team (GMT) provided mortality rates to generate groundfish mortality estimates, the finer underlying data used to calculate the deeper depth bins might not always be able to be published due to confidentiality. These include discard ratios and standard errors. Instead, after calculating estimates using the four depth bins, the final discard estimates and the coefficients of variation will be reported at the finest possible non-confidential strata. While these data may need to be omitted in published reports, they could be provided to authorized users of confidential level data if requested through the WCGOP.

The WCGOP will continue to work with the GMT and Council to provide our fishery managers and scientists the highest quality and most useful data products and analysis.

cc: Mark Strom
Michelle McClure