

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON RESEARCH SET
ASIDES FOR 2019=2020 BIENNIAL HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) recommends including research set asides for select species to accommodate research needs off the coast of California for 2019-2020. Currently, research set asides in the Groundfish Management Team scorecard include those for research conducted by the National Marine Fisheries Service, International Pacific Halibut Commission, and research activities conducted under the authorization of a federal Scientific Research Permit or Letter of Authorization. There are also research set asides in the scorecard that account for state-sponsored research activities off the coast of Oregon and Washington.

The state of California has a Scientific Collecting Permit (SCP) program that authorizes take of species for research or other scientific needs. Due to the overfished status of yelloweye, cowcod and canary rockfishes, CDFW severely has restricted or denied take of these species under SCPs in recent years, and has kept allowable mortality of these species to de minimis levels. However, looking forward to future years and given increases in the volume of groundfish mortalities requested in SCPs in recent years, CDFW believes that establishing set-asides for research off California is necessary at this time. Specifically, cowcod and yelloweye rockfish remain overfished and constrain many west coast fishery activities, while lingcod and black rockfish are expected to be constraining species in 2019-2020. Although canary rockfish are rebuilt, given some requests for high-volume research harvests of this stock in 2017, moving to direct accounting of mortality from research activities seems prudent at this time.

CDFW reviewed SCP applications from recent years and expects the set aside amounts recommended in Table 1 to accommodate the needs of the California SCP program while taking into account recent changes in stock status.

Table 1. Summary of additional set asides requested for the 2019-2020 management cycle to accommodate research needs off the coast of California for select species. These set-asides would be in addition to those under consideration to accommodate federal research.

Species	Metric Tons (2019)	Metric Tons (2020)
Cowcod	0.10	0.10
Yelloweye Rockfish	0.22	0.22
Canary Rockfish	3.00	3.00
Black Rockfish	1.00	1.00
Lingcod	1.50	1.50