

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS –
FINAL ACTION

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) met with the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) to discuss progress of this year's fishery and possible inseason adjustments. The GMT discussion was led by Ms. Jessi Doerpinghaus. The GAP offers the following recommendations and comments on proposed inseason adjustments to ongoing groundfish fisheries.

Sablefish Daily Trip Limit

Due to poor market conditions, fixed gear sablefish landings have been tracking quite low to date and thus there is an opportunity to increase the daily trip limits for both limited entry and open access fixed gear north. Working from the supplemental GMT report **table 2**, the GAP recommends the following:

Open Access Fixed Gear Sablefish North of 36° N. Latitude

Current 2018 trip limits: 300 lb. daily/1,000 lb. weekly/2,000 lb. bimonthly

The GAP supports GMT **Alternative 2**: 300 lb. daily/1400 lb. weekly/2,800 bimonthly

Limited Entry Fixed Gear Sablefish North of 36° N. Latitude

Current 2018 trip limits: 1,100 lb. weekly, not to exceed 3,300 lb. bimonthly

The GAP supports GMT **Alternative 1**: 1,400 lb. weekly, not to exceed 4,200 lb. bimonthly

Open Access Fixed Gear Sablefish South of 36° N. Latitude

Current 2018 trip limits: 300 lb. daily/1,600 lb. weekly/3,200 lb. bimonthly

The GAP supports GMT **Alternative 2**: 300 lb. daily/1,600 lb. weekly/4,800 lb. bimonthly

Bocaccio Trip Limits

Fixed gear fishermen targeting chilipepper rockfish have been encountering substantial numbers of very large bocaccio. The GAP supports increasing the bocaccio trip limits to help reduce regulatory discards in the chilipepper fishery. Working from the supplemental GMT report **table 5**, the GAP recommends the following:

Limited Entry Fixed Gear Bocaccio 40° 10' N. Latitude to 34° 27' N. Latitude

Current 2018 trip limits: 1,000 lb. 2/months

The GAP supports increasing the bocaccio trip limit to 1,500 lb. 2/months

Recreational Fisheries for Yelloweye rockfish

The nearshore recreational fisheries in California and Oregon have experienced slightly higher than normal mortality for yelloweye rockfish this year, with the exception of California north. It is assumed there has been increased effort likely due to better than average nearshore weather and sea conditions. California north, due to a poor salmon season, increased depth to avoid nearshore black rockfish, and resulted in a substantial increase in yelloweye encounters. The result of this increased effort and catch has resulted in the projected catch to exceed the allowable harvest limits.

California Recreational Yelloweye Rockfish

Yelloweye rockfish (YE) impacts in 2018 have exceeded the harvest guideline (HG) analysis projections. As a result, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) took action to restrict the allowable fishing depths in state waters north of Point Conception to depths that were in effect for the 2016 season that reduced allowable depths by 10 fathoms in most management areas. These changes were implemented August 25, 2018 and will run through December 31, 2018. Due to the availability of residual YE in the current scorecard (2.8 mt), the GAP recommends maintaining status quo seasons for the balance of the 2018 season.

Oregon Recreational Yelloweye

On July 1st, 2018 the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), by state rule, reduced the marine fish daily bag limit from 5 to 4 fish per person. This was due to catch projections in June that suggested black rockfish, nearshore rockfish complex species, and YE rockfish were on track to be very close to or slightly over their respective HG's by the end of the year. New catch projections suggest that the black rockfish take will be well below the HG for that species. The GAP supports the ODFW option that would increase the daily bag limit for marine fish back to 5 fish for the remainder of the 2018 season. Due to the availability of residual YE in the current scorecard (2.8 mt), the GAP believes the season structure should remain status quo for the remainder of 2018.

At-Sea Pacific Ocean Perch (POP) and Darkblotched Rockfish Bycatch

The GAP recommends that the Council transfer POP and darkblotched from the "Incidental Open Access" category to the buffer. This recommendation is consistent with our recommendation from June 2018, and in previous years the Council has moved fish from the off-the-top deductions to the at-sea sectors when a need has been demonstrated. The current action prevents fish from being

stranded that cannot be accessed between Council meetings. In addition to meeting National Standard 1 (achieve Optimum Yield), it makes good sense from a management perspective as the buffer is available to any sector that might need it. There is no conservation concern with this action.

The GMT analysis appears to indicate that there is not a high likelihood that the combined at-sea sector bycatch of darkblotched and/or POP will exceed the respective set asides plus the buffers. However, the shoreside whiting fishery is experiencing high encounter rates of both species. It is likely that the at-sea sectors will encounter similarly high rates. Therefore, because there is automatic closure authority in 2018, the at-sea sectors are at risk if the GMT's analysis underestimates projected bycatch amounts. Moving additional amounts of darkblotched and POP into the buffer should reduce this risk, providing a benefit to the at-sea sectors at no cost to other fishery sectors.

2019 Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Regulations

The GAP received reports and recommendations from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), ODFW, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), CDFW, and the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IHPHC). The GAP is supportive of the recommended proposed changes provided by ODFW and WDFW, which address sports fishing seasons in the Columbia River area.

The GAP was informed from the NMFS and IHPHC presentations that the sablefish fishery tiered program, that operates to the north of Pt. Chehalis and is currently allowed 160 lbs. of halibut to be delivered with 1,000 lbs. of dressed sablefish plus two fish, has landed about 20,000 lbs of halibut. The allocation for this fishery is 50,000 pounds of halibut. The GAP recommends that the Council advise NMFS that this number should be increased in order to harvest the assigned allocation. The GAP recommends consideration of 200 pounds per 1000 lbs. of dressed sablefish plus two fish. It is understood this change might be made effective for fishing during the month of October.

PFMC
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