

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON UPDATED COORDINATES FOR  
THE 125 FATHOM ROCKFISH CONSERVATION AREA LINE IN CALIFORNIA

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) received a briefing from Ms. Melissa Mandrup of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) regarding proposed changes to the 125 fathom fixed gear Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) between 40° 10' N. lat. and 34° 27' N. lat..

In 2011, the 125 fathom non-trawl RCA coordinates were updated, however, these were not used in California at that time. During the 2017-2018 harvest specifications and management measures process, the Council recommended, and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) approved modifying the seaward boundary of the fixed gear RCA from the 150 fathom line to the 125 fathom line. When the RCA line was moved shoreward to 125 fathoms, it was discovered that there were fishing grounds that were inadvertently closed by this action (the 125 fathom line and 150 fathom line cross). These areas have been previously fished, when the 150 fathom RCA was in place (2003 through 2016). Therefore, the GMT believes there should be no changes to habitat, socioeconomic, or ecosystem impacts, and the workload to implement this action should be minimal.

As such, **the GMT recommends updates to the 125 fathom RCA lines that reflect the narrow scope of action that only opens areas that have already been fished.** For RCA modifications which would require further analysis to address unidentified impacts, the GMT recommends those be analyzed through the 2019-2020 harvest specifications and management measures process.

PFMC  
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