

SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON INFORMATIONAL REPORT #4:
GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL INFORMATIONAL REPORT FOR HIGH
PRIORITY GROUND FISH ITEMS

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) reviewed Informational Report #4, submitted by the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) which provided details on four high-priority items. The SAS supports selecting **Topic 1: Non-trawl area management (1a) and salmon troll incidental landing limits (1b)** as the highest priority, as described in Table 1 and Table 2 of Informational Report #4 (June 2020 Council meeting). This topic has the highest value return for salmon fishermen in the California coastal communities of Eureka, Ft. Bragg, Bodega Bay, San Francisco, Half Moon Bay, Santa Cruz, Moss Landing, Monterey, Morro Bay, and Avila. In addition, the analysis needed to inform the Council's decision is believed to be relatively simple with minimal workload.

Topic 1a focuses on removing (or adjusting) portions of the Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) to increase accessible fishing grounds. As stated under open public comment at the March 2020 Council meeting, this fishery is highly valued as a bridge fishery for small boat operators and early entrants into the commercial fishery. The year-round operation provides additional revenue to coastal communities and harbor districts which assist in the preservation and upkeep of infrastructure. There is a significant benefit of permanent employment verses seasonal work for those directly dependent on the commercial fishery when the open access fishery is fully functional, as it was before the establishment of the RCA.

Topic 1b focuses on salmon troll incidental landing limits, and asks the Council to consider a change in incidental groundfish retention limits south of 40° 10' N. lat. The SAS supports the proposal so that retention limits would better reflect the improved status of many groundfish stocks. We encourage a full inclusion of rockfish species that may be intercepted to include, but not limited to, vermilion, canary, widow, baccocio, yellow tail, and cow cod. The benefit of this proposal would be a reduction in the discard rate of a high value protein source and assist in the revenue stream for salmon trollers who operate on very low and uncertain margins.

PFMC
06/10/20