

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON INSEASON
 UPDATE FOR RECREATIONAL CABEZON/KELP GREENLING COMPLEX

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) would like to provide an update on 2020 recreational mortality for the Washington cabezon/kelp greenling complex (complex) in response to the 2019 ACL overage which was flagged by the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) in September [Agenda Item C.1.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, September 2020](#).

Recreational mortality estimates show that mortality for the complex is at 5.02 mt through September 2020. Because October estimates are not yet available, projected mortality was estimated using mortality from October 2019 as a proxy and shows projected mortality at 5.08 mt through the close of the Washington recreational groundfish fishery on October 17, 2020, well below the 2020 harvest guideline (HG) of 10.4 mt (Table 1).

Table 1. Washington Recreational Cabezon/Kelp Greenling mortality (mt) for 2019 and 2020 through September with projected mortality for 2020 through the end of the season.								
WA Cabezon/Kelp Greenling Complex	HG / ACT		2019	2020	Projected	Projected	HG / ACT	
	2019	2020	Catch (mt)		Oct 2020	2020 Total	2021	2022
Cabezon	4.6	4.5	9.81	4.19	0.05	4.24	12.2	9.6
Kelp Greenling	5.9	5.9	1.66	0.82	0.01	0.83	5.5	5.5
Complex Total	10.5	10.4	11.48	5.02	0.06	5.08	17.7	15.1

Because 2020 mortality was significantly impacted by a drop in fishing effort due to COVID-19 closures and restrictions, WDFW reviewed groundfish management measures for the upcoming 2021-2022 biennium relative to the 2021-2022 complex HG to evaluate whether additional management measures might be needed to keep the complex mortality below the ACL. Many of the recreational management measures adopted for 2021 and 2022 open deepwater areas to increase access to popular recreational species like lingcod, potentially taking pressure off nearshore species like cabezon and kelp greenling. Based on changes in fishing opportunity and a higher complex HG, WDFW does not see the need for changes to regulations to ensure that mortality for the complex does not exceed the ACL in 2021. WDFW will continue to track monthly recreational mortality estimates and is prepared to adjust if needed.