

EXCERPT OF GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL (GAP) NON-TRAWL  
MANAGEMENT ITEMS FROM INFORMATIONAL REPORT 4, JUNE 2020

The following proposals are the excerpted Non-trawl sections from the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel's (GAP) [Informational Report 4, June 2020](#).

## **Non-Trawl Area Management and Salmon Troll Incidental Landings Limits**

This topic is split into two sections for discussion: Topic 1a., Non-Trawl Area Management, and Topic 1b., Salmon Troll Incidental Landings Limits.

Members of the public submitted many proposals through public comment and other agenda items related to groundfish management over the course of several years. During the March and April 2020 Council meetings, proposals were submitted via the public comment portal under Agenda Item B.1, open public comment. The GAP consolidated the proposals since many of them overlapped. Members of the GAP and the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS), along with members of the public, discussed the efficacy of the proposals with their constituents. Table 1 is a final version of all proposals to date for non-trawl area management<sup>1</sup> and has been updated with respect to past Council actions. Table 2 provides one action item regarding salmon troll incidental catch retention.

### **1a: Non-Trawl Area Management**

#### **Draft Purpose and Need**

The proposals focus on removing or modifying portions of the Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (Non-Trawl RCA). The purpose of these proposed actions is for the industry to gain access to additional fishing grounds, thereby increasing attainment of available species. The industry cited several reasons for considering – and possibly implementing – these actions:

- provide economic value to the fishery;
- reduced regulatory discards (e.g., salmon troll discards);
- diversify fishing strategies;
- reduce fishing vessels' carbon footprints;
- meet market supply problems;
- provide more stable, year-round fishing;
- bring financial relief to the fishermen, communities, and infrastructures they support;
- provide better access to shelf rockfish species;
- disperse fishing effort targeting sablefish to avoid localized depletion of sablefish, particularly (in Cowcod Conservation Areas);
- meet fish size demands for market; and
- streamline enforcement issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Items 4 and 5 in Table 1 were completed under the 2021-2022 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures action.

**Table 1. List of Non-Trawl Area Management Proposals (from Informational Report 4)**

Item	Non-Trawl RCA Changes	Proposal	Comment
1	Fathom (fm) line adjustment	Support closure of 60-80 fathoms for 34° 27' N. lat. to 40°10' N. lat.	There is not an 80-fathom line in <a href="#">regulations</a> .
2	Fathom line adjustment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support moving the shoreward boundary from 30 fm to 40 fm north of 40°10' N. lat. to better access shelf rockfish and other species that are included in any increased trip limit proposals.</li> <li>2. Support moving the seaward boundary from 100 fm to 80 fm north of 40°10' N. lat. in attempt to access more of the midwater rockfish stocks.</li> </ol> <p>The resulting RCA boundaries would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From 40°10' N. lat. to 42° 00' N. lat.: 40 fm (shoreward) to 80 fm (seaward)</li> <li>• From 42° 00' N. lat. to 46°16' N. lat.: 40 fm (shoreward) to 80 fm (seaward)</li> </ul>	<p>There is not an 80-fathom line in <a href="#">regulations</a>.</p> <p>Item 1: Completed in 2021-2022 biennial process, though specific regulation for this area, between 46°16 N. lat. and 40°10' N. lat.: 30 to 40 fm fishing is only allowed with hook and line gear except bottom longline and dinglebar</p>
3	Proposed Analysis for Expansion of Non-trawl Open Access (OA) for Rockfish within CA	Support narrowing the RCA off California from 70 fathoms shoreward boundary to a seaward boundary of 100 fathoms statewide.	Proposed for OA
4	Improve Accuracy of the 40 fm Line for Open Access Fishermen off the San Mateo Coast (seaward of the Non-Trawl RCA boundary)	<p>Support adding two waypoints to the regulations to more accurately reflect the true 40 fm depth contour (seaward RCA boundary). The line between points #132 and #133 is a straight, 20-mile line that inadvertently excludes areas which, if drawn more correctly, would open up some fishing opportunities not allowed under the current regulations. Adding two waypoints would open a small portion of the area for OA fishermen. Keep points 132 and 133, but add:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 132-A: 37° 25' N. lat., 122° 38.66' W. long.; and</li> <li>2. 132-B: 37° 20.68' N. lat., 122° 36.79' W. long.</li> </ol>	<p>The GMT received this public request at the April 2019 meeting (<a href="#">Agenda Item B.1, Open Public Comment</a>).</p> <p>Completed under 2021-2022 biennial process</p>

Item	Non-Trawl RCA Changes	Proposal	Comment
5	New 100 fathom lines	Support <a href="#">California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)100 fathom line</a> . Preliminary Preferred Alternative under new management measures for 2021-2022 harvest specifications. Action may not be needed.	Completed under 2021-2022 biennial process
6	Cowcod Conservation Area (CCA) Changes	Support establishing Non-Trawl RCA lines at 100 and 150 fathoms within the western CCA. A 150-fathom line would allow commercial fixed gear access to important commercial species such as sablefish, thornyhead rockfish and blackgill rockfish outside of 150 fathoms.	Removed from Action per March 2021 Council guidance

## 1b: Salmon Troll Incidental Landings Limits

Under the current regulations, salmon troll fishermen are allowed to catch the open access (OA) trip limits of groundfish throughout the entire coast, but only when fishing outside of the non-trawl rockfish conservation area (RCA) and abiding by other Federal regulations (e.g., use of Vessel Monitoring Systems). However, the regulations summarized in the Code of Federal Regulations, Table 3 (South) to Part 660, Subpart F<sup>2</sup>, provides an exemption for salmon troll fishermen to retain lingcod and yellowtail rockfish while fishing in the non-trawl RCA, but only when fishing north of 40° 10' N. lat. The lingcod and yellowtail rockfish limits for salmon troll are lower than the OA limits and are based on ratios of rockfish to landed salmon.

### Draft Purpose and Need

The purpose for considering changing groundfish retention in the salmon troll fishery south of 40° 10' N. lat. is due, in part, to several species of rockfish being rebuilt, thereby increasing incidental take while salmon fishing. Changing the retention limits would provide additional economic benefits for salmon trollers who are trying to remain viable during a series of salmon seasons that have been limited due to poor returns. Increased retention limits of yellowtail and lingcod (and other midwater rockfish species), both when fishing inside and outside of the non-trawl RCA, will increase bycatch utilization and decrease regulatory discards. The change is needed due to retention limits that were established when several rockfish species were listed as overfished. Adjusting limits based on current, updated stock assessments that show these species are no longer overfished will provide benefits to the troll fishery and offset vessel operational costs while reducing wastage of fish.

**Table 2. Draft Proposal to expand species that may be retained incidentally while salmon troll fishing.**

<b>Groundfish Retention in the Salmon Troll Fishery</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
South of 40° 10' N. lat.	Allow retention of incidental catches of midwater rockfishes (i.e., yellowtail, chilipepper, vermilion, canary, widow, and bocaccio) in the non-trawl RCA throughout the entire coast; focus south of 40° 10' N. lat.; recommend that 50% of each salmon landing be rockfish.

## Implement San Francisco Community Fishing Association/Platt EFP Regulations

This Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP), also referred to as the Emley/Platt EFP, was first issued to open access fishermen in 2013. The following text is from the EFP as proposed for renewal during the November 2019 Council meeting ([Agenda Item H.5 Attachment 5, November 2019](#)):

West Coast fisheries have been increasingly restricted in state and federal waters over the last decade to reduce impacts from fishing. Yet, demand remains for fresh, local seafood. To harvest healthy and abundant fish stocks with less impact, conservation engineering and gear experimentation is needed. The purpose of the EFP is to test the potential for a new commercial jig gear configuration to harvest

<sup>2</sup> [Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas and Trip Limits for Open Access Gears South of 40°10' N. Lat](#)

currently underutilized rockfish species (yellowtail) while avoiding overfished stocks to enhance optimum yield in the mixed stock West Coast groundfish fishery.

The EFP allows the commercial use of midwater jig gear within the Non-trawl RCA in areas off California under 100 percent observer coverage. The long-term goal is to allow commercial jig fishing with this gear off the entire West Coast, including in the Non-trawl RCAs, by the Open Access and Limited Entry fixed gear participants. If successful, this gear could also be used by the nearshore fleet to avoid species of concern and could create a fishery that would fill out the portfolios of those who make up the bulk of the fishermen in the West Coast's coastal communities

Renewal of this EFP is expected to be considered for final approval at the June 2020 Council meeting for the 2021-2022 biennial management cycle. If approved and prosecuted in the next management cycle, this EFP will have been providing data and information on this type of fixed gear for 10 years by the end of 2022.