

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON 2021 GROUND FISH HARVEST IN CALIFORNIA

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) provides the following informational report on harvest of select groundfish species for 2021. This report represents the first update on the status of the 2021 fishing season relative to Annual Catch Limits (ACLs), Harvest Guidelines (HGs), sector allocations, and Annual Catch Targets (ACTs) in effect for the 2021-22 biennium.

In this report, catch includes estimates of total mortality from the recreational sector, and landings from the commercial non-trawl sector without discard mortality. The 2021 combined recreational and commercial catches to date compared to federally designated harvest specifications (Table 1) are within allowable levels.

Monthly recreational catch (Table 2) data are from RecFIN through April 2021 and reflect activity across all recreational management areas for January through April. Season openers in California for boat-based fishing occurred on March 1 south of Pt. Conception (34° 27' N. lat.), April 1 south of Pt. Arena (38° 57.5' N. lat.) and May 1 south of the OR/CA border. There are new regulatory changes for 2021 within the ten-fish aggregate Rockfish, Cabezon, and Greenling bag limit. These changes include removal of the sub-bag limits for cabezon, black rockfish, and canary rockfish and implementation of a five-fish sub-bag limit for vermilion rockfish. Preliminary indications are that catch is in line with 2020 levels, and there are no discernable trends this early in the season. Several management areas also experienced an increase in allowable fishing depth in 2021.

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS) staff continue to maintain safety protocols, including keeping a safe distance from subject anglers and passers-by. Similar to 2020, there have been some deficiencies in data collected by CRFS in the early months of 2021, including the absence of any party-charter onboard data, length data, and some species composition data. As conditions improve, CDFW expects its sampling activities to continue on the path back to normal.

Commercial landings data (Table 3) are from PacFIN, through June 16, 2021. Data are preliminary and subject to change. Beginning in 2021, fishing during Period 2 (March-April) south of 40° 10' N. lat. reopened for the first time to commercial groundfish fishing for lingcod, shelf rockfish stocks (i.e., minor shelf complex, canary, bocaccio, widow, and chilipepper rockfishes), and nearshore stocks (i.e., black rockfish, nearshore rockfish complex, CA scorpionfish, cabezon, and kelp greenling) since 2003. Activity during this period for the shelf stocks was slightly higher than expected. Though year-to-date commercial landings of shelf stocks are tracking higher than previous years, these landings are projected to be within limits. Landings from the commercial nearshore fleet during Period 2 were lower than anticipated.

CDFW will provide additional catch updates throughout 2021, including catch information on new species of interest.

Table 1. Estimated take (mt) of select groundfish species in California for 2021 compared to the harvest limits for 2021.

Stock/Stock Complex ¹	Reference Point	Recreational Mortality (mt)	Commercial Landings (mt)	Total (mt)	Tracking Limits (mt)	Percent Attainment
Yelloweye rockfish	ACT (CA rec)	0.1	See Table 3	0.1	8.9	1.5%
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat.	HG (CA Share) ^a	0.4	3.1	3.5	36.2	9.8%
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL	21.8	21.8	43.5	1016.0	4.3%
Black rockfish	ACL	2.6	15.3	17.9	348.0	5.2%
Cabezon	ACL	4.4	9.0	13.4	210.0	6.4%
California scorpionfish	ACL	24.4	0.5	24.9	291.0	8.6%
Kelp greenling	^b	0.6	1.2	1.8	92.5	2.0%
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	1.1	6.9	8.0	2799.8	0.3%
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	16.3	13.5	29.8	599.0	5.0%
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	-	1.1	1.1	571.4	0.2%
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL	-	2.2	2.2	6050.0	0.0%
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^c	Non-Trawl Allocation	37.8	40.6	78.5	1163.0	6.7%
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Shelf Complex	25.9	29.6	55.5	209.5	26.5%
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	17.0	16.5	33.5	1036.4	3.2%
Canary rockfish	HG (rec)	3.7	See Table 3	3.7	116.8	3.2%
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.5	13.7	14.2	565.1	2.5%
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation (rec)	0.9	See Table 3	0.9	16.0	5.8%
Widow rockfish	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.9	0.9	1302.9	0.1%
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	-	1.8	1.8	290.3	0.6%
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^d	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	2.0	2.0	47.9	4.1%
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^e	HG	-	12.2	12.2	176.6	6.9%
Darkblotched rockfish	ACL	-	0.3	0.3	882.0	0.0%
Shortbelly rockfish	^f	-	0.0	0.0	NA	-

Note: 0.0 indicates trace take; a dash (-) indicates no take.

a/ The nearshore complex north of 40°10' N lat. HG is 79 mt. The CA share of the HG is 36.2 mt.

b/ Reference point denotes the CA kelp greenling contribution to the Other Fish complex ACL.

c/ Includes catch of vermilion rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat.

d/ Does not include blackgill rockfish landings south of 40°10' N. lat. due to a separate harvest limit from the slope rockfish complex south.

e/ Blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. commercial landings include both trawl and non-trawl sectors.

f/ Shortbelly rockfish is an ecosystem component species and does not have a harvest limit

¹ **Nearshore rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.** = black-and-yellow, China, gopher, grass, kelp, blue, brown, calico, copper, olive, quillback, and treefish

Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. = black-and-yellow, China, gopher, grass, kelp, blue, brown, calico, copper, olive, quillback, and treefish

Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat. = bocaccio, bronzespotted, chameleon, chilipepper, cowcod flag, freckled, greenblotched, greenspotted, greenstriped, halfbanded, harlequin, honeycomb, Mexican, pink, pinkrose, pygmy, redstripe, rosethorn, rosy, shortbelly, silvergrey, speckled, squarespot, starry, stripetail, swordspine, tiger, vermilion

Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. = bronzespotted, chameleon, flag, freckled, greenblotched, greenspotted, greenstriped, halfbanded, harlequin, honeycomb, Mexican, pink,

pinkrose, pygmy, redstripe, rosethorn, rosy, shortbelly, silvergrey, speckled, squarespot, starry, stripetail, swordspine, tiger, vermilion, yellowtail

Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat. = aurora, bank, blackgill, darkblotched, redbanded, roughey, sharpchin, shortraker, splitnose, yellowmouth

Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. = aurora, bank, blackgill, darkblotched, POP, redbanded, roughey, sharpchin, shortraker, splitnose, yellowmouth

Table 2. Estimated catch (mt) of select groundfish species in the California recreational sector by month in 2021.

Stock/Stock Complex ⁱ	January	February	March	April	Total
Yelloweye rockfish	-	-	-	0.1	0.1
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.2	0.4	2.4	18.8	21.8
Black rockfish	0.3	0.2	0.9	1.3	2.6
Cabezon	0.0	3.3	0.4	0.7	4.4
California scorpionfish	4.9	5.7	5.0	8.8	24.4
Kelp greenling	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.6
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	0.6	0.6	1.1
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.2	2.9	13.2	16.3
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^a	0.0	0.0	7.3	30.4	37.8
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.0	5.7	20.1	25.9
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	4.6	12.4	17.0
Canary rockfish	-	-	0.0	3.7	3.7
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	-	0.3	0.2	0.5
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	0.3	0.6	0.9
Widow rockfish	-	-	-	0.0	0.0
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^b	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-
Darkblotched rockfish	-	-	-	-	-
Shortbelly rockfish	-	-	-	-	-

Note: 0.0 indicates trace mortality; a dash (-) indicates no mortality.

1/ See rockfish stock complex definitions under Table 1.

a/ Includes catch of vermilion rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat.

b/ Does not include catch of blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. due to a separate harvest limit from the slope rockfish complex south.

Table 3. Estimated landings (mt) of select groundfish species in the California commercial non-trawl fixed gear limited entry and open access sectors by month in 2021.

Stock/Stock Complex¹	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total
Yelloweye rockfish	-	-	-		0.0	-	0.0
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.3	0.3	3.1
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	1.5	3.7	4.3	4.5	4.0	3.7	21.8
Black rockfish	0.0	0.6	2.5	4.3	4.8	3.2	15.3
Cabezon	0.5	1.7	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.5	9.0
California scorpionfish	-	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.5
Kelp greenling	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	1.2
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.8	1.8	2.2	1.4	0.8	6.9
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.7	2.5	3.0	2.9	2.2	2.3	13.5
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	1.1
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.1	2.2
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^a	6.9	7.6	8.1	6.2	6.8	5.1	40.6
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	5.5	5.9	6.4	3.4	4.7	3.6	29.3
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	1.7	2.5	5.0	1.9	3.1	2.3	16.5
Canary rockfish	0.6	1.5	2.8	2.1	1.4	1.1	9.6
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	1.3	2.5	3.6	1.6	3.3	1.4	13.7
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Widow rockfish	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.9
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.5	1.8
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^b	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	2.0
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^c	0.8	2.0	2.1	3.1	2.5	1.7	12.2
Darkblotched rockfish	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3
Shortbelly rockfish	-	-	0.0	-	-	-	0.0

Note: Landing estimates do not include discard mortality. 0.0 indicates trace landings; a dash (-) indicates no landings.

1/ See rockfish stock complex definitions under Table 1.

a/ Includes landings of vermilion rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat.

b/ Does not include landings of blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. due to a separate harvest limit from the slope rockfish complex south.

c/ Blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. landings include both trawl and non-trawl sectors.