

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 second 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 June 2021 and reflect activity across all recreational management areas for January through June. 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. Several management areas also experienced an increase in allowable fishing depth in 2021. Catch is in line with 2020 levels.

During the first half of 2021, California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS) staff continued to maintain COVID-19 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. Starting on July 16, CRFS samplers resumed normal pre-COVID-19 sampling protocols. These changes in sampling protocol will be reflected in subsequent catch updates.

Commercial landings data (Table 3) are from PacFIN, through August 11, 2021. Data are preliminary and subject to change. Year-to-date landings are showing an increase in commercial landings of shelf rockfish stocks (i.e., minor shelf complex, canary, bocaccio, widow, and chilipepper rockfishes), nearshore stocks (i.e., black rockfish, nearshore rockfish complex, CA scorpionfish, cabezon, and kelp greenling), and lingcod from previous years (2017-2020). Deepwater stocks (i.e., sablefish, thornyheads, and slope rockfish) are trending similar to 2020.

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	Reference Point	Recreational Mortality (mt)	Commercial Landings (mt)	Total (mt)	Tracking Limits (mt)	Percent Attainment
Yelloweye rockfish	ACT (CA rec)	0.5	See Table 3	0.5	8.9	5.5%
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat.	HG (CA Share) ^a	2.6	4.3	6.9	36.2	19.1%
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL	98.0	34.5	132.5	1016.0	13.0%
Black rockfish	ACL	45.7	24.9	70.5	348.0	20.3%
Cabezon	ACL	9.7	14.4	24.1	210.0	11.5%
California scorpionfish	ACL	69.5	0.7	70.2	291.0	24.1%
Kelp greenling	^b	1.2	1.6	2.8	92.5	3.1%
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	7.5	9.1	16.7	2799.8	0.6%
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	52.5	19.2	71.7	599.0	12.0%
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.6	1.7	2.3	571.4	0.4%
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL	0.1	4.2	4.3	6050.0	0.1%
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^c	Non-Trawl Allocation	100.1	60.9	160.9	1163.0	13.8%
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	71.4	42.6	114.0	209.5	54.4%
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	29.1	22.4	51.6	1036.4	5.0%
Canary rockfish	HG (rec)	15.6	See Table 3	15.6	116.8	13.4%
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.7	20.9	21.6	565.1	3.8%
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACT (rec)	3.1	See Table 3	3.1	16.0	19.1%
Widow rockfish	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.5	2.0	2.5	1302.9	0.2%
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	-	2.1	2.1	290.3	0.7%
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^d	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	2.9	2.9	47.9	6.0%
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^e	HG	-	15.3	15.3	176.6	8.7%
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 of 40°10' N. lat.

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.

¹Nearshore 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, silverygrey, 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, silverygrey, 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 California recreational sector by month in 2021.

Stock/Stock Complex ¹	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total
Yelloweye rockfish	-	-	-	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.5
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4	1.7	2.6
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.2	0.4	2.4	18.8	26.0	50.2	98.0
Black rockfish	0.3	0.2	0.9	1.3	12.7	30.4	45.7
Cabezon	0.0	3.3	0.4	0.7	2.0	3.3	9.7
California scorpionfish	4.9	5.7	5.0	8.8	15.3	29.7	69.5
Kelp greenling	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	1.2
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	0.6	0.6	2.5	3.9	7.5
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.2	2.9	13.2	16.8	19.4	52.5
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	0.2	0.5	0.6
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	0.0	0.1	0.1
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^a	0.0	0.0	7.3	30.4	32.3	30.0	100.1
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.0	5.7	20.1	24.2	21.3	71.4
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	4.6	12.4	6.1	6.0	29.1
Canary rockfish	-	-	0.0	3.7	4.3	7.6	15.6
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	-	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.7
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	0.3	0.6	2.0	0.1	3.1
Widow rockfish	-	-	-	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.5
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 of 40°10' N. lat.

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

Stock/Stock Complex ¹	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	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	1.0	0.4	0.2	4.3
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	1.5	3.7	4.3	4.5	4.0	6.9	7.8	1.7	34.5
Black rockfish	0.0	0.6	2.5	4.3	4.8	6.0	6.0	0.8	24.9
Cabezon	0.5	1.7	1.9	1.7	1.8	3.6	2.7	0.6	14.4
California scorpionfish	-	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.7
Kelp greenling	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0	1.6
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.8	1.8	2.2	1.4	1.8	0.9	0.3	9.1
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.7	2.5	3.0	2.9	2.2	4.2	2.6	1.3	19.2
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.1	1.7
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.9	0.5	4.2
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^a	6.9	7.6	8.1	6.2	6.8	12.1	11.8	1.3	60.9
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	5.5	5.9	6.4	3.4	4.7	8.0	8.0	0.8	42.6
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	1.7	2.5	5.0	1.9	3.1	3.6	4.0	0.6	22.4
Canary rockfish	0.6	1.5	2.7	2.0	1.4	2.8	2.5	0.5	14.0
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	1.3	2.5	3.6	1.6	3.3	3.5	4.5	0.6	20.9
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	-	-	0.0
Widow rockfish	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.7	0.2	2.0
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.7	1.0	0.1	-	2.1
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^b	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.2	2.9
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^c	0.8	2.0	2.1	3.1	2.4	2.4	1.8	0.6	15.3
Darkblotched rockfish	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Shortbelly rockfish	-	-	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	0.0

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 of 40°10' N. lat.

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