

NON-TRAWL AREA MANAGEMENT- RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES

Agenda Item F.6

April 2022

Overview of Presentation



BACKGROUND AND INFO ON AREA
BASED MANAGEMENT MEASURES



PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF
EACH ALTERNATIVE



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Briefing Book Items

- Attachment 1 (Electronic Only): Non-Trawl Sector Management Measures
- CDFW Report 1: Propose Protection Areas within the Cowcod Conservation Areas
- Supplemental ODFW Report 1: Heceta Bank West Proposal
- Supplemental ODFW Report 2: Nehalem Bank Long-Term Monitoring Sites
- Supplemental HC Report 1
- Supplemental GMT Report 1
- Supplemental GAP Report 1
- Supplemental EC Report 1
- Public Comment

History of Action

- Nov. 2019- Council directed GAP to develop scope and P&N
- April 2021: Initiated scoping process and developed draft P&N
- Nov. 2021: Refined P&N and ROA
 - CCA and changes off WA were included into package

New Proposals from CDFW and ODFW

Council Action

- 1. Review and potentially revise the range of alternatives, as appropriate.**
- 2. Provide guidance on the development of analyses and schedule, as needed.**

Purpose and Need

The purpose of these proposed actions is to provide access to additional areas that are currently closed to groundfish fishing inside the Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) and Cowcod Conservation Area (CCA).

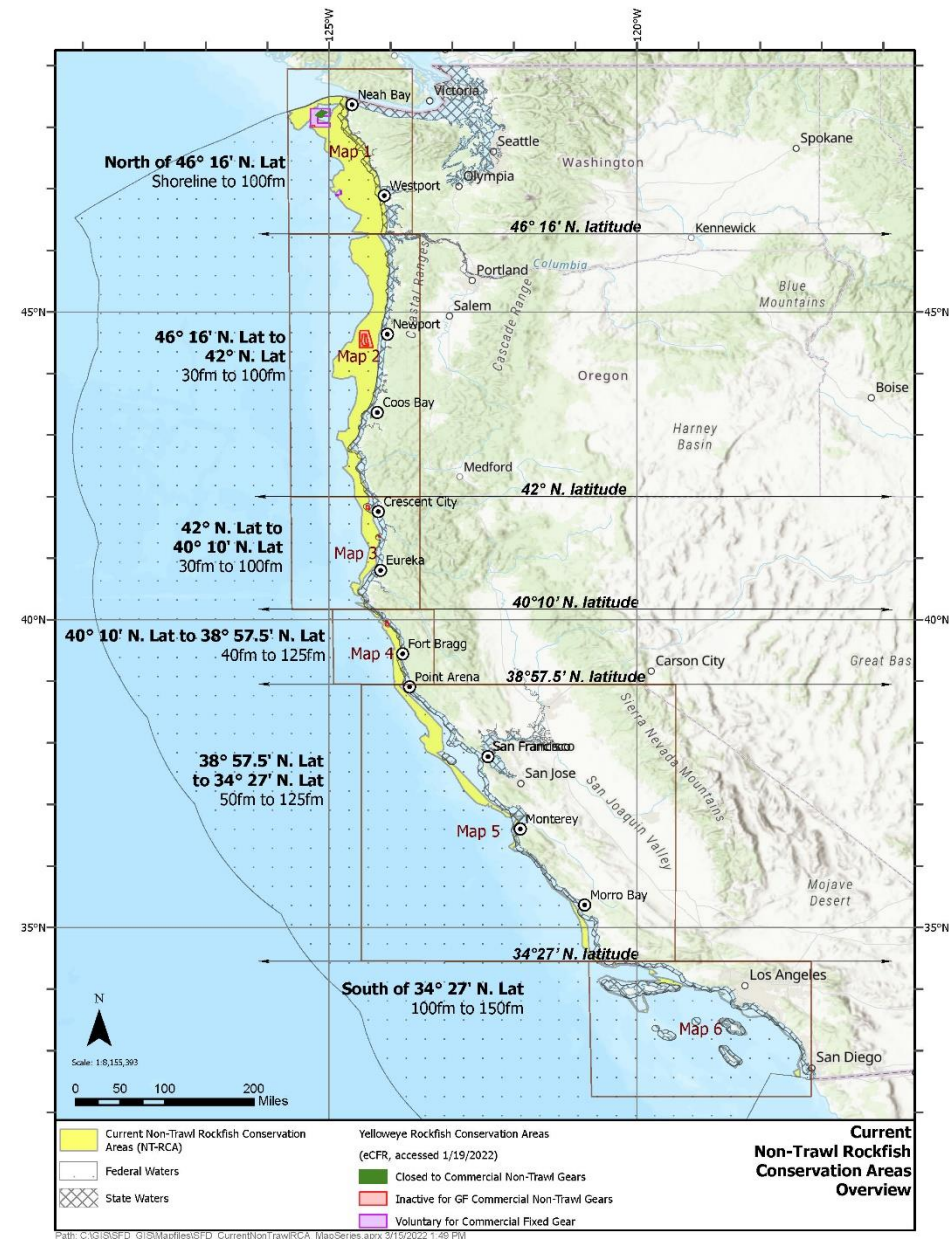
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The additional access might be provided by actions such as 1) moving and/or modifying the existing Non-Trawl RCA and/or CCA boundaries, and/or 2) allowing groundfish fishing inside the Non-Trawl RCA and/or CCA using only select gears that minimize bottom contact.

Non-Trawl RCA

- Established in 2003 to protect OFS
- All but yelloweye rebuilt
- Prohibits non-trawl vessels from targeting healthy shelf stocks
- Boundaries amended several times through GF Specifications

See pg. 7, Attachment 1



Cowcod Conservation Area

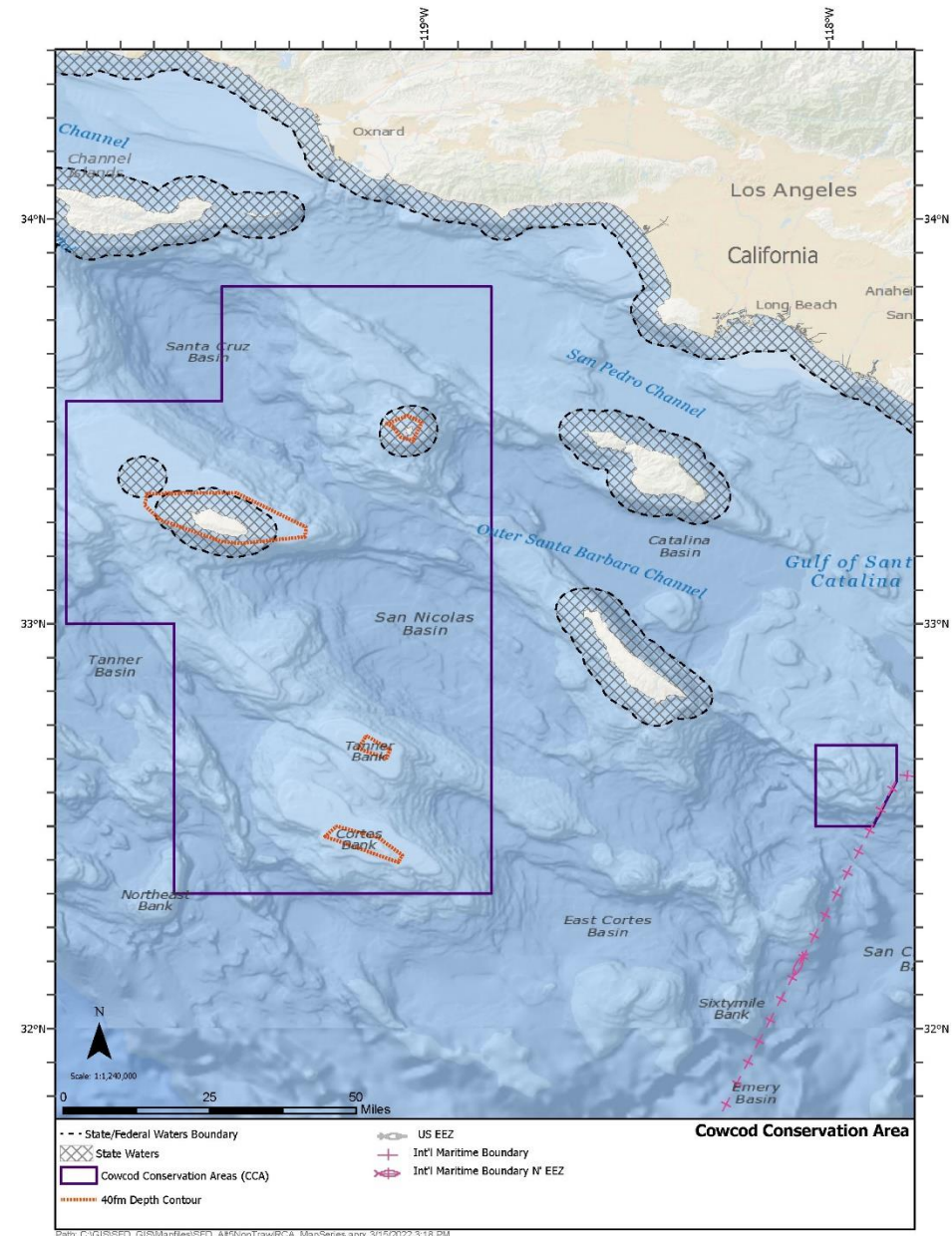
Established in 2001 to protect cowcod

- Rebuilt in 2019

Applies to recreational and commercial vessels

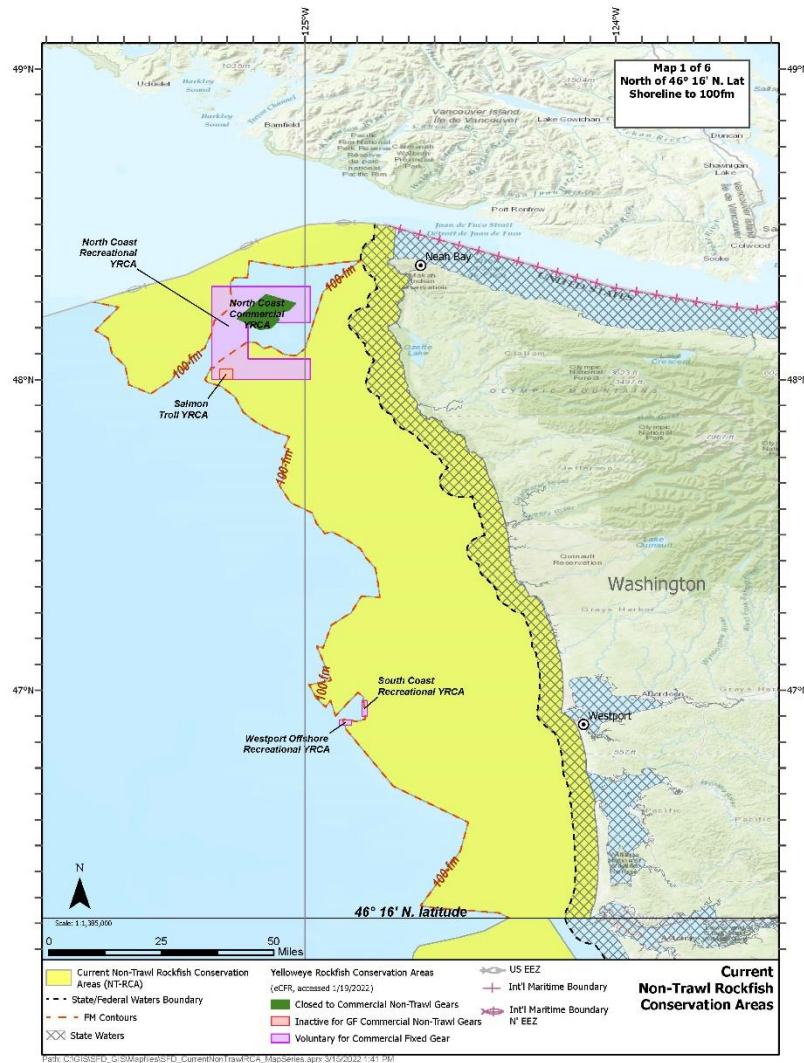
Vessels prohibited from fishing outside of 40 fathoms around islands (with some exceptions)

See pg. 9, Attachment 1



Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Areas (YRCAs)

- First developed in 2003
- Only 1 currently active for non-trawl: North Coast Commercial YRCA
- Some voluntary avoidance for FG off WA
- Most not active for non-trawl gears



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Block Area Closures

Background

- Currently available only for trawl gears
- Preseason/Inseason
- Sector/gear/duration specific

Issues

- Lack of inseason data
 - Fish tickets- only retained species
 - Low observer coverage
 - Logbooks- starting in 2023

Questions to Consider

- Does the Council want to develop BACs coastwide for non-trawl gears?
 - Motion only specified Alts 1-4

Habitat and Essential Fish Habitat Conservation Areas (EFHCAs)

- EFHCAs designed to protect or mitigate habitat impact
- Two types of EFHCAs:
 - Bottom trawl
 - Bottom contact
- Prohibits all gears and fisheries - federal and non-federal

Considerations for New Area Restrictions

- Areas exposed by NT RCA and CCA adjustments vary along coast
- Articulate need for action in each area, the proposed protections, and to which fisheries they would apply.
- Need to consider enforceability, impact to current groundfish operations, etc.
- Examine FMP to decide on mechanism to consider EFHCAs, CCAs and other closure options (i.e., ODFW, CDFW proposals, YRCAs, NT RCA)
- Example regarding current Council motion: Add BC GF EFHCA layer on top of existing BT EFHCA
 - Likely an FMP amendment using interim review under habitat framework process

Alt. 1: OA HKL gear in NT RCA

OA vessels could fish in NT RCA b/t 34 27 and 46 16 with select HKL gear

- Dinglebar, longline, vertical HKL gear anchored to bottom prohibited
- Fish inside and outside NT RCA
- Only approved gear on board

Impacts

- Increased attainments of midwater rockfish → positive socio-economic benefits
- Likely limited impacts to species of concern or habitat
- Potential risk to seabirds (bait)
- Uncertainty related to gear configurations

Alt. 2: LEFG HKL gear in NT RCA

LEFG vessels could fish in NT RCA b/t 34 27 and 46 16 with select HKL gear up to LEFG limits

- Dinglebar, longline, vertical HKL gear anchored to bottom prohibited
- Fish inside and outside NT RCA
- Only approved gear on board

Impacts

- Increased attainments of midwater rockfish → positive socio-economic benefits
- Likely limited impacts to species of concern or habitat
- Potential risk to seabirds (bait)
- Uncertainty related to gear configurations

Fishery Sector Overview

Alternative
1

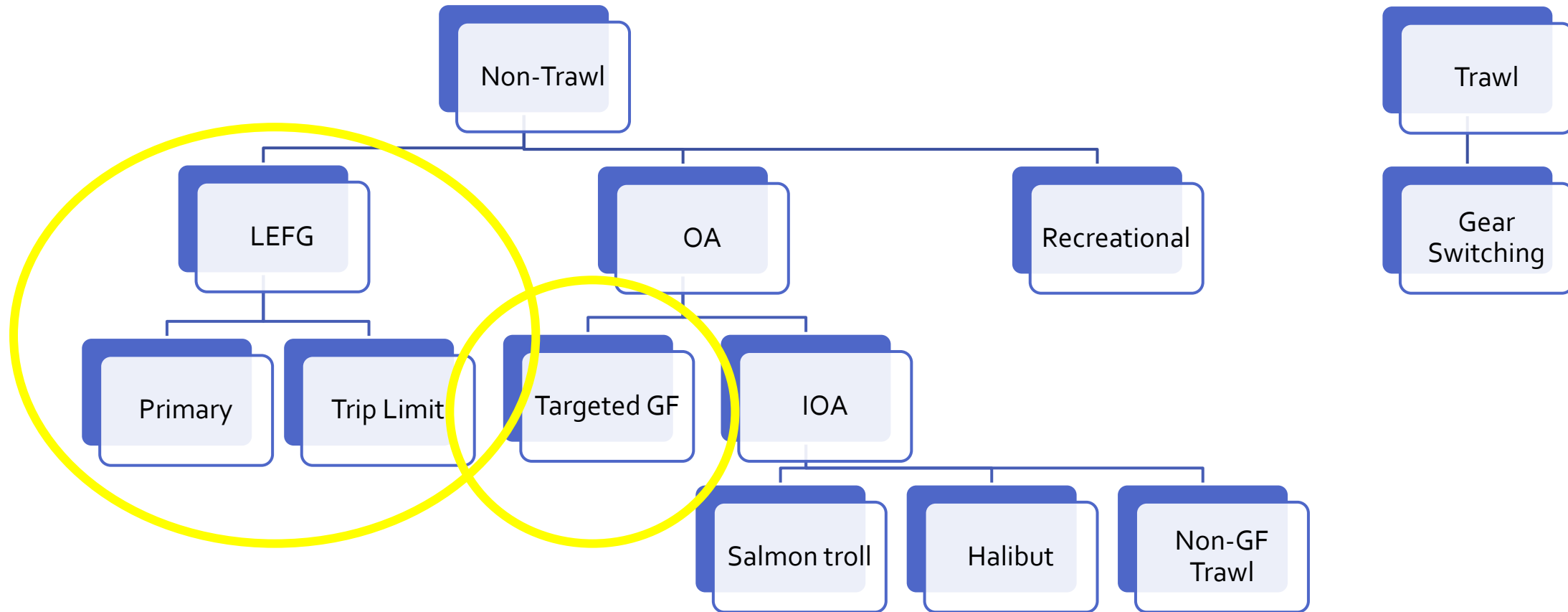
Alternative
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Alternative
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Alternative
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Alternative
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Alternative
6



NT RCA vs. SPEX Mgmt Measures

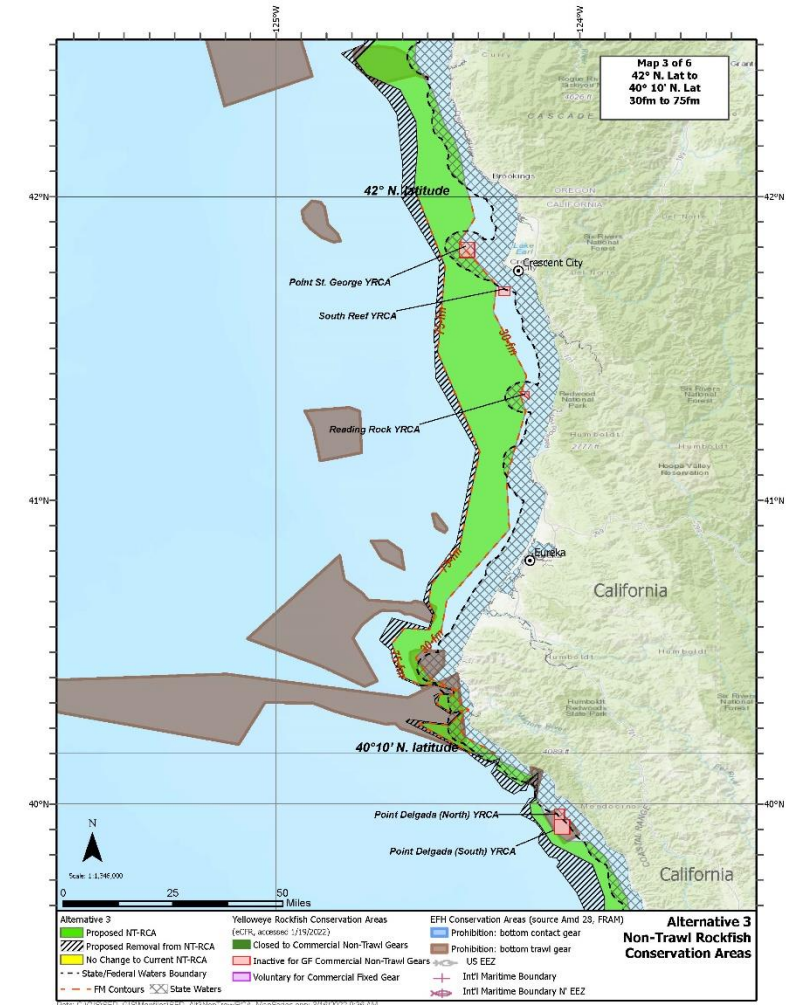
Item	23-24 SPEX	NMFS 12E Report	NT RCA (Alt 1 & 2)
Scope	46° 16' to US/Mex border	46° 16' to US/Mex border	46° 16' to 34° 27'
Sectors	OA, LEFG, IFQ GS	OA, LEFG	OA, LEFG
Limits	Can fish up to OA limits	Can fish up to OA limits	Can fish up to LEFG limits (Alt 2)
Gears	Non bottom contact HKL	EFP specified gears	Non bottom contact HKL
Bait	Natural and artificial	Artificial only	Natural and artificial

Questions to Consider for Alt 1 and 2

- Extend scope to US/Mexico border similar to 12e proposal for 2023-2024 ?
- If NMFS 12e proposal is selected for 2023-24, then analysis for PPA would take that into account (i.e. Alt 1 & 2 would add consideration of natural bait, expand H&L gear avail for use).
- For Alternative 2, does the Council want to allow IFQ gear switching vessels to utilize the proposed gear types in the NT_RCA?

Alt. 3: Move seaward boundary from 100 fm to 75 fm from 34 27 N. lat. to 46 16 N. lat.

- All gear permitted in 75-100 fm
- Open 2,453 sq. mi. to fishing (all non-trawl gears)
- Likely to increase attainment of non-trawl allocations
- Potentially higher impacts to yelloweye
- Increased risk compared to No Action/Alt 1/Alt 2 to seabirds and whales
- Increased risk to habitat
 - Suboption 1: Change BT EFHCAs to bottom contact GF EFHCAs
 - 272 sq. mi. of BT EFHCA opened
 - 138 sq. mi. of hard substrate exposed



Fishery Sector Overview

Alternative
1

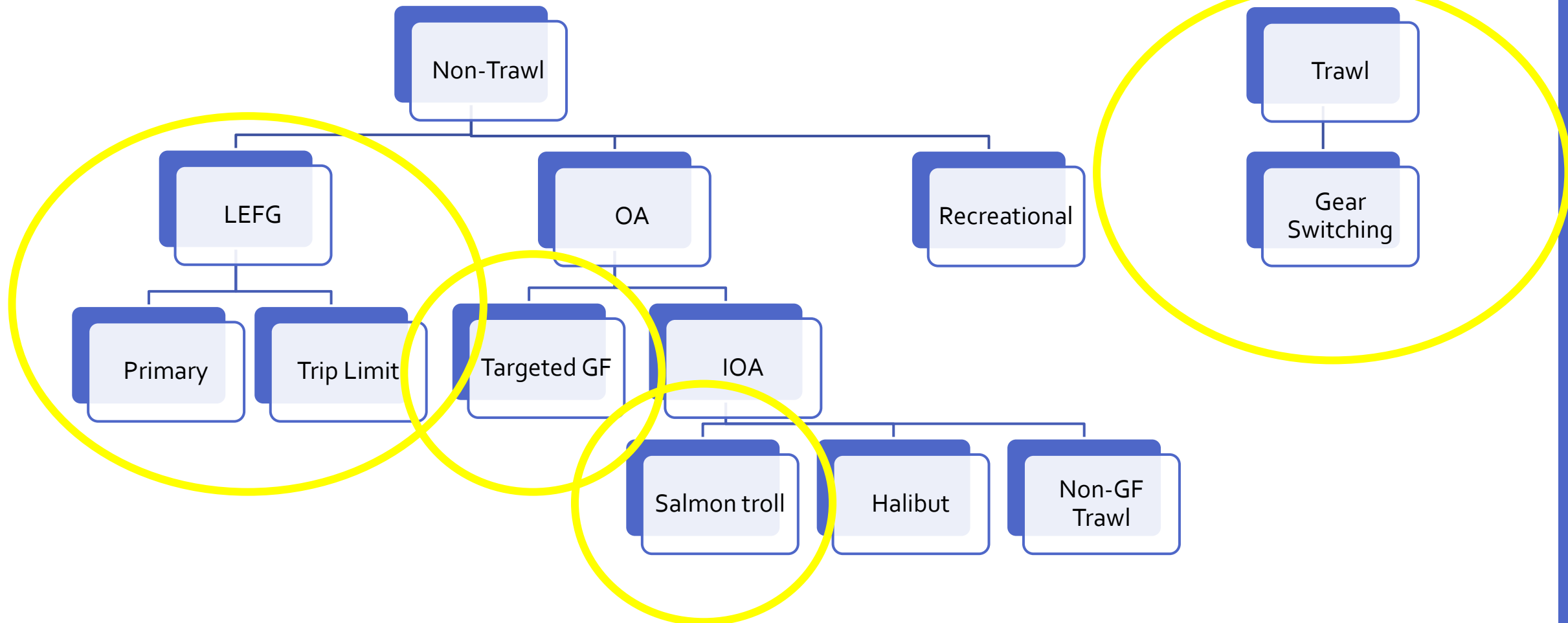
Alternative
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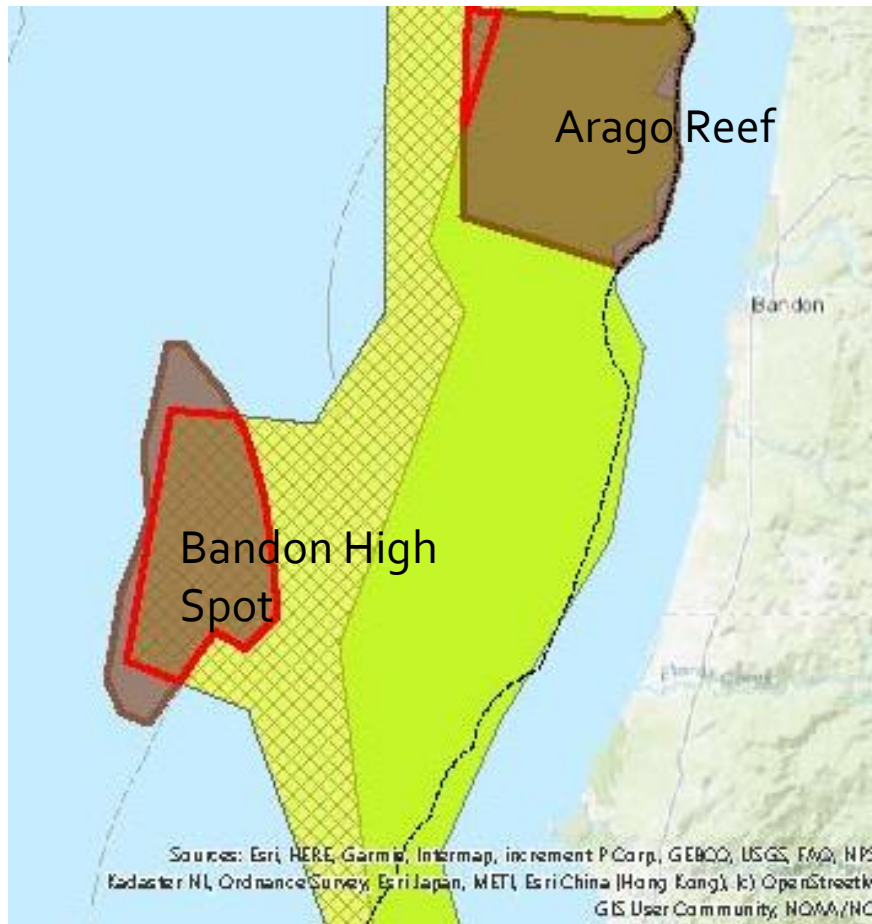
Alternative
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Questions to Consider for Alt 3

- Does the Council want to consider suboption 1 for all EFCHAs exposed through removal NT_RCA?
 - To what extent should a bottom trawl EFHCA also be closed to groundfish bottom contact gears (i.e., only the portion exposed or the entire area outside the NT_RCA)?
- Does the Council want to include halibut fisheries in this alternative?

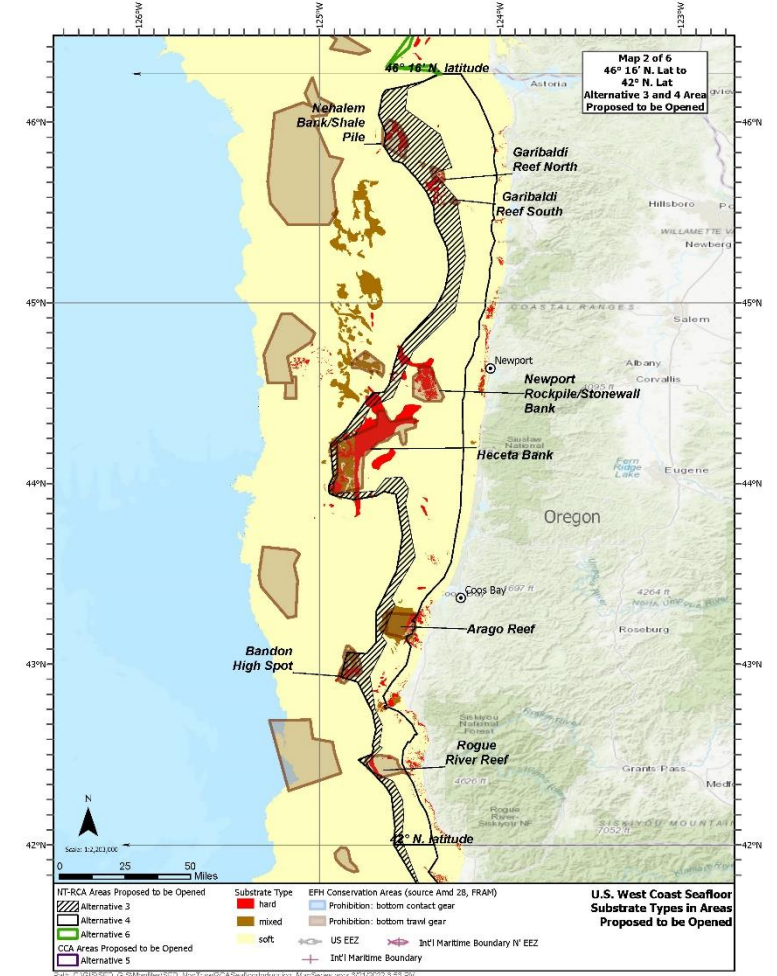
Council Option on EFHCAs



- Council added option to change designation of BT EFHCAs to BC GF EFHCAs (New type)
- Some bottom trawl EFHCAs are already exposed to groundfish bottom contact gears
- Changing designation can affect state-managed fisheries

Alt. 4: Remove the NT RCA from 34 27 to 46 16 N. lat.

- Open 8,764 sq. mi. to fishing (all non-trawl gears)
- Likely to increase attainment of non-trawl allocations
 - Salmon troll vessels no longer restricted to RCA limits within latitudes-only OA limits
- Potentially higher impacts to yelloweye, copper, quillback
- Increased risk compared to other alternatives to seabirds and whales
- Increased risk to habitat
 - Suboption 1: Change BT EFHCAs to bottom contact GF EFHCAs
 - 991 sq. mi. of BT EFHCA opened
 - 518 sq. mi. of hard substrate exposed



Fishery Sector Overview

Alternative
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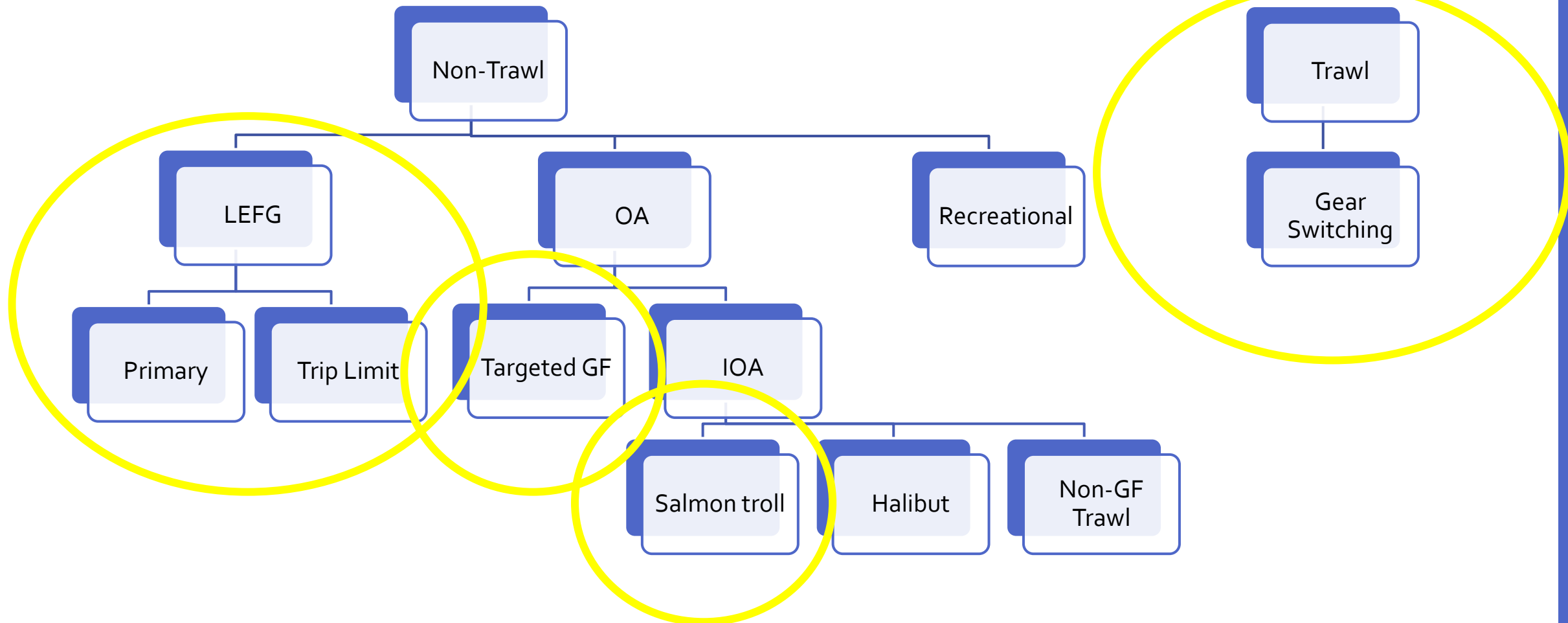
Alternative
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Alternative
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Alternative
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Alternative
6



Questions to Consider for Alt 4

- Does the Council want to consider suboption 1 for all EFCHAs exposed by removal of NT RCA?
 - To what extent should a bottom trawl EFHCA also be closed to groundfish bottom contact gears (i.e., only the portion exposed or the entire area)?
- Does the Council want to include halibut fisheries in this alternative?

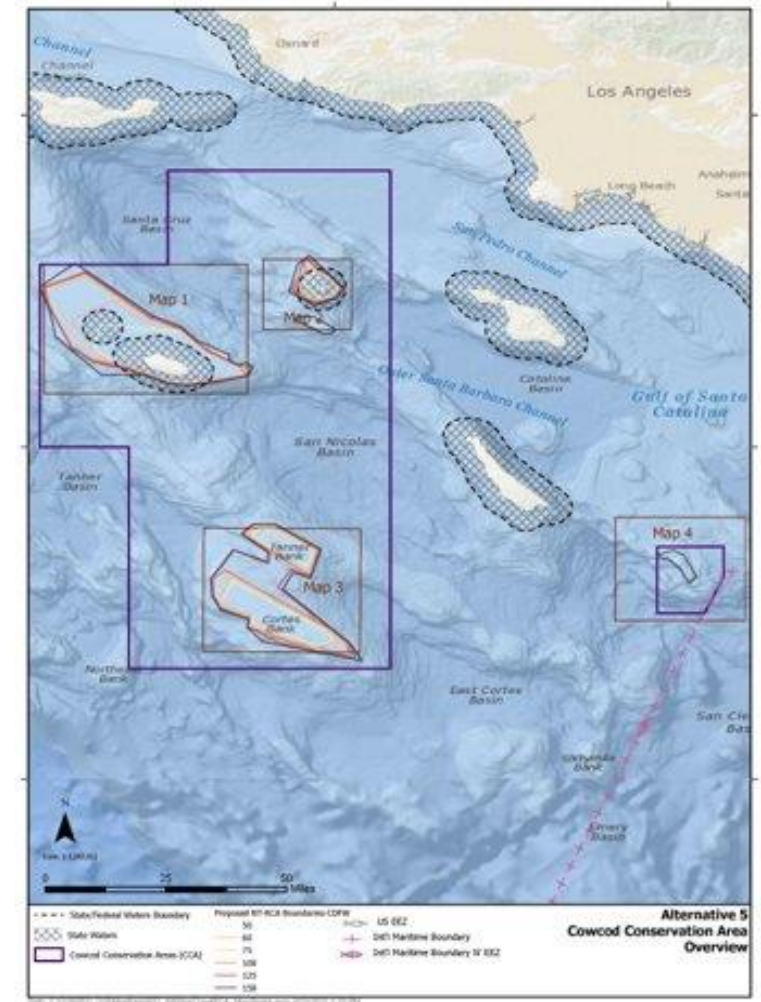
Alt 5- Remove Cowcod Conservation Area

Fishing restrictions- Commercial and Recreational

- Current NT RCA boundary: 40 fm
- New potential lines at 50,60,75,100,150 fm- yet to be identified

Impacts

- Increase attainments → economic benefits
- Uncertainty related to GF bycatch impacts
- Habitat impacts
 - Majority of CCA is BT EFHCA
 - 307 sq. mi. of hard substrate exposed



Fishery Sector Overview

Alternative
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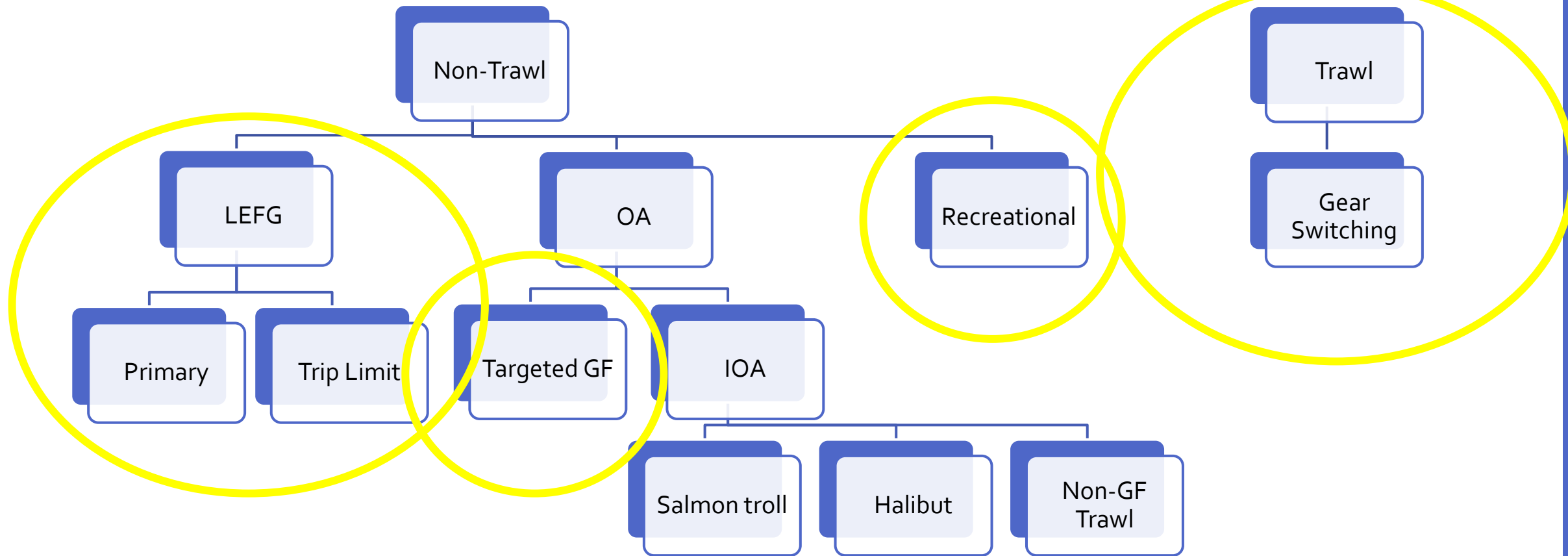
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Questions to Consider for Alt 5

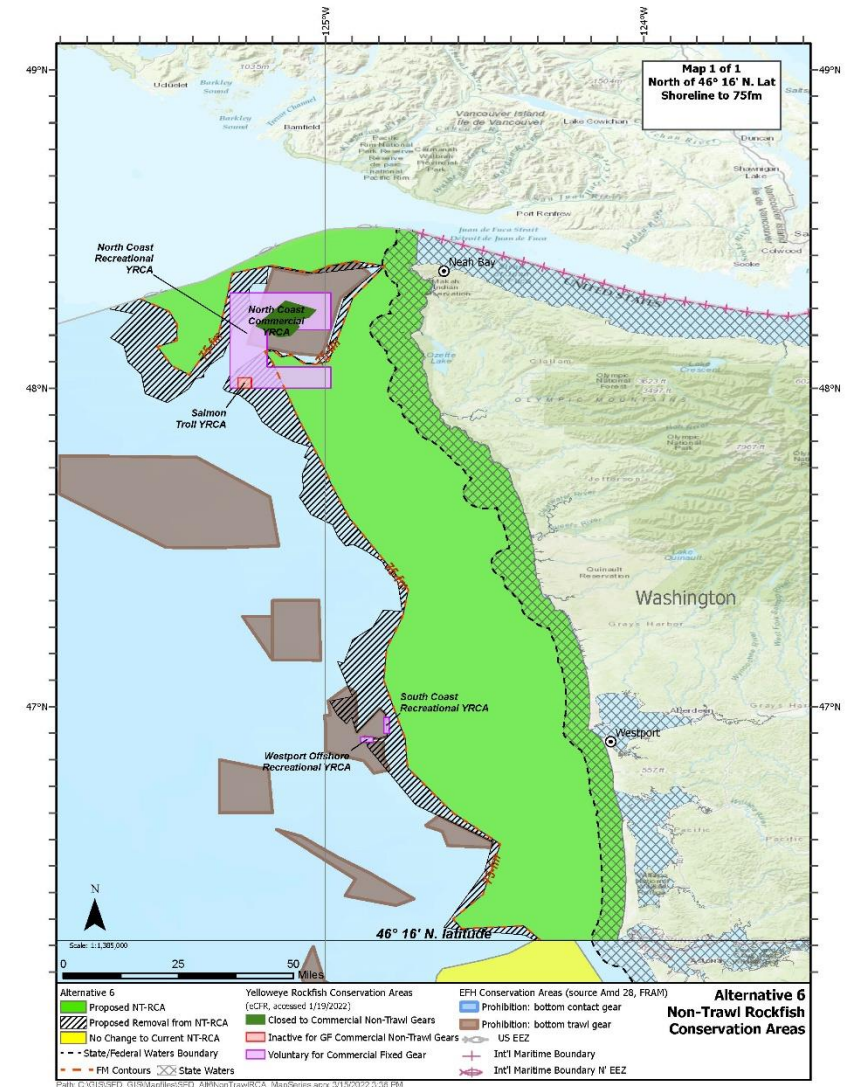
- What NT_RCA lines would be recommended to be used if the CCA were repealed?
- Does the Council want to consider developing BACs south of 34° 27' N. lat that could be applied within the current bounds of the CCA?
- If new area restrictions are added along with a repeal of the CCA, what fisheries would be restricted from any new closed areas as proposed in the F.6.a CDFW Report 1 and does the action meet the purpose and need developed by the Council?

Alt. 6: Change seaward boundary off WA for pot gear only

Open limited areas seaward of the 75 fm (yet to be identified)

Preliminary impact analysis using 75 fm boundary

- Open 715 sq. mi. to pot gear
- Economic benefits through access to larger sablefish → higher price per pound
- Likely little yelloweye impact with pot gear (Table 13)
- Potential habitat impacts
 - 2/3 EFHCAs already primarily exposed to pot gear
 - Grays Canyon higher exposure
- Potential whale risks
- Further investigation needed on sector conflicts



Fishery Sector Overview

Alternative
1

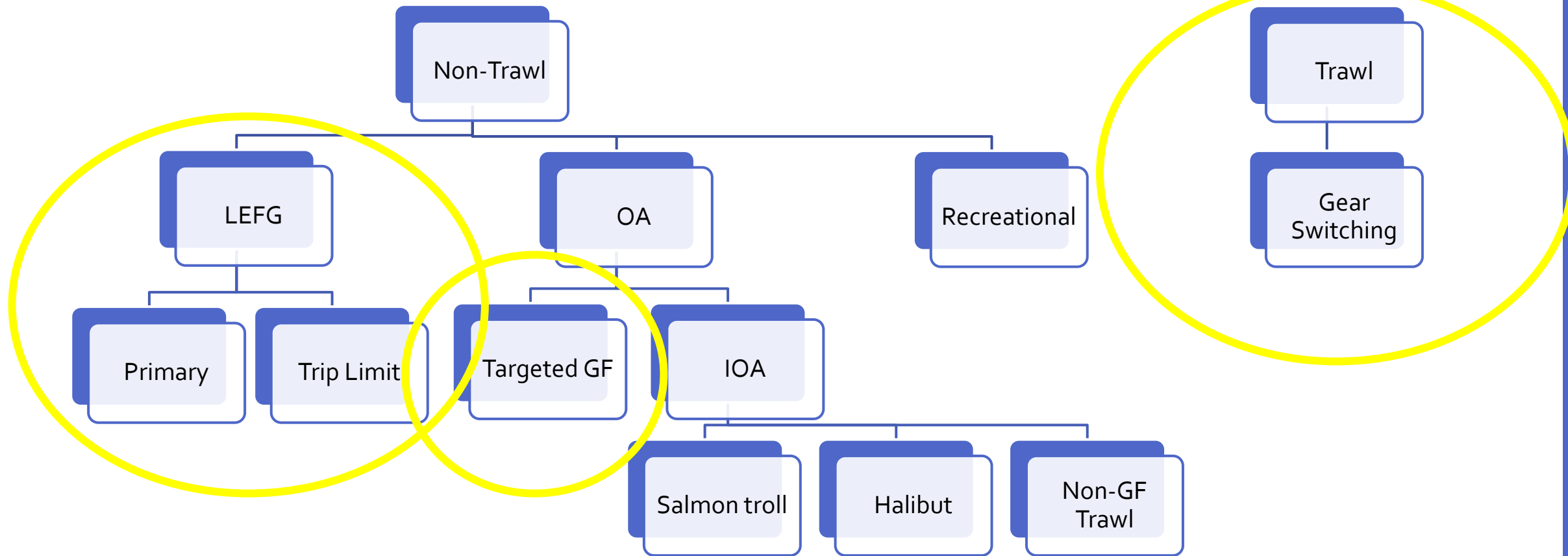
Alternative
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Alternative
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Alternative
6



Questions to Consider for Alt 6

- Are there areas seaward of the 75-fathom depth curve that can be identified as possible areas to be opened under the criteria laid out by the Alternative 6 description?
- Does the Council want to prohibit all bottom contact groundfish gear in bottom trawl EFHCAs that would be exposed under this action?
- Does the Council want to consider developing BACs for waters off the Washington coast?

Council Action



Review and potentially revise the range of alternatives, as appropriate.



Provide guidance on the development of analyses and schedule, as needed.