

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS FINAL ACTION

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) discussed the current status of 2022 groundfish fisheries, requests from industry, and any needs for inseason adjustments during the June 2022 Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting. The GMT may provide an additional supplemental report to discuss and provide recommendations on any remaining proposed adjustments.

Action Items

There are no action items at this meeting. The GMT ran model projections to consider increases to the Limited Entry Fixed Gear (LEFG) sablefish trip limits north of 36° N. lat. and Open Access (OA) sablefish trip limits north of 36° N. lat. However, given that sablefish bycatch in the trawl fishery is tracking high and that fixed gear attainment may improve compared to previous years, the GMT did not believe that increasing the sablefish trip limits at this time was appropriate. Additionally, the status quo trip limits currently in place are higher than nearly all historical trip limits. The team will continue to monitor sablefish catches from all fisheries and participation in the fixed gear sectors to determine whether there is an opportunity to increase the trip limits in September 2022.

Informational Items

At-Sea Pacific Whiting

On May 22nd and 23rd, the Mothership sector of the at-sea Pacific whiting fishery experienced an unusually high bycatch event of sablefish north of 36° N. lat. Ten separate hauls, out of a total of 388 hauls this year, each caught greater than 5,000 lbs. (2.3 mt), with the largest haul catching just over 50,000 lbs. (22.7 mt), which is the largest individual sablefish haul on record for the at-sea sectors. The median of those 10 unusually large hauls was 18,839 lbs. (8.5 mt), and the total amount of sablefish taken by all 10 hauls was 225,595 lbs. (102.3 mt). All ten hauls occurred in southern Oregon waters at roughly 42° 06' N. lat. and 124° 36' N. long., which is just offshore of the port of Brookings, OR. Bottom depths ranged from 182 fathoms to 235 fathoms, with a mean of 212 fathoms. The at-sea sectors notified the GMT immediately after the event, informing us that the coops held an emergency meeting and implemented move-along measures to prevent additional bycatch impacts in the area.

As of June 11th, the at-sea sectors have caught a total of 162 mt of sablefish north of 36° N. lat., exceeding the 100 mt combined sector at-sea set-aside. Set-asides do not trigger Council action, and the GMT is not recommending any action be taken at this time. However, given this high bycatch event, the team will continue to closely monitor sablefish catches from all sources of removals throughout the year and signal to the Council if the team thinks action is necessary. As shown in Table 1 below, the individual fishing quota (IFQ) and fixed gear sectors appear to also be tracking high compared to previous years, despite low fixed gear attainment in the last two years related to COVID-19 impacts and potentially other factors. However, the 2022 sablefish

north annual catch limit (ACL) is 1,314 mt and 960 mt higher than those of 2017 and 2019, respectively, when the ACLs were exceeded due to a combination of high fixed gear attainment and high bycatch events. The GMT is also aware of increasing bycatch of northern sablefish in the market squid seine fishery, and while this is not an observed fishery, we will monitor catches to the extent that we can.

Table 1. At-sea, IFQ, and LEFG/OA catch of sablefish north of 36° N. lat. through May 31st since 2017, along with annual LEFG/OA attainment and total annual ACL attainment.

Year	At-Sea Catch (mt) through May 31	IFQ Catch (mt) through May 31	LEFG/OA Catch (mt) through May 31	LEFG/OA Annual Attainment	ACL Annual Attainment
2017	1	706	531	98%	109%
2018	26	594	462	88%	98%
2019	9	687	359	82%	101%
2020	6	596	239	60%	72%
2021	6	828	355	77% a/	76%
2022	143	1,125	436	-	-

a/ 2021 LEFG/OA attainment for 2021 does not account for actual discards or discard mortality, because 2021 discard estimates are not available at this time. The attainment amount does, however, incorporate a recent three-year average of discards as a proxy.

Chinook Salmon Scorecard

Table 2 shows Chinook salmon catches from groundfish fisheries and exempted fishing permits (EFPs) as of June 11, 2022, in relation to the sector thresholds. The GMT will report the Chinook salmon numbers from the Year-Round Coastwide Midwater Rockfish EFP (i.e., the Trawl Gear EFP) during the March, June, and September Council meetings. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will provide a full report on the Chinook salmon numbers from the Year-Round Coastwide Midwater Rockfish EFP (i.e., the Trawl Gear EFP) at the April and November meetings.

Table 2. Chinook salmon catch (numbers of fish) in 2022 as of June 11, 2022, in relation to the sector thresholds (Source: PacFIN IFQ521 Combined Sector Salmon Bycatch ESA Report).

Sector a/	Sub-Sector	Catch To Date	% of Threshold	Total Threshold
Whiting	Catcher Processor	94	1%	11,000
	Mothership	45	0%	
	Shoreside	26	0%	
	Tribal	560 b/	5%	
	Total	725	7%	
Non-Whiting	Bottom Trawl	253	5%	5,500
	Midwater Trawl	44	1%	
	Tribal	21	0.38%	
	Fixed Gear	500 c/	9%	
	WA Rec			
	OR Rec, incl. longleader			
	CA Rec			
Total	818	15%		
All groundfish fisheries & EFPs		1,543		

a/ Also, there is a reserve of 3,500 fish, in addition to the number of fish in the whiting and non-whiting thresholds.

b/ Current year tribal landings are estimated as the maximum of the historic landings for the last 5 years.

c/ GMT proposed assumption of annual mortality, which assumed maximum historical mortality (154) plus a 250 fish buffer from the 2017 BiOp and an additional 96 fish to account for some uncertainty in recreational salmon seasons; recreational estimates only apply to groundfish fisheries occurring outside of salmon seasons.

N/A = no catch to date

Shortbelly Rockfish Scorecard

Table 3 estimates that 66.1 mt of shortbelly rockfish has been taken as of June 11, 2022. The GMT notes that shortbelly rockfish is once again available on the public groundfish scorecard (Report GMT007) on the [PacFIN Reports Dashboard](#).

Table 3. Estimated mortality of shortbelly rockfish by sector, as of June 11, 2022. (Source: PacFIN)

Sector	Estimated Mortality (mt)
At-Sea Pacific whiting Catcher Processor	2.9
At-Sea Pacific whiting Mothership	37.7
IFQ	10.0
Incidental/Miscellaneous	N/A
Shoreside Hake	15.6
Treaty	N/A
Total	66.1
Threshold	2,000

N/A = no catch to date

Rebuilding Species Scorecard

Table 4 shows yelloweye rockfish projections from groundfish fisheries as of June 11, 2022, in relation to the Harvest Guidelines (HG) and Annual Catch Targets (ACT). The International Pacific Halibut Commission's (IPHC) annual stock assessment longline survey has just begun, but catches of yelloweye rockfish thus far are within the projected impacts.

Table 4. Projected mortality impact (mt) of yelloweye rockfish by sector, as of June 11, 2022.

Fishery <i>Date: June 11, 2022</i>	Yelloweye		
	HG Allocations a/	ACT Allocations a/	Projected Impacts f/
Off the Top Deductions	8.85	8.85	10.56
EFP b/	0.24	0.24	0.02
Research c/	2.92	2.92	2.92
Incidental OA d/	0.69	0.69	2.62
Tribal e/	5	5	5
Bottom Trawl			0
Troll			0
Fixed gear	5	5	5
mid-water			0
whiting			
Trawl Allocations	3.4	3.4	0.6
-SB Trawl	3.4	3.4	0.6
-At-Sea Trawl	0		0
a) At-sea Pacific whiting MS			
b) At-sea Pacific whiting CP			
Non-Trawl Allocation	38.8	30.4	23.6
Non-Nearshore			
LE FG	8.1	6.3	3.9
OA FG			
Directed OA: Nearshore			
Recreational Groundfish			
WA	9.9	7.8	5.7
OR	9	7.1	5.5
CA	11.7	9.2	8.5
TOTAL	51	42.6	34.8
Harvest Specification	51	42.2	42.2
Difference	0	-0.4	7.4
Percent of ACL	100.00%	101.00%	82.40%
Key	Blank cells = not applicable		
	Dashed (--) = trace, less than 0.1 mt		
	Gray shaded cells = Fixed values		
	Light blue shaded cells = off the top deductions		

a/ Formal allocations are represented in the black shaded cells and are specified in regulation in Tables 2b and 1e. The other values in the allocation columns are 1) off the top deductions, 2) set asides from the trawl allocation 3) ad-hoc allocations recommended in the 2021-2022 EIS process, 4) HG for the recreational fisheries for yelloweye rockfish.

b/ EFPs are amounts set aside to accommodate anticipated applications. Values in this table represent the estimates provided by the applicants and approved by the Council, which are currently specified in regulation.

c/ Includes NMFS trawl shelf-slope surveys, the IPHC halibut survey, and expected impacts from SRPs and LOAs.

d/ The GMT's best estimate of impacts as analyzed in the 2021-2022 Environmental Impact Statement, which are currently specified in regulation.

e/ Tribal values in the allocation column represent the values in regulation. Projected impacts are the tribes best estimate of catch.

f/ Updated based on GMT's best estimates.

PFMC
06/12/22