

CORDELL BANK CONSERVATION AREA REVISIONS - SCOPING

In March 2023, under Workload and New Management Measure Priorities, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) prioritized scoping and potential development of removing the Cordell Bank Groundfish Conservation Area (GCA) and other associated changes as described in [Agenda Item F.8.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 1, March 2023](#). The Cordell Bank GCA has been in place since the early 2000s and prohibits groundfish fishing within the boundaries of the GCA for trawl, non-trawl, and recreational fisheries (with some limited exceptions). In the process of the 2023-2024 harvest specifications and management measures process and Amendment 32 (non-trawl area management measures item), it became apparent that this GCA was overlapping with several other restrictions including two essential fish habitat conservation areas (EFHCAs), may no longer be necessary, and is resulting in regulatory confusion for stakeholders.

Agenda Item G.5.a, CDFW Report 1 provides background on the Cordell Bank GCA and the proposal from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to remove the GCA for all groundfish fisheries while maintaining protections for sensitive habitats in the Cordell Bank (50-fm (91-m) isobath) bottom contact EFHCA. The Council should consider the information in the report and provide guidance on the scope and timing of this action.

Council Action:

1. Adopt scope of revisions under consideration and discuss next steps.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.5.a, CDFW Report 1 – California Department of Fish and Wildlife Report on Cordell Bank Conservation Area Revisions.
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- G.5. Cordell Bank Conservation Area Revisions - Scoping Jessi Doerpinghaus
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt the Scope of Revisions Under Consideration and Discuss Next Steps