

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
CORDELL BANK CONSERVATION AREA REVISION – SCOPING

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) supports California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW) proposal to remove the Cordell Bank Groundfish Conservation Area (yellow polygon in [Agenda item G.5, CDFW report 1](#), Figure 1) and create a new Groundfish Exclusion Area (GEA) that would overlay the existing Cordell Bank (50-fm) Isobath Essential Fish Habitat Conservation Area (red polygon in [Agenda item G.5 CDFW report 1](#), Figure 1). The proposed GEA is specifically intended to mitigate impacts to sensitive environments from certain groundfish fishing activities. The GMT concurs that this action would eliminate regulatory redundancy, improve clarity for stakeholders, and allow for improved enforceability of closed areas around Cordell Bank. Further, the GMT sees value in aligning the rules and regulations for the proposed GEA around Cordell bank with those in the forthcoming GEAs in the Cowcod Conservation Area (CCA); draft Amendment 32; 88 FR 59838).

The GMT requests further clarification from the analysts on the following:

1. Will the GEA prohibit all groundfish fishing by the commercial and recreational sectors?
2. Will vessels be allowed to continuously transit through the GEA?

PFMC
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