

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON FINAL INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS
FOR 2023-2024 – PART II

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) fixed gear representatives have worked closely with the Groundfish Management Team to develop the following measures to protect quillback rockfish but also allow for some fishing with non-bottom contact (12E) gears as well as reductions or zeroing out of specific trip limits. The GAP agrees with the GMT recommendations in Agenda Item E.9.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, November 2023 and suggests the following inseason adjustments for 2024:

1. Move the shoreward boundary of the non-trawl rockfish conservation area (RCA) from 42° N. lat. to 36° N. lat. to the state boundary;
2. Reduce minor shelf rockfish trip limits from 42° N. Lat. to 36° N. Lat as defined in Option 1 (Limited Entry [LE] between 40° 10' to 42° N. lat would remain at 800 lbs/mo)
 - a. Open Access (OA) between 40° 10' to 42° N. lat.- 600 lbs/mo
 - b. LE between 40° 10' to 36° N. lat.- 6,000 lbs/2 mo
 - c. OA between 40° 10' to 36° N lat - 3,000 lbs/ 2 mo
3. Reduce the lingcod trip limit to 0 lb/2 mo south of 42° N. Lat. to 36° N. Lat. within the non-trawl RCA; keep trip limits at status quo seaward of the non-trawl RCA;
4. Reduce the other flatfish trip limit south of 42° N. lat. to 36° N. lat. to 0 lb/2 mo within the non-trawl RCA; keep trip limits at status quo seaward of the non-trawl RCA;
5. Reduce the trip limits for the minor nearshore rockfish complex to 0 lbs/2 months between 42° N. lat. and 36° N. lat.;
6. Reduce the trip limits for cabezon to 0 lbs/2 months between 42° N. lat. and 36° N. lat.; and
7. Maintain prohibition of quillback rockfish retention in federal waters off California.

The GAP also agrees with the GMT's proposal on trip limit changes if Amendment 32 is not implemented by January 1, 2024.

GAP fixed gear representatives plan to work with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to reopen state waters to California nearshore permit holders, to be implemented as soon as possible.

RCA lines in the former Cowcod Conservation Area (CCA)

The GAP agrees with the GMT proposal outlined in Agenda Item E.9.a, Supplemental Report 2, November 2023 to:

- Implement the 100-150 fm RCA lines for non-trawl commercial fisheries around Santa Barbara Island, San Nicolas Island, and Tanner and Cortes Banks;
- Implement of the 50 fm RCA line for recreational fisheries around Santa Barbara Island, San Nicolas Island, and Tanner and Cortes Banks when the “offshore only” fishery occurs in the Southern Management Area (i.e., south of Point Conception)

The GAP believes this will be easier to understand for industry; it will be a uniform RCA for the entire California Bight, while providing protections for some rockfish species.

PFMC
11/06/23