

**OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON THE 2025-26 BIENNIAL  
 MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR THE OREGON RECREATIONAL FISHERY**

As the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) develops federal groundfish management measures for 2025-26, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) staff continue to seek public input on a preferred season structures (e.g., bag limits, area closures, gear restrictions) for the 2025 recreational groundfish season.

*Harvest Guidelines*

Under Alternative 1 on Annual Catch Limits (ACLs), the Oregon recreational harvest guidelines or presumed state quotas are presented in Table 1 (with 2023 values for comparison). For the Oregon black, blue and deacon rockfish complex, the majority of the decrease from 457.9 mt in 2023 to 325.9 mt in 2025 is in response to the 2023 black rockfish stock assessment. The results of the assessment model indicate that black rockfish are just above the target stock status but could go below it without a reduction in catch.

**Table 1. Oregon recreational Federal harvest guidelines (HG), or state quotas under Alternative 1 (mt), with 2023 HGs for comparison.**

Stock	2023 HG (mt)	2025 HG (Percent of 2023)	2026 HG (Percent of 2023)
Oregon Black/Blue/Deacon Rockfish Complex <sup>a/</sup>	457.9	325.9 (71%)	329.5 (72%)
Canary Rockfish <sup>b/</sup>	65.1	26.0 (40%)	26.1 (40%)
Oregon Cabezon/Greenling Complex <sup>c/</sup>	51.4	49.2 (96%)	48.6 (95%)
Nearshore Rockfish Complex North of 40°10' N. lat. <sup>d/</sup>	15.8	14.6 (92%)	14.3 (91%)
<b>YELLOWEYE ROCKFISH</b>	7.0	7.4 (106%)	7.6 (109%)

<sup>a/</sup> The state process in Oregon establishes the commercial and recreational quotas for black, blue, and deacon rockfishes. The values are the recreational share based on the 2023 recreational and commercial sharing percentages in Oregon state regulations.

<sup>b/</sup> Federal HGs are established for canary and yelloweye rockfish and should be included in Federal regulation.

<sup>c/</sup> Includes kelp and other greenlings. Kelp greenling accounts for over 99 percent of the landings. The state process in Oregon establishes the commercial and recreational shares for the cabezon/greenling OR Complex. The values are the recreational share based on the 2023 recreational and commercial sharing percentages in Oregon state regulations.

<sup>d/</sup> Blue and deacon rockfish are not part of the nearshore rockfish north complex in Oregon, they are part of a complex with black rockfish. The state process in Oregon establishes commercial and recreational quotas for nearshore rockfish complex species. The values are the recreational share based on the 2023 recreational and commercial sharing percentages in Oregon state regulations.

*Groundfish Seasons and Area Restrictions*

Under the Alternative 1 for federal harvest specifications in 2025-26, federal regulations for the Oregon recreational groundfish fishery would continue to allow fishing at all depths year-round and maintain the similar bag limits as in 2023 and 2024, with the addition of a sablefish bag limit (Table 2).

**Table 2. Oregon recreational groundfish season structure and bag limits proposed for federal rule under all harvest specifications alternatives for 2025-26.**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bottomfish Season	Open all depths											
Marine Bag Limit <sup>a/</sup>	Ten (10)											
Lingcod Bag Limit	Three (3)											
Flatfish Bag Limit <sup>b/</sup>	Twenty-Five (25)											
<b>Longleader Bag Limit <sup>c/</sup></b>	<b>Twelve (12); sub-bag of five (5) canary rockfish</b>											
<b>Sablefish Bag Limit</b>	<b>Ten (10)</b>											

a/ Marine bag limit is 10 fish per day and includes all groundfish species other than lingcod, salmon, steelhead, Pacific halibut, flatfish, surfperch, sturgeon, striped bass, pelagic tuna, and mackerel species, and bait fish such as herring, anchovy, sardine, and smelt; of which no more than one may be cabezon.

b/ Flounders, soles, sanddabs, turbot, and halibut except Pacific halibut.

c/ Longleader fishing must take place seaward of the 40-fathom regulatory line with the following rockfish allowed for retention: blue, bocaccio, canary, chilipepper, deacon, greenstriped, redstripe, silvergray, widow, and yellowtail rockfishes.

Maintaining the federal regulations as shown in Table 2, even though the state often adopts more restrictive measures in state rule, enables ODFW to tighten or ease restrictions inseason based on quota status and projected mortality. The federal rules serve as a backstop, while state rules can be adjusted quickly in response to inseason circumstances, improving management responsiveness and the ability to achieve conservation and opportunity objectives. Some of the more restrictive state rules in recent years have included a summer depth restriction, a lower marine bag limit and lingcod bag limit, and sub-bag limits (or no retention) for copper, China, and quillback rockfishes. For 2024, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) adopted the season structure shown in Table 3 in state rules.

**Table 3. Oregon recreational groundfish season structure and bag limits in place via state regulations for 2024.**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bottomfish Season	Open all depths											
Marine Bag Limit <sup>a/</sup>	Five (5)											
Cabezon	<b>CLOSED</b>						1-Fish Sub-Bag Limit					
Lingcod Bag Limit	Two (2)											
Flatfish Bag Limit <sup>b/</sup>	Twenty-Five (25)											
Longleader Gear <sup>c/</sup>	Twelve (12)											
Quillback & Yelloweye Rockfishes	<b>PROHIBITED</b>											

a/ Marine bag limit includes all species other than lingcod, salmon, steelhead, Pacific halibut, flatfish, surfperch, sturgeon, striped bass, pelagic tuna and mackerel species, and bait fish such as herring, anchovy, sardine, and smelt; of which no more than one may be cabezon.

b/ Flounders, soles, sanddabs, turbot, and halibut except Pacific halibut

c/ Longleader fishing must take place seaward of the 40-fathom regulatory line with the following rockfish allowed for retention: blue, bocaccio, canary, chilipepper, deacon, greenstriped, redstripe, silvergray, widow, and yellowtail rockfishes.

Oregon prohibited the retention of quillback rockfish in the recreational fishery (and all non-trawl commercial fisheries) beginning January 1, 2022, based on the results of the 2021 assessment of the stock off Oregon. While the assessment indicated that the stock is healthy (47 percent of

unfished spawning biomass, above the 40 percent target), the total biomass estimate was smaller than previously thought, and the available yield is lower than recent harvest levels. Oregon determined that lowering fishing mortality beginning in 2022 was in the best interest of the quillback rockfish stock and the fishery. ODFW anticipates continuing the prohibition in 2025-26.

For state rules in 2025 and 2026, ODFW staff will continue to examine data from 2024 (along with other recent years) to model different season structures to keep harvest levels within state and federal harvest guidelines. A reduction to black rockfish and canary rockfish harvest rates will require a combination of a reduced bag limit, sub-bag limit(s), area closure(s) or time closure(s). ODFW staff will present different season structure scenarios to the public prior to presenting a staff recommended season structure to the Commission for its annual consideration of groundfish rules each December.