

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT  
ON PRELIMINARY 2024 GROUND FISH HARVEST IN CALIFORNIA

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) provides the following report on initial harvest of select groundfish species of interest in 2024. A comprehensive reporting of groundfish mortality in California is found at the end of this report in Appendix I. All values were rounded using standard rounding rules in each table for presentation purposes; for that reason, a sum of the values over rows or columns within tables may not equal the total value.

### **Recreational Fishery**

Substantial changes to California recreational season structures were implemented for 2024, consistent with Council and CDFW actions taken in March (Option 2 from, [Agenda Item F.8.a Supplemental REVISED CDFW Report 2, March 2024](#)). The boat-based recreational fishery opened in April, however, as of this writing California Recreational Fishery Survey (CRFS) estimates are only available through March (Table 1).

#### ***Quillback Rockfish***

Quillback rockfish remain in the minor nearshore rockfish complex, north and south of 40°10' N. lat., with a shared commercial and recreational species-specific Annual Catch Target (ACT) of 0.96 mt for the area between 42° - 40°10' N. lat. and 0.97 mt for the area south of 40°10' N. lat. CRFS catch estimates indicate no quillback rockfish mortality occurred off California between January and March. Preliminary field survey information from April through May 12 indicates the number of quillback rockfish encounters is within the expected range and encountered fish are being reported as released, indicating good compliance with the prohibited status of the species.

#### ***Copper Rockfish***

Copper rockfish remain in the minor nearshore rockfish complex, north and south of 40°10' N. lat., with a shared commercial and recreational species-specific ACT of 6.99 mt for the area between 42° - 40°10' N. lat. and 87.73 mt for the area south of 40°10' N. lat. The best estimate of total mortality for copper rockfish in the California recreational fishery through May 12 incorporates CRFS estimates from January through March, and weekly Anticipated Catch Value (ACV) data through May 12. The best estimate of total mortality for the area between 42° - 40°10' N. lat. is 0.18 mt, and 4.33 mt for the area south of 40°10' N. lat. These values are within the area-specific ACT values for copper rockfish and are not currently projected to exceed the limits.

#### ***Yelloweye Rockfish***

The California recreational yelloweye rockfish harvest guideline (HG) is set at 11.8 mt, with an ACT of 9.3 mt in 2024. The best estimate of total mortality for yelloweye rockfish in the California recreational fishery through May 12 incorporates CRFS estimates from January through March, and weekly ACV data through May 12. The best estimate of total mortality is 0.30 mt, which is well within the California recreational yelloweye rockfish ACT and is not currently projected to exceed the limit.

### **Non-Trawl Commercial Fishery**

Substantial changes to the non-trawl commercial fishery regulations off California were

implemented for 2024, consistent with Council and CDFW actions taken since September 2023 ([Agenda Item G.8.a Supplemental GMT Report 5 September 2023](#), [Agenda Item E.9.a Supplemental GMT Report 1 November 2023](#), and [Agenda Item F.8.a Supplemental GMT Report 1 March 2024](#)). These actions to protect quillback rockfish have changed the dynamics of the fishery in Central and Northern California as demonstrated by the data below. Specifically, landings north of 40°10' N. lat. are lower for nearshore rockfish (-0.4 mt), shelf rockfish (-0.4 mt), yellowtail rockfish (-0.2 mt), slope rockfish (-0.3 mt) and lingcod (-1.3 mt). Of which there were near zero landings for shelf rockfish, slope rockfish, nor lingcod. Landings south of 40°10' N. lat. are lower for shelf rockfish (-11.4 mt), vermilion rockfish (-9.6 mt), chilipepper rockfish (-2.9 mt), and lingcod (-2.2 mt); and higher for bocaccio rockfish (+5.4 mt), slope rockfish (+17.6 mt) than at this time in 2023.

### ***Quillback Rockfish***

Commercial landings data are from PacFIN and reflect activity across all management areas from January through May 21, 2024. There have been no reported landings of quillback rockfish in the California non-trawl commercial fishery since retention of quillback rockfish was prohibited in August 2023.

### ***Copper Rockfish***

Commercial landings data are from PacFIN and reflect activity across all management areas from January through May 21, 2024. Landing totals are 0.008 mt (Table 2) for the area between 42° - 40° 10' N. lat. and 0.5 mt (Table 2) for the area south of 40° 10' N. lat. The combined commercial and recreational values are within the area-specific ACT values for copper rockfish (Table 3). Landings across California remain similar to what we have seen each year since the sub-trip limits were implemented in 2022, suggesting they are effectively minimizing harvest in the commercial fishery. Reported catches are preliminary and subject to change as more data becomes available.

**Appendix 1.**

This appendix provides the most current California harvest information for the 2024 fishing season relative to Annual Catch Limits (ACLs), Harvest Guidelines (HGs), sector allocations, and Annual Catch Targets (ACTs) for the 2023-24 biennium. Catch includes estimates of total mortality (does not include ACVs) from the recreational sector, and landings from the commercial sector without discard mortality. Commercial landings are from the non-trawl fixed gear limited entry and open access sectors, except for blackgill rockfish landings which include both trawl and non-trawl landings.

Monthly recreational catch data are from RecFIN through March 2024 and reflect activity across all recreational management areas (Table 1). Commercial landings data are from PacFIN and reflect activity across all management areas from January through May 21, 2024 (Table 2). Reported catches are preliminary and subject to change as more data becomes available. The 2024 combined recreational and commercial catches are compared to federally designated harvest specifications in Table 3.

**Table 1. Estimated catch (mt) of select groundfish species in the California recreational sector by month in 2024. Data are from RecFIN, are preliminary and subject to change.**

Stock/Stock Complex	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Yelloweye rockfish <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--										0.0
CA Black rockfish <sup>a</sup>	0.0	0.0	0.0										0.0
Canary rockfish	--	--	0.0										0.0
Darkblotched rockfish	--	--	--										0.0
Shortbelly rockfish	0.0	--	--										0.0
Splitnose rockfish	--	--	--										0.0
Widow rockfish	--	--	--										0.0
Spiny dogfish	0.1	--	0.0										0.1
Dover sole	--	--	--										0.0
English sole	--	--	--										0.0
Petrale sole	0.0	--	0.2										0.2
Starry flounder	--	--	0.0										0.0
Other flatfish	0.3	0.7	0.9										1.9
CA Cabezon	0.1	0.1	0.1										0.2
CA Kelp greenling	0.0	0.1	0.0										0.1
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat. <sup>b</sup>	--	0.0	--										0.0
Copper rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	--	0.0	--										0.0

Stock/Stock Complex	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Quillback rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--										0.0
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>c</sup>	--	--	--										0.0
Squarespot rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Vermilion rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	0.0										0.0
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>b</sup>	0.1	0.1	0.3										0.4
Copper rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	0.0	0.0	0.0										0.1
Quillback rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	--	--	--										0.0
CA scorpionfish	3.4	6.5	8.3										18.1
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>c</sup>	0.1	0.2	0.4										0.7
Squarespot Rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	--	0.0	0.0										0.0
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.1	0.2	0.3										0.6
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	--	0.0	0.0										0.0
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	--	0.0										0.0
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>d</sup>	--	--	--										0.0
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.1	0.0										0.2
Sablefish N. 36° N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Sablefish S. 36° N. lat.	--	--	0.0										0.0
Longspine thornyhead N 34° 27' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Longspine thornyhead S 34° 27' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Shortspine thornyhead N 34° 27' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0
Shortspine thornyhead S 34° 27' N. lat.	--	--	--										0.0

Note: 0.0 indicates trace mortality; a dash (-) indicates no mortality.

a/ Totals for yelloweye rockfish, black rockfish, copper rockfish, and quillback rockfish are CRFS estimates only and do not include ACV projections.

b/ Includes catch of copper rockfish and quillback rockfish.

c/ Includes catch of squarespot rockfish and vermilion rockfish.

d/ Does not include catch of blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. due to a separate harvest limit from the slope rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat.

**Table 2. Landings (mt) of select groundfish species in California commercial non-trawl fixed gear limited entry and open access sectors, except for blackgill rockfish landings which include trawl and non-trawl, by month in 2024. Data are from PacFIN (5/21/2024), are preliminary and subject to change.**

<b>Stock/Stock Complex</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yelloweye rockfish	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
CA Black rockfish	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Canary rockfish	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4.7
Darkblotched rockfish			0.0	0.0	0.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.1
Shortbelly rockfish	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Splitnose rockfish	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Widow rockfish	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.7
Spiny dogfish	0.0	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Dover sole	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.1
English sole	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Petrале sole	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.5
Starry flounder		0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Other flatfish	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.2
CA Cabezon	1.8	1.4	1.9	2.8	2.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	10.0
CA Kelp greenling	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.5
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	--	--	0.2	0.1	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.3
Copper rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--	0.0	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Quillback rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>b</sup>	--	0.0	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Squarespot Rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Vermilion rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.8
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.0
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	2.9	3.9	4.0	6.5	5.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	22.6
Copper rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.5
Quillback rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
CA scorpionfish	--	--	--	--	0.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.1

<b>Stock/Stock Complex</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>b</sup>	11.1	9.6	9.7	9.6	7.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	47.1
Squarespot Rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.1
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	8.6	6.6	6.6	7.2	5.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	34.1
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	8.4	8.1	7.2	4.3	5.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	33.2
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	2.8	3.7	6.9	3.4	2.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	19.1
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>c</sup>	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.3	4.8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	20.5
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>d</sup>	3.1	2.4	3.2	4.0	4.8	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	17.6
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.9	1.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6.0
Sablefish N. 36° N. lat.	27.3	25.9	35.0	46.2	30.4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	164.8
Sablefish S. 36° N. lat.	11.9	12.9	16.9	16.8	11.6	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	70.2
Longspine thornyhead N 34°27' N. lat.	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.8
Longspine thornyhead S 34°27' N. lat.	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.5
Shortspine thornyhead N 34°27' N. lat.	1.9	1.4	1.9	1.8	1.9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	9.0
Shortspine thornyhead S 34°27' N. lat.	2.5	2.2	1.5	3.0	2.7	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	11.8

Note: 0.0 indicates trace mortality. Landing estimates do not include discard mortality. 0.0 indicates trace landings; a dash (--) indicates no landings.

a/ Includes landings of copper rockfish and quillback rockfish.

b/Includes landings of vermilion rockfish and squarespot rockfish

c/ Does not include landings of blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. due to a separate harvest limit from the slope rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat.

d/ Blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. landings include both trawl and non-trawl sectors.

**Table 3. Estimated mortality (mt) of select groundfish species in California for 2024 compared to the harvest limits for 2024.**

Stock/Stock Complex	Reference Point	Recreational Mortality (mt)	Commercial non-trawl Landings (mt)	Total (mt)	Tracking Limits	Percent Attainment
Yelloweye rockfish <sup>a</sup>	ACT (CA rec)	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.3	0.0%
CA Black rockfish <sup>a</sup>	ACL	0.0	0.0	0.0	229.0	0.0%
Canary rockfish	HG (rec)	0.0	4.7	4.7	112.9	4.2%
Darkblotched rockfish	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.1	0.1	37.9	0.3%
Shortbelly rockfish	EC Species Threshold <sup>b</sup>	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,000.0	0.0%
Splitnose rockfish	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	76.7	0.0%
Widow rockfish	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	2.7	2.7	400.0	0.7%
Spiny dogfish	Fishery Harvest Guideline	0.1	0.0	0.1	1,055.5	0.0%
Dover sole	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.1	0.1	2,420.1	0.0%
English sole	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	435.0	0.0%
Petrale sole	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.2	0.5	0.7	30.0	2.4%
Starry flounder	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	171.9	0.0%
Other flatfish	Non-Trawl Allocation	1.9	0.2	2.1	465.3	0.4%
CA Cabezon	ACL	0.2	10.0	10.2	171.0	6.0%
CA Kelp greenling	<sup>c</sup>	0.1	0.5	0.6	92.5	0.6%
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat. <sup>d</sup>	HG (CA Share) <sup>e</sup>	0.0	0.3	0.3	39.9	0.8%
Copper rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	ACL Contribution to Complex	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0	0.0%
Quillback rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	ACL Contribution to Complex	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0%
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>f</sup>	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	480.4	0.0%
Squarespot Rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	<sup>g</sup>	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.7	0.0%
Vermilion rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.6	0.0%
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.8	0.8	543.9	0.1%
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	275.6	0.0%
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,965.9	0.0%
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>d</sup>	ACL	0.4	22.6	23.0	891.0	2.6%

Stock/Stock Complex	Reference Point	Recreational Mortality (mt)	Commercial non-trawl Landings (mt)	Total (mt)	Tracking Limits	Percent Attainment
Copper rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	ACL Contribution to Complex	0.1	0.5	0.6	87.7	0.7%
Quillback rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>a</sup>	ACL Contribution to Complex	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0%
CA scorpionfish	ACL	18.1	0.1	18.2	252.0	7.2%
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>b</sup>	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.7	47.1	47.8	1,169.0	4.1%
Squarespot Rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	0.0	0.1	0.1	9.6	1.2%
Vermilion rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	0.6	34.1	34.7	281.3	12.3%
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	33.2	33.2	749.7	4.4%
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	19.1	19.1	505.9	3.8%
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	43.4	0.0%
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>i</sup>	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	20.5	20.5	243.5	8.4%
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. <sup>j</sup>	HG	0.0	17.6	17.6	170.0	10.4%
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.2	6.0	6.2	423.9	1.5%
Sablefish N. 36° N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	164.8	164.8	6,309.0	2.6%
Sablefish S. 36° N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	70.2	70.2	1,256.0	5.6%
Longspine thornyhead N 34° 27' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.8	0.8	105.4	0.8%
Longspine thornyhead S 34° 27' N. lat.	ACL	0.0	1.5	1.5	683.0	0.2%
Shortspine thornyhead N 34° 27' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	9.0	9.0	62.5	14.4%
Shortspine thornyhead S 34° 27' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	11.8	11.8	645.3	1.8%

a/ Recreational totals for yelloweye rockfish, black rockfish, copper rockfish, and quillback rockfish are CRFS estimates only and do not include ACV projections.

b/ Shortbelly rockfish is an ecosystem component species and has a threshold of 2,000 lb as per FMP Amendment 30

c/ Reference point denotes the CA kelp greenling contribution to the Other Fish complex ACL.

d/ Includes catch of copper rockfish and quillback rockfish

e/ The nearshore complex north of 40°10' N lat. HG is 87.7 mt. The CA share of the HG is 39.9 mt.

f/ Includes catch of squarespot rockfish and vermilion rockfish

g/ Squarespot rockfish north of 40°10' N. lat. has no species-specific contribution within the Shelf Rockfish Complex north of 40°10' N. lat.

h/ Includes catch of vermilion rockfish and squarespot rockfish

i/ Does not include blackgill rockfish landings south of 40°10' N. lat. due to a separate harvest limit from the slope rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat.

j/ Blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. commercial landings include both trawl and non-trawl sector.