

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON CORDELL  
BANK FISHERY REGULATION CHANGES – RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES,  
PRELIMINARY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

In September of 2023, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) brought forward a proposal to revise the groundfish area closure and associated fishing regulations around Cordell Bank ([Agenda Item G.5.a, CDFW Report 1, September 2023](#)). The proposal laid out the regulatory complexity caused by several overlapping closed areas and associated regulations around Cordell Bank, while identifying a potential option to streamline the regulations and bring current area management up to date. At that time, CDFW recommended, and the Council approved, further development of the proposed revisions.

Including the non-trawl Rockfish Conservation Area, there are currently four different types of prohibitions around Cordell Bank, each of which overlaps to varying degrees, with some boundary lines lying close to one another but not aligned. Each utilize different regulatory prohibitions (e.g., gear type that may be used or species that may be retained) and were developed for various purposes and implemented at different times. This has resulted in a mismatched and non-uniform stacking of regulations and creates significant confusion for those commercial and recreational vessels attempting to fish the area around Cordell Bank. Through this action, CDFW aims to revisit the need for the current layers of regulation, with the goal of streamlining them in a manner that reduces regulatory complexity in the area around Cordell Bank.

CDFW supports moving forward with refining a Range of Alternatives or selecting a Preliminary Preferred Alternative that aligns with the Department's intent to address this unnecessary regulatory complexity. CDFW would like to thank Council staff for their work on this agenda item as well as industry stakeholders for their input over the course of development for this proposed Council action.