

CORDELL BANK CONSERVATION AREA REVISIONS

Agenda Item I.5
November 2024



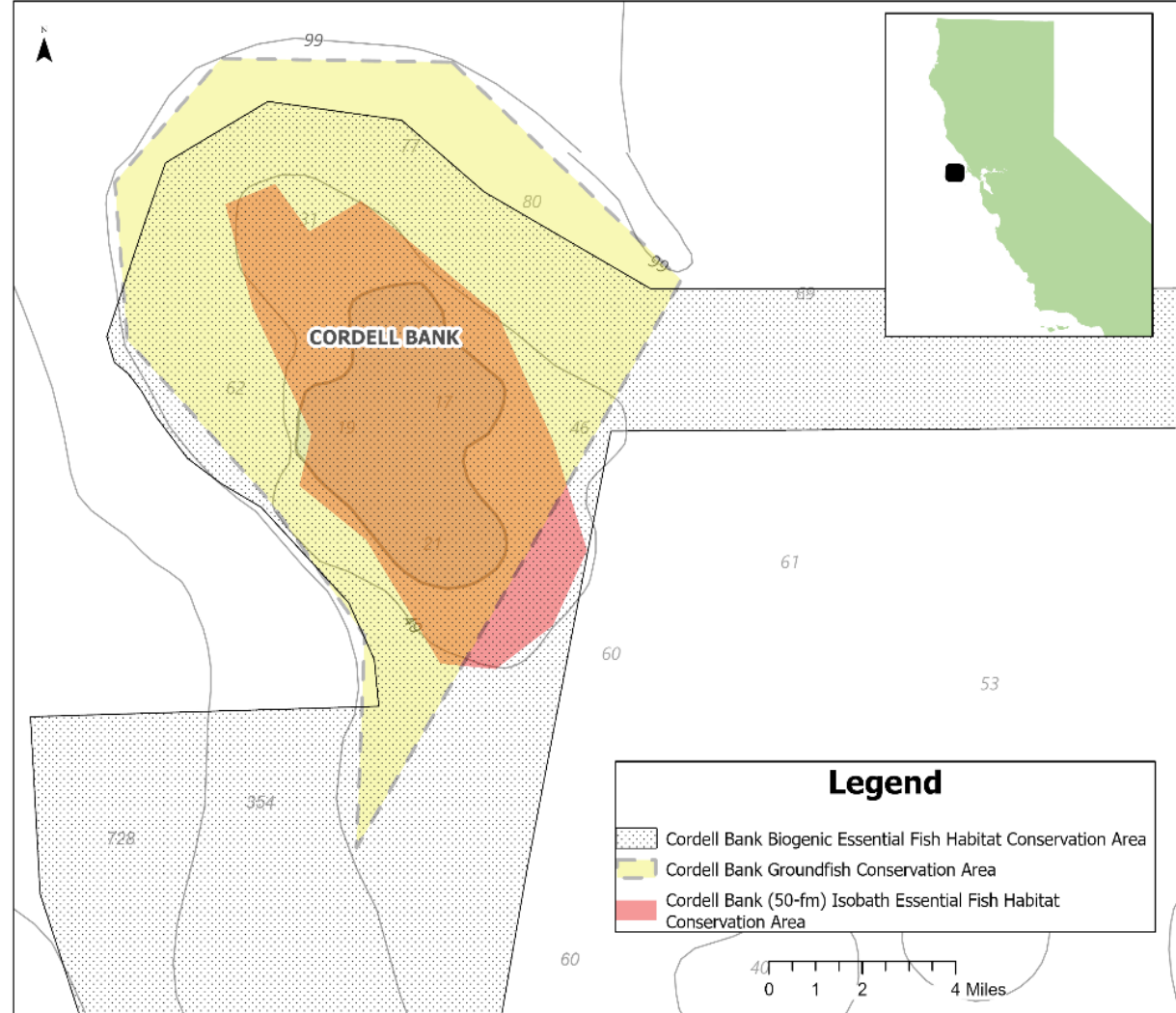
Photo: Clinton Bauder/BAUE

TYPES OF MANAGEMENT AREAS

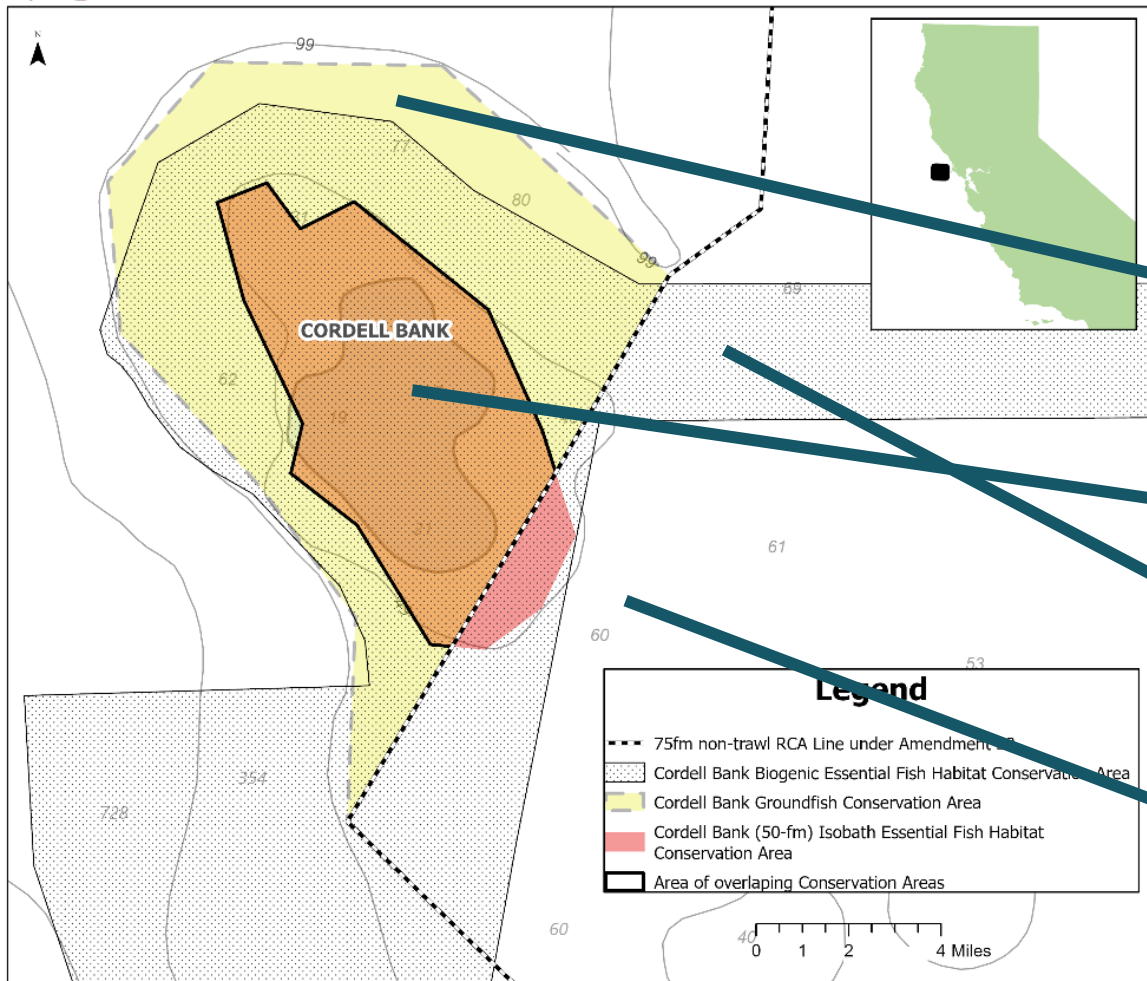
- Groundfish Conservation Area (GCA)
 - Purpose: Limit impacts to groundfish
 - Can be gear specific, fishery specific
 - Examples: Cordell Bank GCA, Non-Trawl RCA, Trawl RCA
- Essential Fish Habitat Conservation Area (EFHCA)
 - Purpose: Limit impacts to essential fish habit for groundfish
 - Gear specific (bottom trawl, bottom contact), applicable to all fisheries/select fisheries
- Groundfish Exclusion Area (GEA)
 - Purpose: Limit impacts to sensitive habitats (not EFH) from groundfish fishing
 - Can be gear specific and fishery specific

CORDELL BANK GROUNDFISH CONSERVATION AREA (GCA)

- Implemented in early 2000s for recreational and commercial fisheries to limit impacts to overfished rockfish
- Prohibits groundfish fishing- with certain exceptions for flatfish (see Table 1 in Attach 1 for details)
- Historically overlapped with 4 other management areas (trawl RCA, non-trawl RCA, 2 EFHCAs)
 - Now overlaps with EFHCAs and borders non-trawl RCA
- Regulatory complexity in area= HIGH

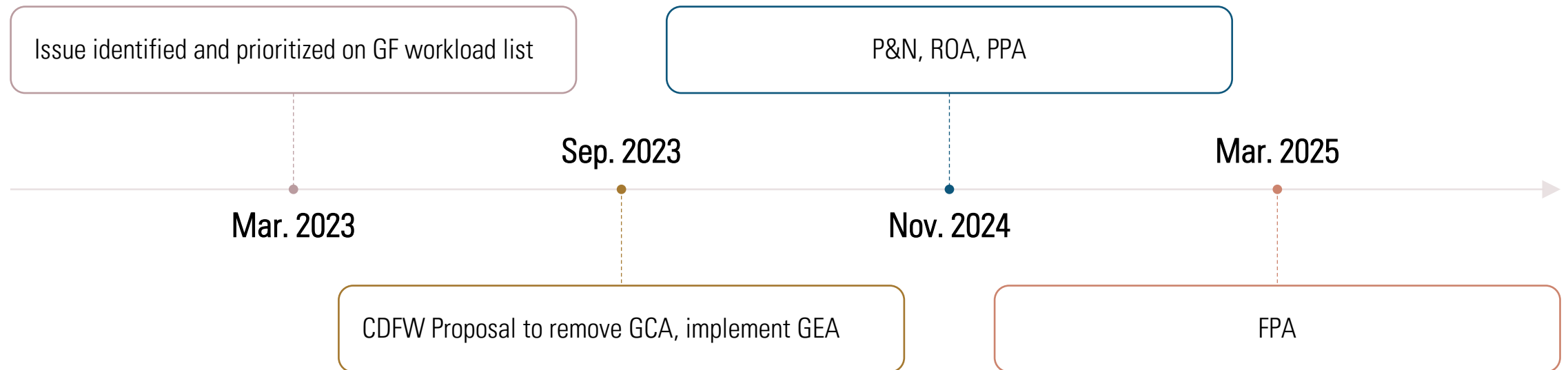


FISHING REGULATIONS



- Yellow= GCA
 - Closed to GF fishing
 - Exceptions for non-trawl comm other FF, rec petrale, starry flounder, and other FF
- Pink= Bottom Contact EFHCA
 - No bottom contact gears permitted
- Dotted= Bottom Trawl EFHCA
 - No bottom trawl except demersal seine
- Dashed line= 75 fm seaward boundary of Non-Trawl RCA
 - Non-bottom contact gears permitted (including in BC EFHCA)

HISTORY OF ACTION



COUNCIL ACTION

- Adopt purpose and need
- Adopt range of alternatives
- Adopt preliminary preferred alternative (if possible)

MATERIALS



Attachment 1: Draft
EA/RIR/MSA Analysis



CDFW Report 1



ONMS Report 1/Supp
ONMS Report 2



Supplemental
Attachment 2: Habitat
Data and Errata



Supplemental
HC/GAP/GMT/EC
Reports



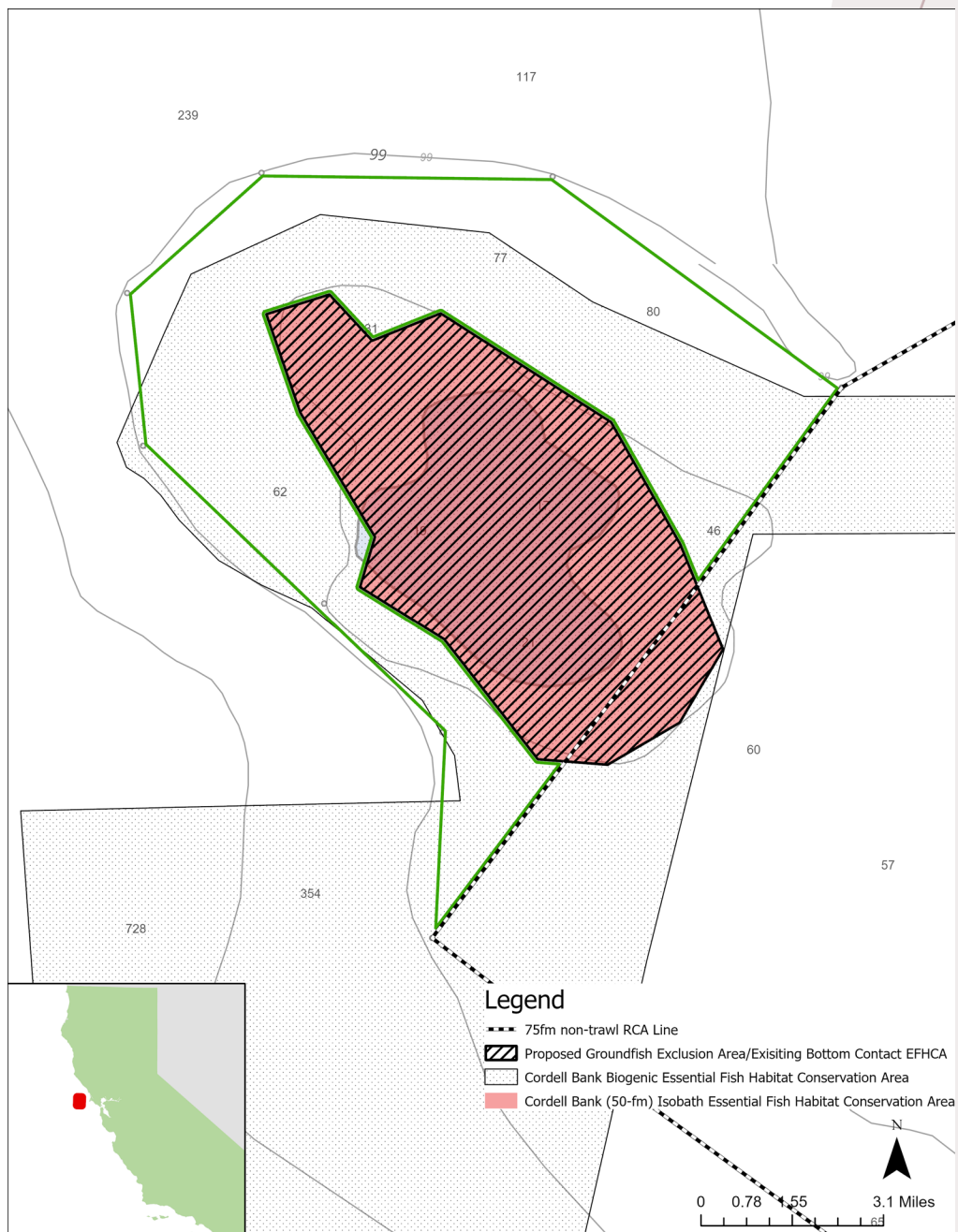
Public comments

PROPOSED PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this action is to **provide fishing access to previously closed areas surrounding Cordell Bank while protecting sensitive habitats**. The Cordell Bank GCA was initially implemented to reduce catch of several overfished groundfish stocks, which are all now rebuilt or rebuilding ahead of schedule. This action is needed to **reduce unnecessary regulatory complexity**.

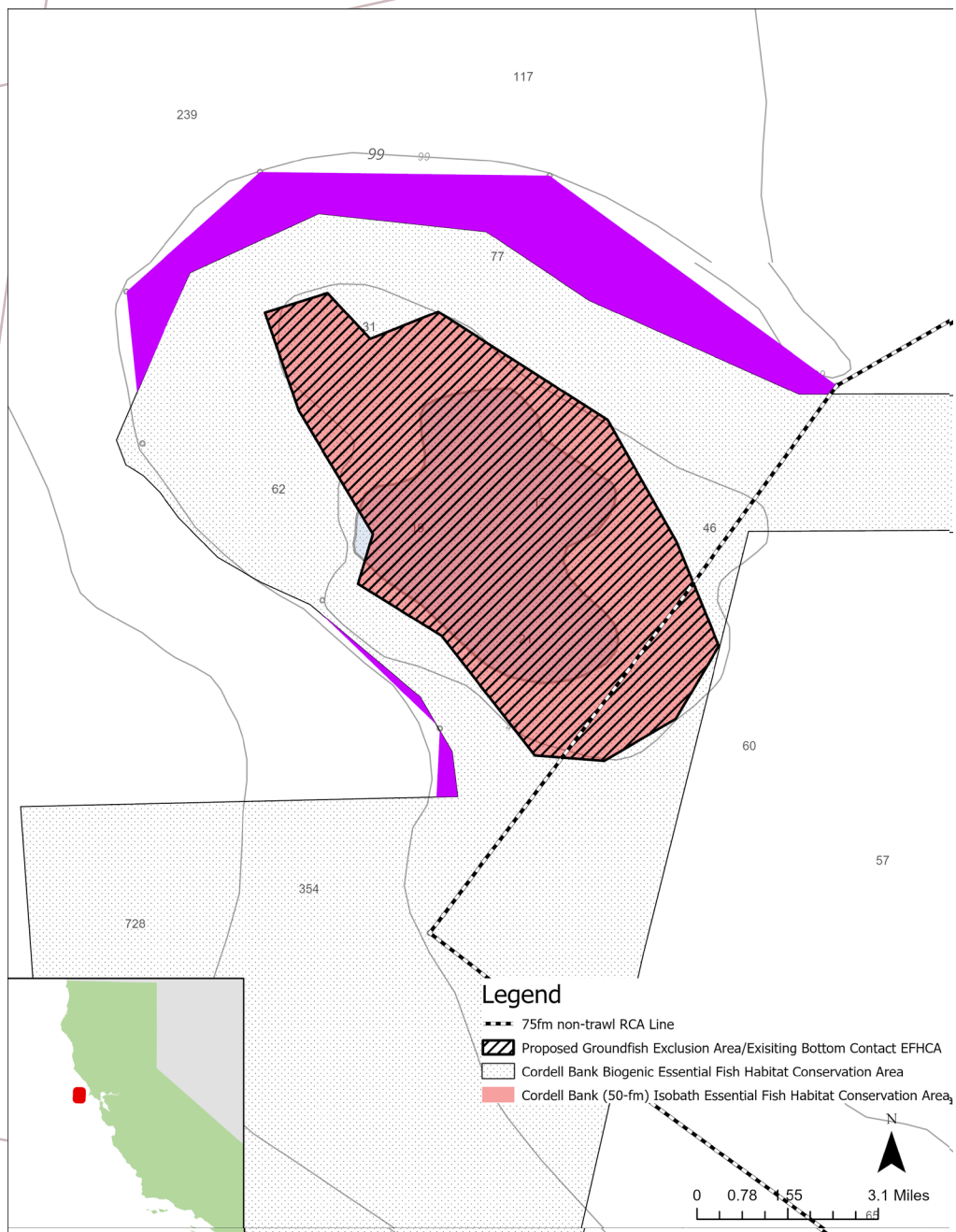
ALTERNATIVE 1

- Remove GCA
- Implement a GEA that overlaps with the bottom contact EFHCA
 - Prohibit all groundfish fishing



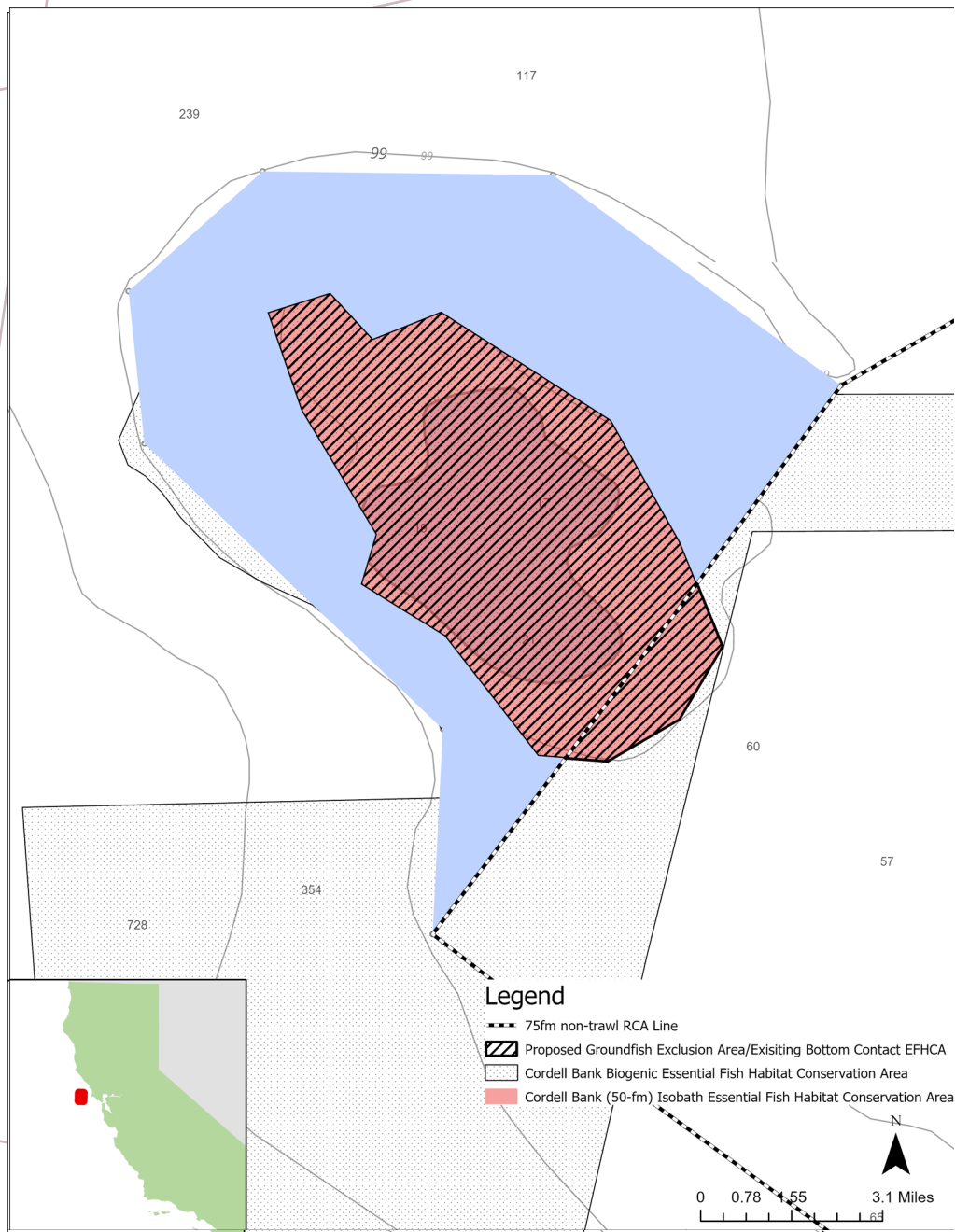
ALTERNATIVE 1

- Remove GCA
- Implement a GEA that overlaps with the bottom contact EFHCA
 - Prohibit all groundfish fishing
- Results
 - 10.2 sq. mi. open to bottom trawling



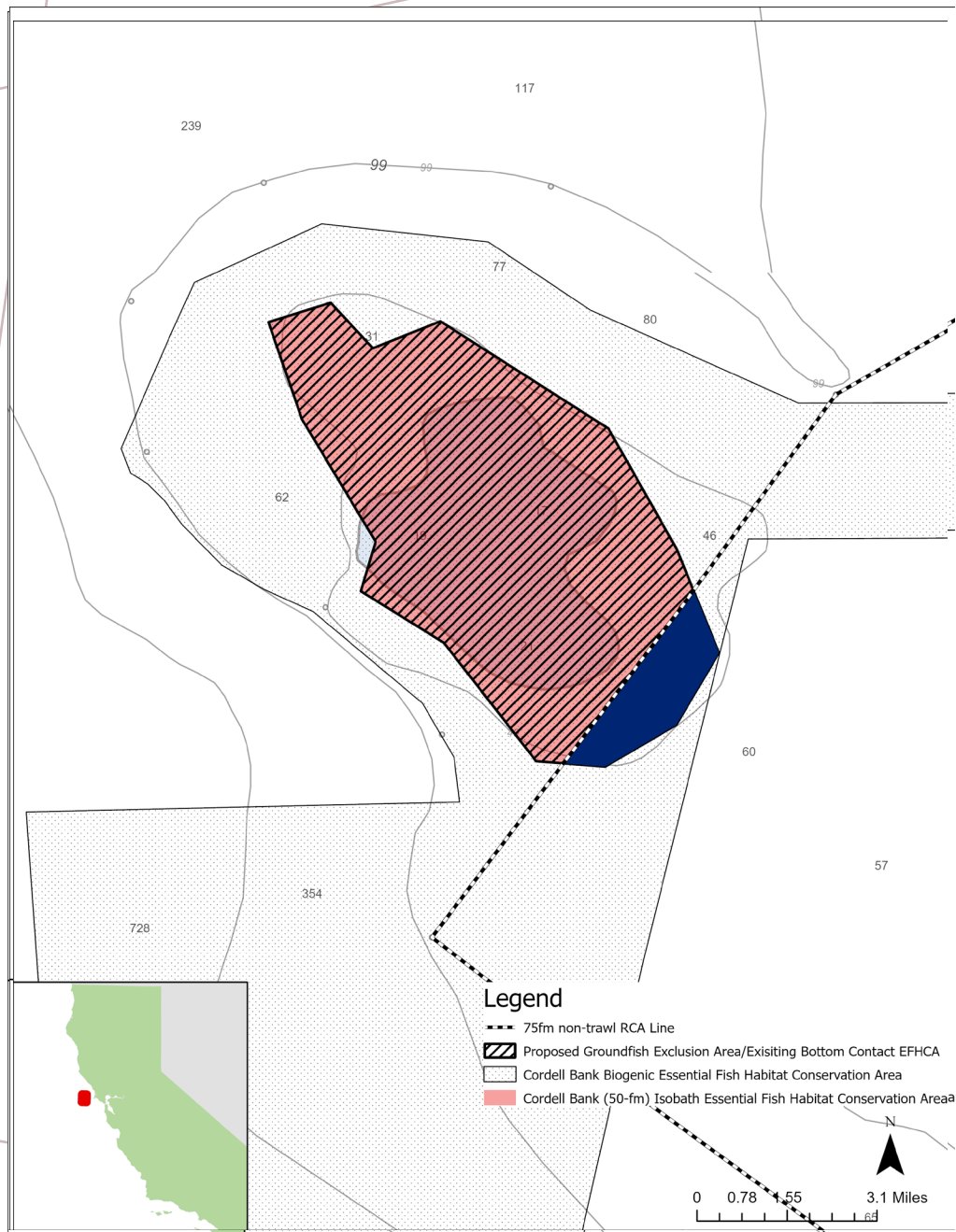
ALTERNATIVE 1

- Remove GCA
- Implement a GEA that overlaps with the bottom contact EFHCA
 - Prohibit all groundfish fishing
- Results
 - 10.2 sq. mi. open to bottom trawling
 - 40.1 sq. mi. open to non-trawl comm and rec



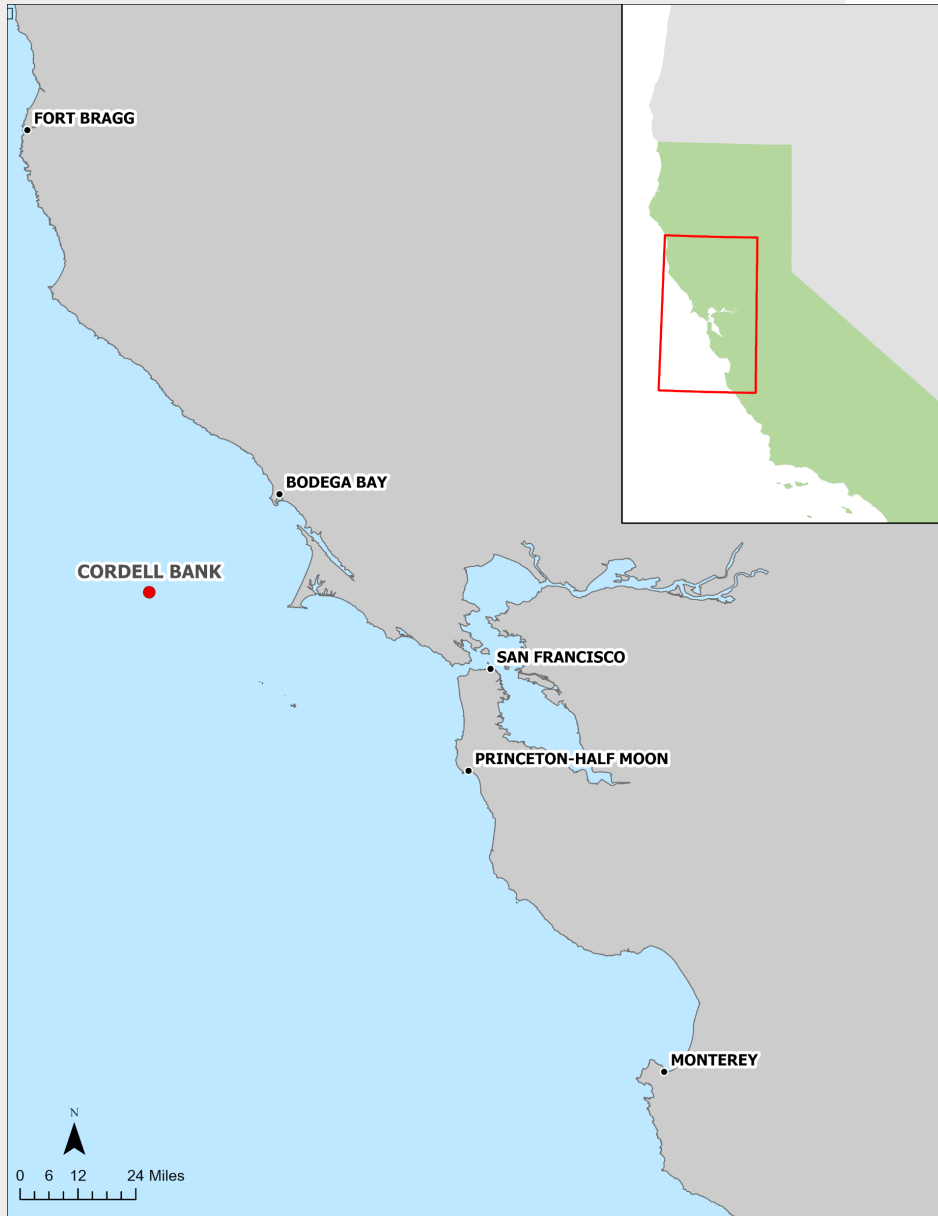
ALTERNATIVE 1

- Remove GCA
- Implement a GEA that overlaps with the bottom contact EFHCA
 - Prohibit all groundfish fishing
- Results
 - 10.2 sq. mi. open to bottom trawling
 - 40.1 sq. mi. open to non-trawl comm and rec
 - 2.5 sq. mi. closed to non-bottom contact gear in Non-Trawl RCA
 - Overall=less regulatory complexity
 - Total opening=0.014% of the EEZ





ANALYSIS

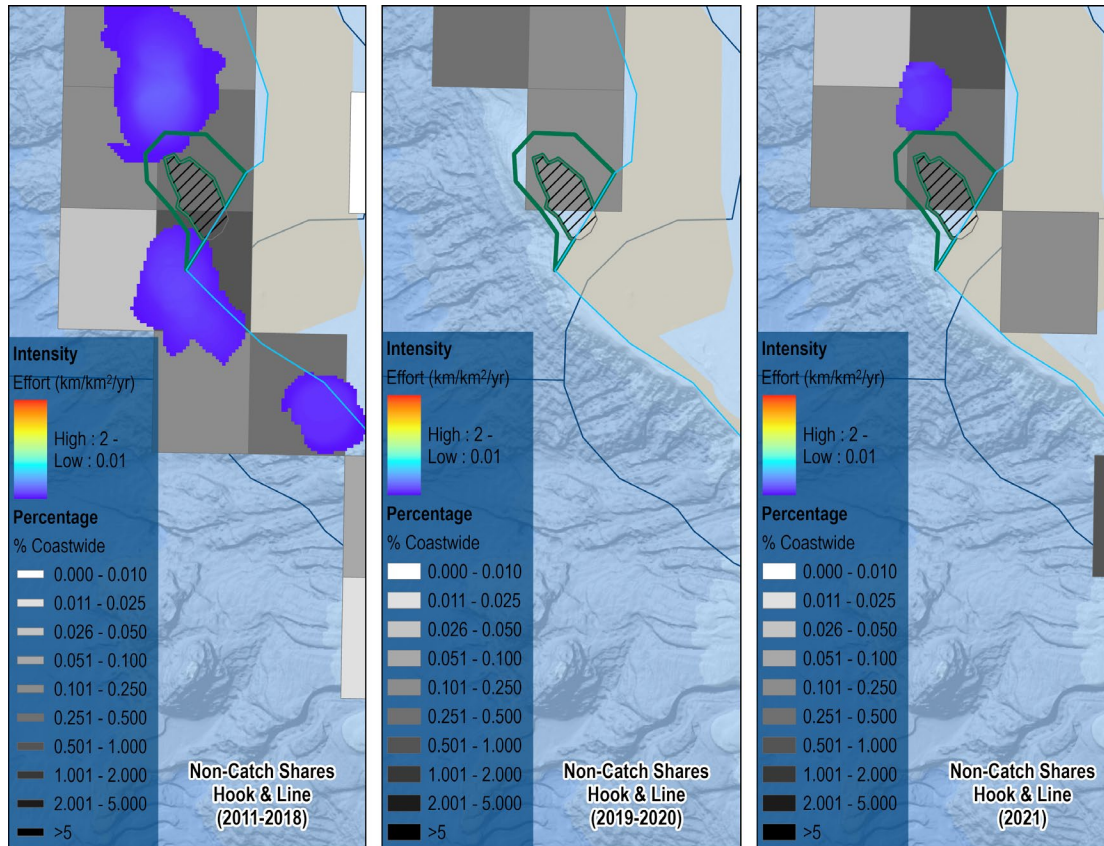


OVERALL FISHING IMPACTS

- Likely ports affected: Bodega Bay, SF
- Recreational
 - Limited by weather, offshore season availability
- Commercial
 - WCGOP/PacFIN data suggests that limited trawling in the vicinity
 - Non-trawl sectors more prevalent in the broader area/ports

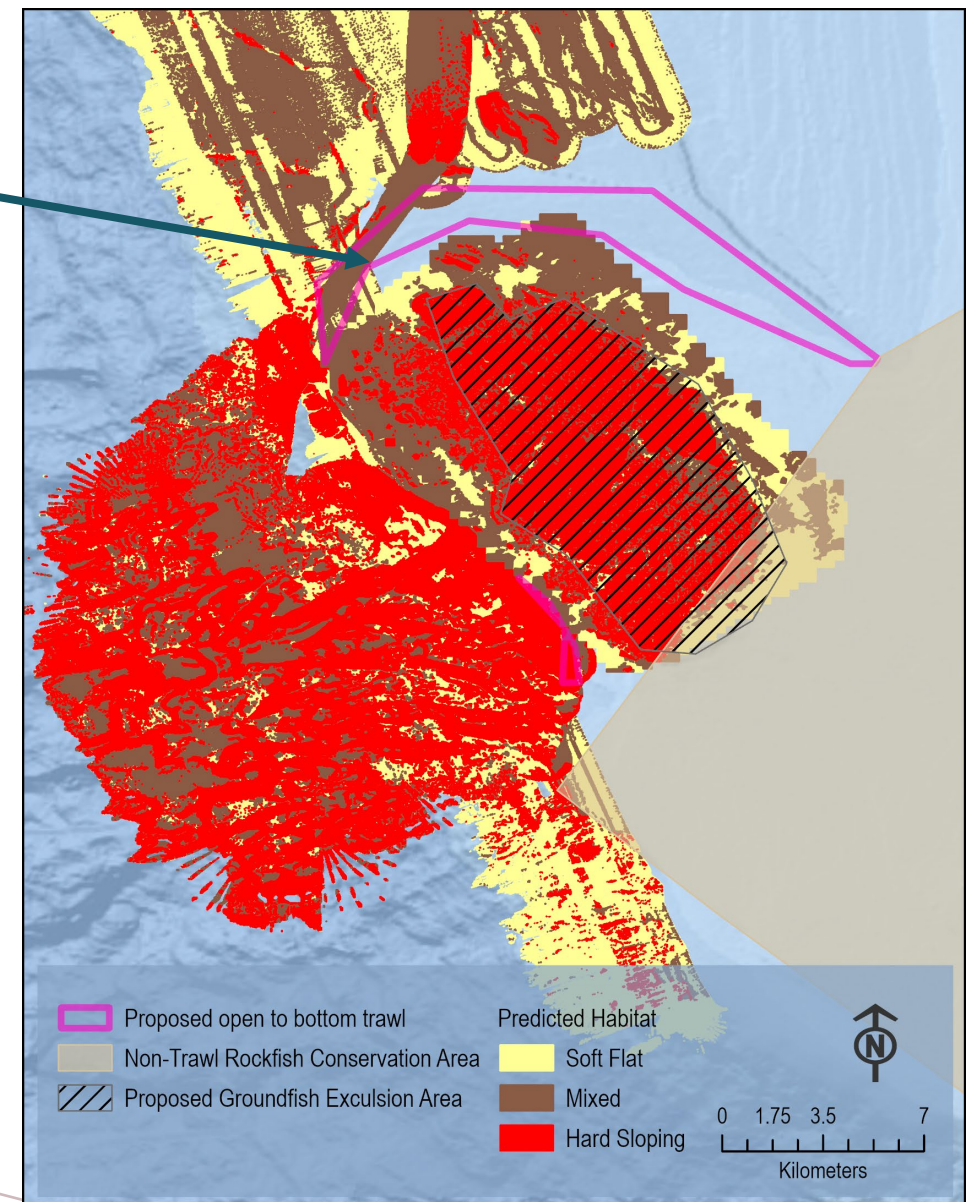
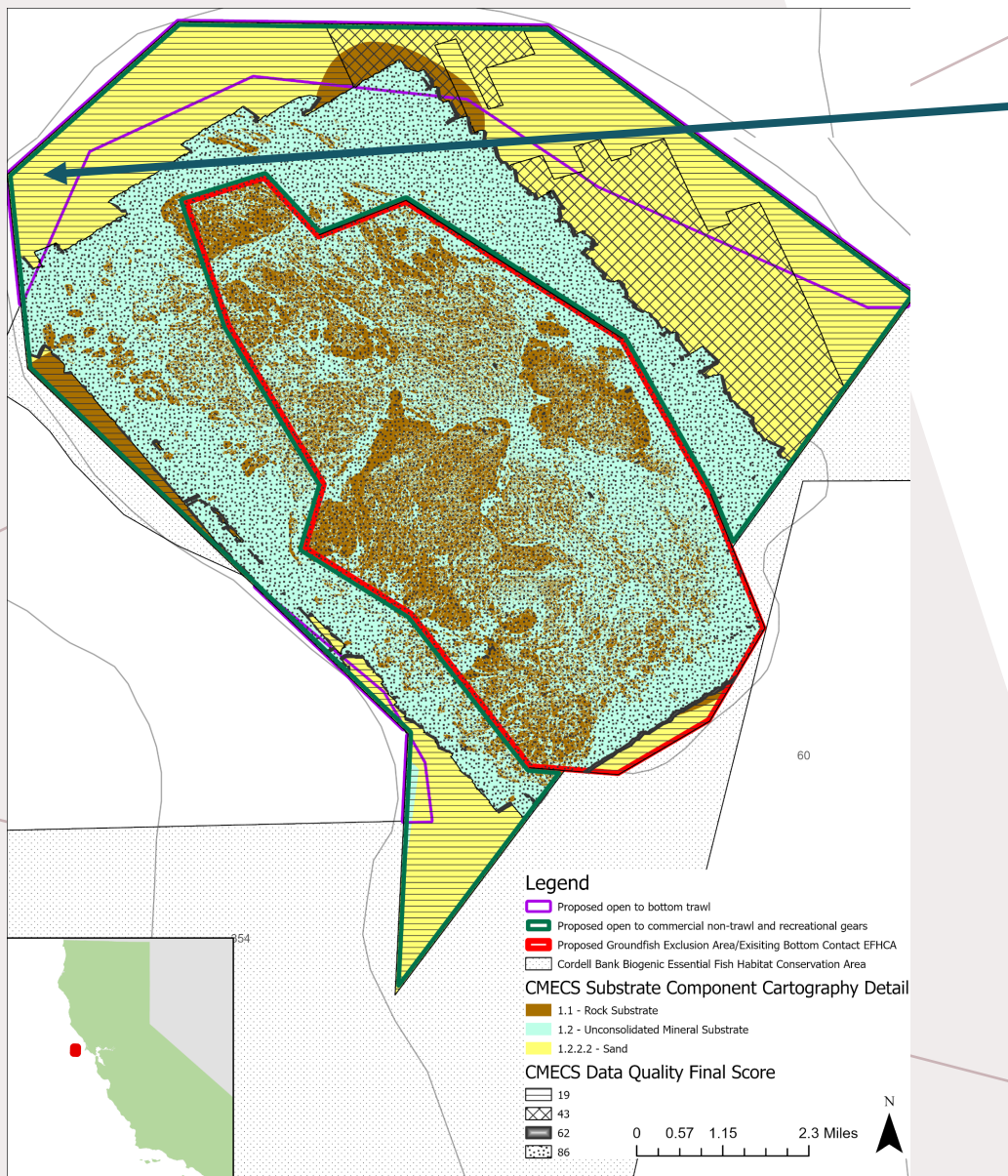
POTENTIAL IMPACTS (COMMERCIAL)

- Utilized WCGOP fishing effort data (2011-2021)
 - Limited observer coverage for non-catch shares fleet
 - Most likely comm sector= non-catch shares HKL
 - Likely limited overall shift into area given size, habitat, and location

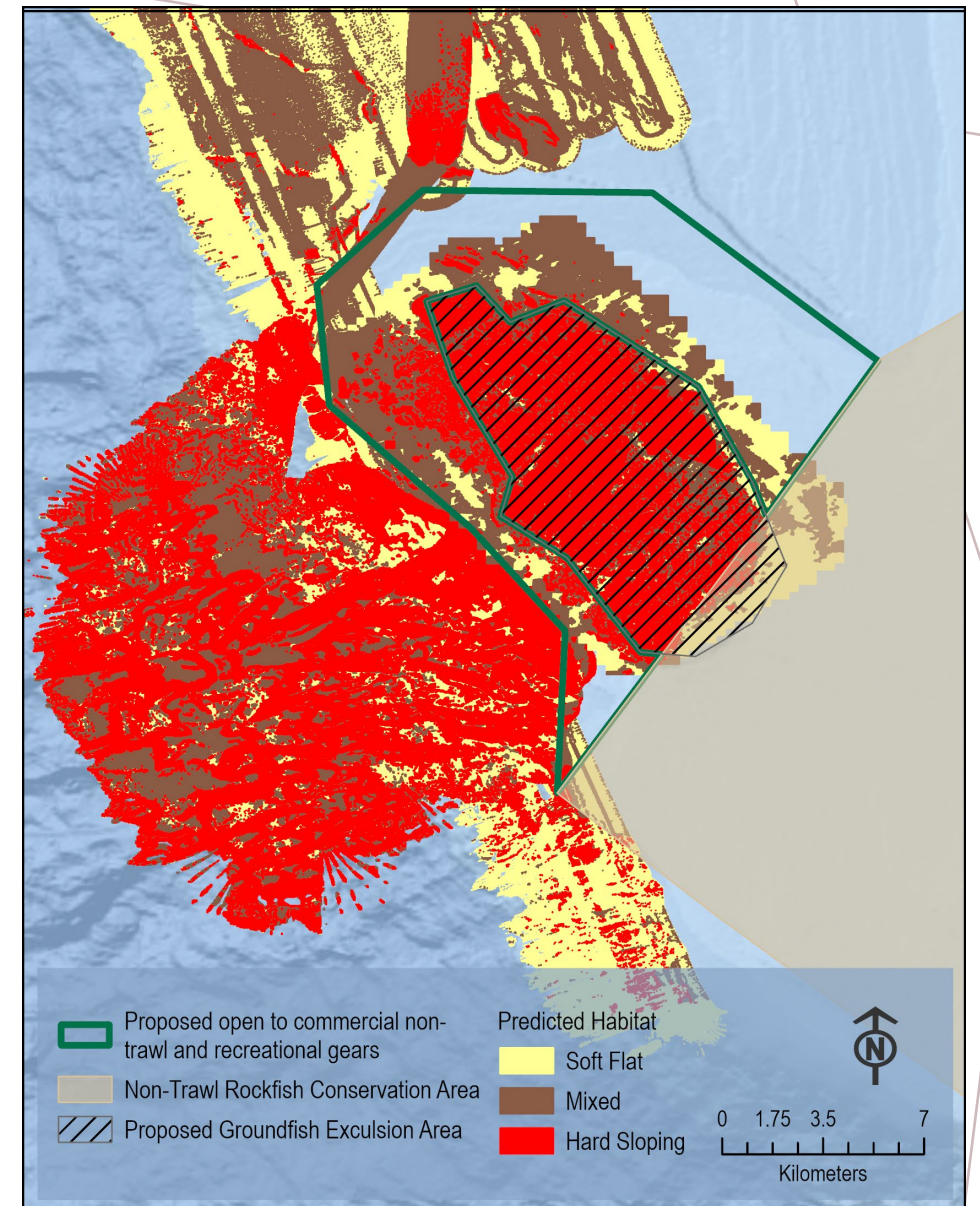
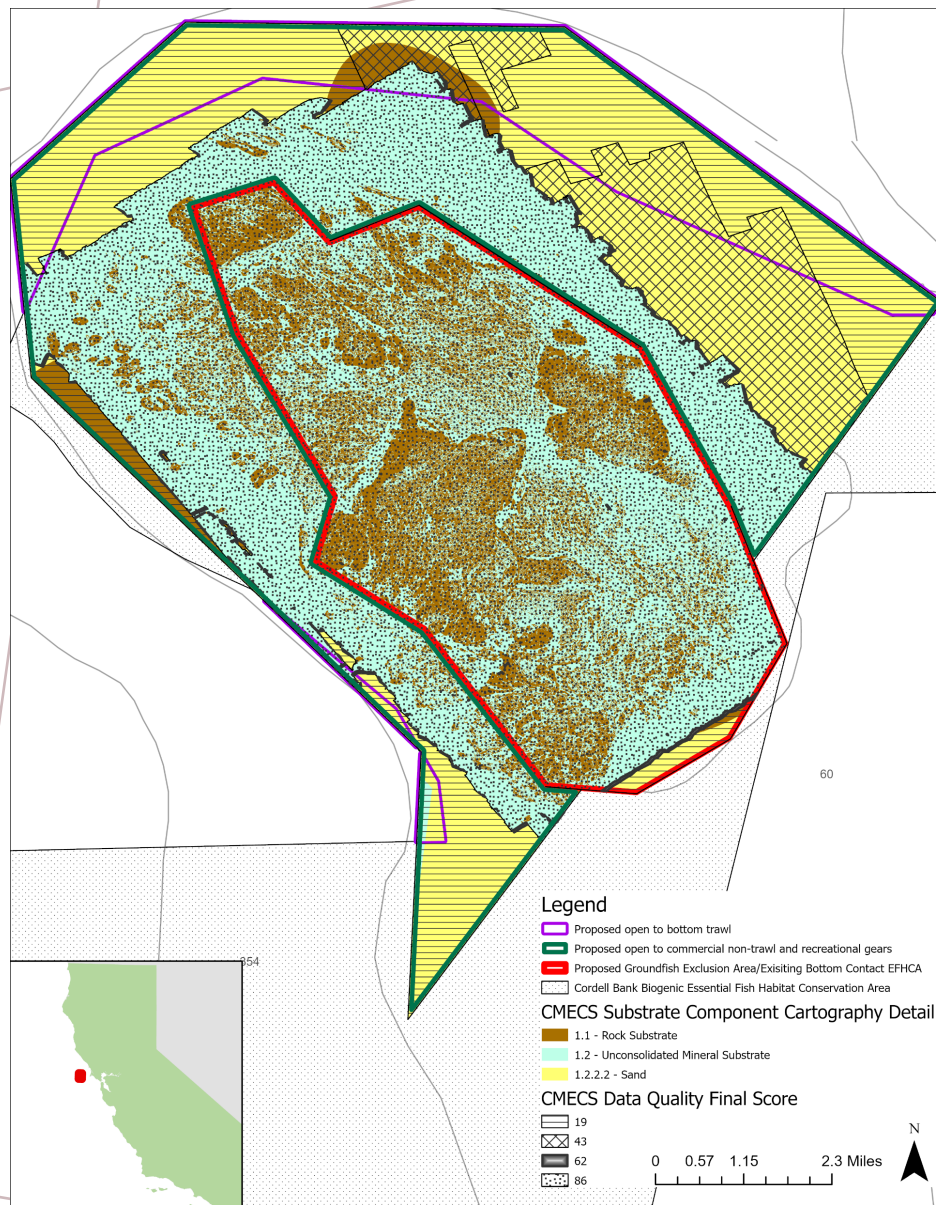


HABITAT ANALYSIS: DATA SOURCES

- Habitat type
 - Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership (PMEP) Database (CMECs classification)
 - ONMS Additional Data (Predicted Substrate)
- Corals, sponges, and sea pens
 - NOAA Deep-Sea Coral Observations
 - NOAA Deep-Sea Coral Modeling
 - ONMS Suitability Models

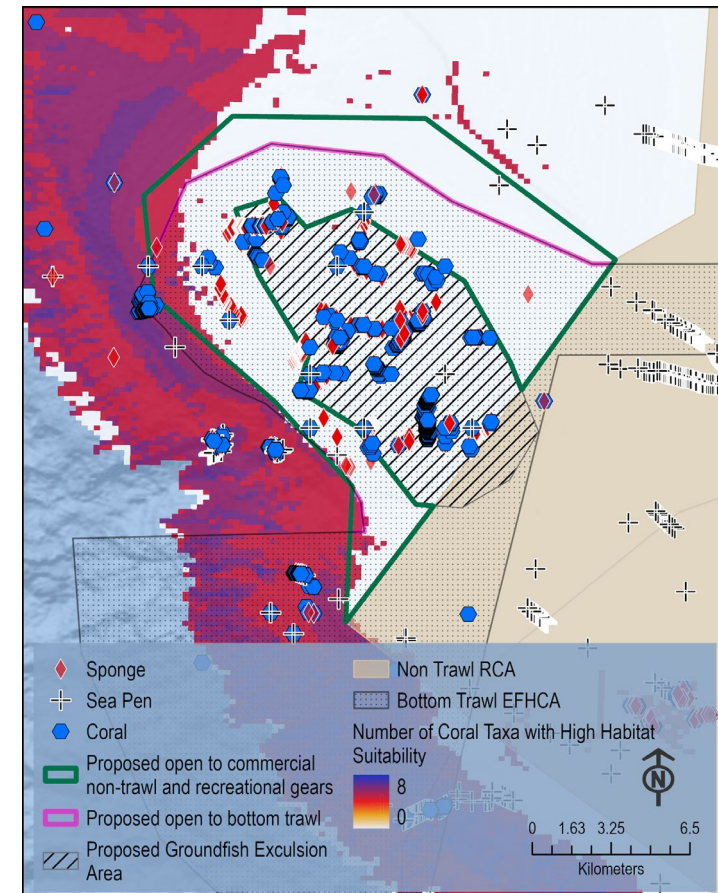
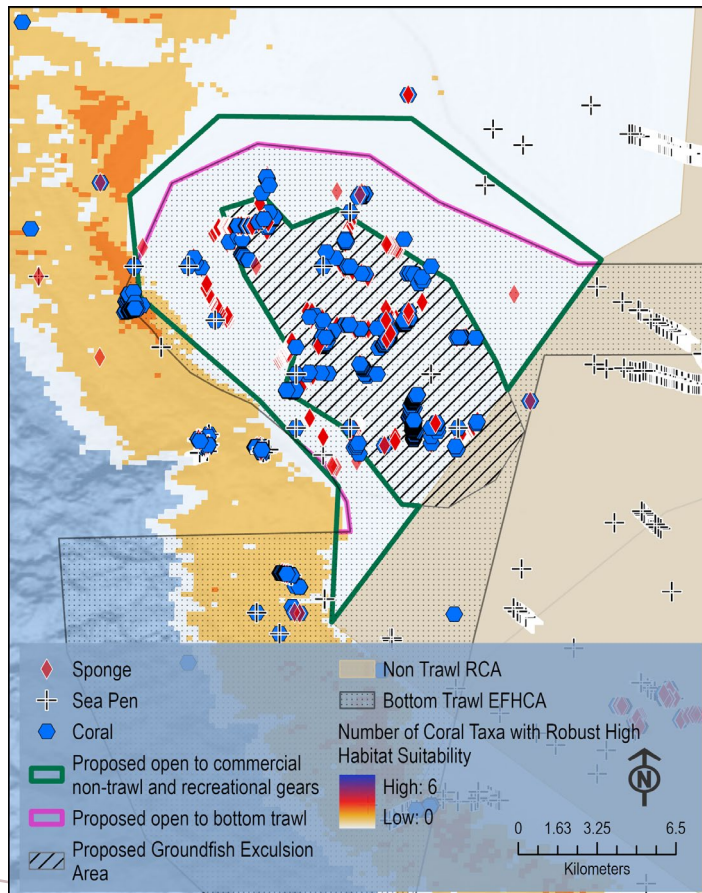


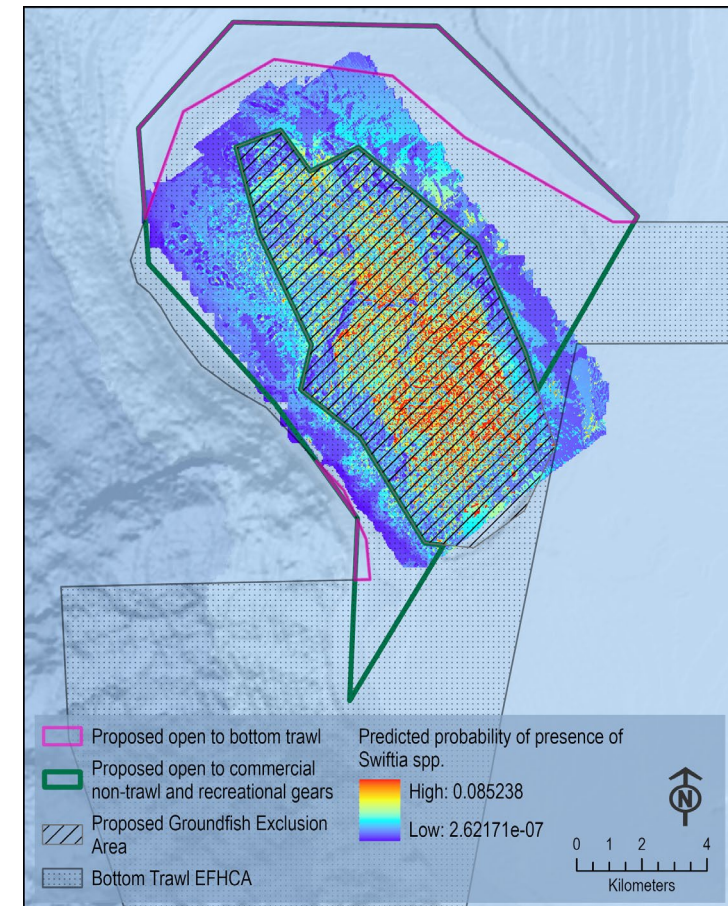
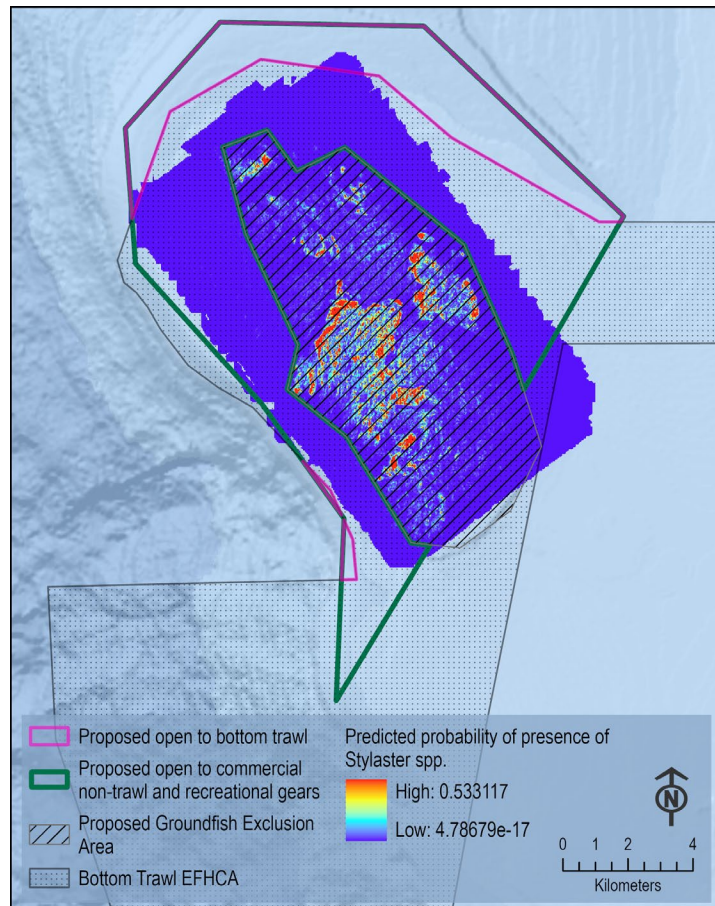
HABITAT TYPE



HABITAT TYPE

CORALS, SPONGES, AND SEA PENS





ONMS CORAL SUITABILITY MODELING

HABITAT IMPACTS SUMMARY

- Areas to be opened
 - 10.2 sq. mi. to bottom trawl
 - 40.1 sq. mi. to non-trawl commercial and recreational
- Areas to be closed
 - GEA bounds would limit any GF activity (any gear) from the EFHCA area
- Likely limited effort shift into areas, therefore impacts not likely to be significant



ANALYTICAL SUPPORT

Sage Tezak, ONMS

Andre Klein, CDFW

Kate Sherman, PSMFC



COUNCIL ACTION

ADOPT PURPOSE AND NEED, RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES,
AND PRELIMINARY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE, IF
POSSIBLE



QUESTIONS?