

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK IN SUPPORT OF PHASE 2 STOCK DEFINITIONS

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) supports the threshold framework used in [Agenda Item H.6, Supplemental REVISED Attachment 1, March 2025](#) as a logical and efficient approach to evaluate the large number of species in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The GMT also agrees the application of 25 percent is a reasonable proxy to determine the proportion of fishing-related mortality (i.e., total mortality) occurring in Federal waters that could impact stock status. The GMT discussed using a proxy other than 25 percent and did not identify a better value based on the analysis provided to date. Setting the proxy at 25 percent for distinguishing between species principally caught in Federal versus state waters should not be considered as a precedent for future actions, nor should it be considered binding or deterministic. The numeric value is a policy determination and is intended to provide a “first pass” at creating a more manageable subset of the current FMP species that are in need of further analysis. Thus, the Council could consider using another value in any future analysis if information suggested a different proxy would be more appropriate.

The GMT endorses the current Range of Alternatives (ROA) for the management Alternatives and the stock definitions Options laid out in Attachment 1, with the refinements recommended by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC).

The GMT reviewed the list of species presented in Table 30 (Group A) and Table 31 (Group B) of Attachment 1 and provides recommendations for Council consideration. The Group A and Group B binning helped guide initial discussions but was not considered a limiting or deterministic factor in sorting species based on whether or not they need further review. The GMT understands that Group A and Group B were simply intended to reflect the analysis outcomes and do not need to be carried forward into any action outcome. The GMT recommendations draw from both groups to i) identify species with sufficient information at this time to recommend a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA), where possible, and ii) identify species for which further review is warranted.

The GMT has identified 46 species as aligning with Alternative 1 at this time (Table 1, left column). After review of the material provided, and in consideration of the history of management, the GMT recommends selecting Alternative 1 as PPA to continue managing them in the FMP with harvest specifications. These Alternative 1 species include mostly Group A species but also include lingcod and vermilion rockfish (OR/WA), which are included within Table 31 of Attachment 1 (i.e., Group B). The GMT does not see a need for further review of these two Group B species under Alternatives 2 and 3, for the same reasons detailed in SSC report 1 ([Agenda Item H.6.a. Supplemental SSC Report 1](#)).

The GMT also proposes species for further analysis under the factors outlined in [§600.305\(c\)](#). These include species found both within Table 30 (Group A) and Table 31 (Group B) of Attachment 1 (Table 1, right column). The GMT is not recommending an alternative for these species to allow consideration of Alternatives 1-3 as well as the full stock definition options (Options 1-4) under Alternative 1.

Table 1. Species the GMT recommends for Alternative 1 (left column) as PPA and species for which the GMT recommends further analysis under all three Alternatives (right column).

Alternative 1 as PPA (N=46)	For further analysis (N=38)
Arrowtooth flounder	Black & yellow rockfish
Aurora rockfish	Black rockfish
Bank rockfish	Blue/deacon rockfish
Big skate	Bronzespotted rockfish
Blackgill rockfish	Brown rockfish
Bocaccio rockfish	Butter sole
California scorpionfish	Cabezon
Chilipepper rockfish	Calico rockfish
Canary rockfish	Chameleon rockfish
Cowcod	China rockfish
Darkblotched rockfish	Copper rockfish
Dover sole	Curlfin sole
English sole	Dwarf-red rockfish
Flathead sole	Flag rockfish
Greenspotted rockfish	Freckled rockfish
Greenstriped rockfish	Gopher rockfish
Harlequin rockfish	Grass rockfish
Lingcod	Greenblotched rockfish
Longnose skate	Halfbanded rockfish
Longspine thornyhead	Honeycomb rockfish
Pacific cod	Kelp greenling
Pacific hake	Kelp rockfish
Pacific ocean perch	Leopard shark
Pacific sanddab	Light dusky rockfish
Pacific spiny dogfish	Mexican rockfish
Petrale sole	Olive rockfish
Redbanded rockfish	Pink rockfish
Redstripe rockfish	Pinkrose rockfish
Rex sole	Pygmy rockfish
Rosethorn rockfish	Quillback rockfish
Rougeye/blackspotted rockfish	Rock sole
Sablefish	Rosy rockfish
Sharpchin rockfish	Sand sole
Shortraker rockfish	Speckled rockfish
Shortspine thornyhead	Starry flounder
Silvergray rockfish	Swordspine rockfish
Splitnose rockfish	Tiger rockfish
Squarespot rockfish	Treefish
Starry rockfish	
Stripetail rockfish	
Vermilion/sunset rockfish (CA)	
Vermilion rockfish (OR/WA)	
Widow rockfish	
Yelloweye rockfish	
Yellowmouth rockfish	
Yellowtail rockfish	

For the species the team recommends for Alternative 1, the analysis in Attachment 1 includes four options to define these species to stocks. Of the 46 total species identified in Table 1, left column, 18 already have defined stocks under Amendments 31 and 35, and the GMT does not see a need to change the stock definition for these species at this time. Of the remaining 28, only four have information available that could provide rationale for a stock definition different from Option 1 (i.e., Coastwide). The rationale for cowcod and harlequin rockfish can be found in Attachment 1, and the rationale for greenspotted and darkblotched rockfishes can be found in SSC Report 1. **For the remaining 24 species, the GMT recommends selecting Option 1 (i.e., Coastwide) as PPA for stock definitions (Table 2).**

Table 2. Stock definition Options for species the GMT is recommending Alternative 1 as PPA along with GMT recommendations, where possible.

Species	Opt. 1	Opt. 2	Opt. 3	Opt. 4	GMT PPA Recommendation
Arrowtooth flounder	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Aurora rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Bank rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Big skate	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Blackgill rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Bocaccio rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
California scorpionfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Cowcod	*	*			No recommendation
Darkblotched rockfish	*	*	*		No recommendation
Flathead sole	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Greenspotted rockfish	*	*			No recommendation
Greenstriped rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Harlequin rockfish	*	*			No recommendation
Longnose skate	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Longspine thornyhead	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Pacific cod	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Pacific hake	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Pacific ocean perch	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Pacific sanddab	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Redstripe rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Rosethorn rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Sharpchin rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Shortraker rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Silvergray rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Splitnose rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Starry rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Stripetail rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide
Yellowmouth rockfish	*				Option 1 - Coastwide

A comprehensive set of recommendations including identification of species to Alternative 1 with stock definitions and species for further review, organized by the original Group A/Group B format, can be found in Appendix 1.

Addressing the Washington Recreational Fishery

Analyses in Attachment 1 differed for the Washington recreational fishery because data to attribute mortality spatially to state or Federal waters are not available. Presently, two methods to address recreational species are proposed for WA: Proposal 1 which uses Oregon findings as a proxy, or Proposal 2 which would retain all species with WA mortality in the FMP. At this meeting, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) staff shared a third approach to address this lack of spatial data for the recreational fishery, which relies on interviews of charter skippers and anglers with extensive experience and expertise to determine where species are principally caught. In character, this is not unlike some information underlying the OR and CA recreational analysis that relies on sampling program angler interviews to determine if catch occurred in state or Federal waters. Washington also conducts a coastwide rockfish survey that may provide information on rockfish species distribution. The GMT understands that WDFW will bring forward data and the analysis it is conducting for evaluation and to inform the process consistent with Council action on this agenda item for June. Therefore, the GMT does not see a need for the Council to select either Proposal 1 or 2 at this time.

§600.305(c) Considerations

Regarding the forthcoming analysis under the factors outlined in §600.305(c), the GMT recommends that the analysis of catch be extended to include more historical data, to the extent that available data streams are found to be appropriate and reliable by analytical staff. As highlighted in SSC Report 1, historical catch of some species flagged for additional analysis is dramatically different from what is currently seen in the fishery. The inclusion of this data may help address concerns surrounding the effect of management on the current proportionality of catch, as well as consideration of potential ecosystem component species. Additionally, the team sees merit in providing a review of available ecosystem literature appropriate to those species where currently included information is not informative on the need of conservation and management. When considering Factor 5 regarding importance to commercial, recreational, and subsistence users, the team requests that the analysts look at more than only revenue data and include other aspects of importance, such as ecosystem value. Finally, Council staff conducting additional analysis should provide the States and Tribes with an opportunity for direct input under relevant factor(s) for those species which they deem of importance and flagged for additional analysis.

PFMC
03/08/25

Appendix 1 - Complete set of GMT Recommendations, in the original Group A/Group B Sorting

BOLD	<= Selected for Alternative 1, Stock Definition PPA Identified
<i>ITALICS</i>	<= Selected for Alternative 1, Stock Already Defined Under Amendment 31 or 35

"Group A" Species	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Stock Definition Recommendation/ROA & PPA
Arrowtooth flounder	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Aurora rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Bank rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Big skate	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Blackgill rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Bocaccio rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Bronzespotted rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Butter sole	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
California scorpionfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
<i>Chilipepper rockfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
<i>Canary rockfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Cowcod rockfish	*			ROA - Option 1, 2
Curlfin sole	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Darkblotched rockfish	*			ROA - Option 1, 2, 3
<i>Dover sole</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
<i>English sole</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Flag rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Flathead sole	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Freckled rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Greenblotched rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Greenspotted rockfish	*			ROA - Option 1, 2
Greenstriped rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Halfbanded rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Honeycomb rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Harlequin rockfish	*			ROA - Option 1, 2
Longnose skate	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Longspine thornyhead	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1

Mexican rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Pacific cod	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Pacific hake	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Pacific ocean perch	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Pacific sanddab	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
<i>Pacific spiny dogfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
<i>Petrale sole</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Pink rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Pinkrose rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Pygmy rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
<i>Redbanded rockfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Redstripe rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
<i>Rex sole</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Rosethorn rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
<i>Rougheye/blackspotted rockfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
<i>Sablefish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Sharpchin rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Shortraker rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
<i>Shortspine thornyhead</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Silvergray rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Speckled rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Splitnose rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
<i>Squarespot rockfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Starry rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Stripetail rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
Swordspine rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
<i>Vermilion/sunset rockfish (CA)</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
<i>Widow rockfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
<i>Yelloweye rockfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Yellowmouth rockfish	*			ROA/PPA - Option 1
<i>Yellowtail rockfish</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>

"Group B" Species	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Stock Definition Recommendation/ROA
Black & yellow rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Black rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Blue/deacon rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Brown rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Cabezon	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Calico rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Chameleon rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
China rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Copper rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Dwarf-red rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Gopher rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Grass rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Kelp greenling	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Kelp rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Leopard shark	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Light dusky rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
<i>Lingcod</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>
Olive rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Quillback rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Rock sole	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Rosy rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Sand sole	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Starry flounder	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Tiger rockfish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
Treefish	*	*	*	No recommendation, pending further analysis
<i>Vermilion rockfish (OR/WA)</i>	*			<i>ALREADY DEFINED</i>