

PHASE 2 STOCK DEFINITIONS: SUMMARY OF DECISION POINTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2025

This document is intended to provide a highly summarized synopsis of the Phase 2 Stock Definitions action. The role of the following is to supplement the analyses in Attachment 1 and its Appendix and is meant to simplify the decision points of this action for the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Advisory Bodies.

In brief, there are several main decision points for the Council to consider in adopting a final preferred alternative (FPA) for 42 groundfish species. First, the Council should adopt an alternative from the range of the three alternatives. Second, for the species adopted under Alternative 1, the Council should adopt a stock definition Option.

The Council is considering three alternatives and three Options under Alternative 1 (Figure 1):

- Alternative 1 would identify the species as in need of conservation and management in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), thus the species would remain in the fishery management plan (FMP). Stocks of species that have not yet been defined under Amendment 31 would need to be defined.
- Alternative 2 would identify the species as *not* in need of conservation and management in the EEZ, and would remove the species from the FMP and, thus, from Federal management.
- Alternative 3 would identify the species as *not* in need of conservation and management in the EEZ and designate them as an ecosystem component (EC) species, thus the species would remain in the FMP to some extent.

Under Alternative 1, the Council is considering three stock definition Options:

- Option 1: Single stock, single area
- Option 2: Two stocks, two areas
- Option 3: Three stocks, three areas

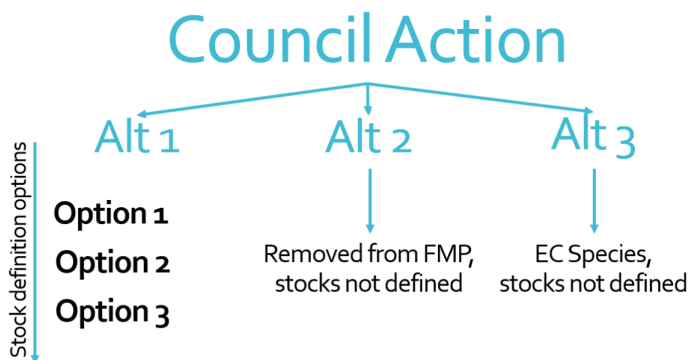


Figure 1. Overview of the Range of Alternatives and Options for this action. Species under Alternative 1 ARE in need of conservation and management in the EEZ, species under Alternatives 2 & 3 ARE NOT in need of conservation and management in the EEZ

1.1 FPA Decision Point

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Draft Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Regulatory Flexibility Analysis/MSA Analysis for Proposed Amendment to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan and Appendix, including the §600.305(c) 10 Factor Analysis of 42 Groundfish Species and a Range of Alternatives to Support Council Decision-Making for a Final Preferred Alternative

Attachment 2: Draft Language for Amendment [TBD] to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan

At their June 2025 meeting, the Council adopted a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) Alternative for 40 of the 42 groundfish species considered in this action and is now contemplating their FPA. [Agenda Item E.6, Supplemental Attachment 2, June 2025](#) provided the analysis for 40 species under the 10 Factors at §600.305(c) (the ‘10 Factors’) to support a PPA at the June Council meeting. All species were considered under the three alternatives.

The Council adopted Alternative 1 as PPA for the species (or stocks¹) shown in Table 1. Alternative 1 would identify these species as in need of conservation and management in the EEZ. The species would continue to be actively managed by the Council.

Table 1. Groundfish species adopted under Alternative 1 as PPA. Stocks of the italicized species previously defined under Amendment 31. For species that have not had their stocks defined, the parentheses denote the proposed stocks in need of conservation and management in the EEZ, per the PPA.

<i>Black rockfish (OR and WA)</i>	<i>Cabezon (WA)</i>	<i>Kelp greenling (WA)</i>
<i>Blue/Deacon rockfish (OR and WA)</i>	<i>Copper rockfish (WA/OR)</i>	<i>Quillback rockfish (WA, OR, CA)</i>

The Council adopted Alternative 2 as PPA for the species (or stocks) shown in Table 2. Alternative 2 would identify these species (or stocks) as not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ. These species would be removed from the FMP.

Table 2. Groundfish species adopted under Alternative 2 as PPA.

Black and yellow rockfish	China rockfish	Harlequin rockfish	Olive rockfish
Black rockfish (CA)	Copper rockfish (CA)	Honeycomb rockfish	Pink rockfish
Blue rockfish (CA)	Dwarf red rockfish	Kelp greenling (OR/CA)	Pinkrose rockfish
Brown rockfish	Freckled rockfish	Kelp rockfish	Pygmy rockfish
Cabezon (OR/CA)	Gopher rockfish	Leopard shark	Swordspine rockfish
Calico rockfish	Grass rockfish	Light dusky rockfish	Treefish
Chameleon rockfish	Half-banded rockfish		

¹ Note, ‘stocks’ in this context applies to both those already defined (under Amendment 31), as well as the potential range of stock definition Options for each species adopted by the Council in March 2025 ([Agenda Item H.6 Supplemental Revised Attachment 1, March 2025](#)).

The Council adopted Alternative 3 as PPA for the species shown in Table 3. Alternative 3 would identify these species as not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ; these species would be designated as EC species in Chapter 3 of the FMP.

Table 3. Groundfish species adopted under Alternative 3 as PPA.

Bronzespotted rockfish	Mexican rockfish	Tiger rockfish	Rock sole
Flag rockfish	Rosy rockfish	Butter sole	Sand sole
Greenblotched rockfish	Speckled rockfish	Curlfin sole	Starry flounder

In March 2025, the Council adopted Alternative 1, Option 1 (single stock, coastwide) as PPA for stripetail and rosethorn rockfishes. However, in June 2025, the Council was still undecided on an FPA for stripetail and rosethorn rockfish species and directed staff to evaluate these species under the 10 Factors found at §600.305(c) in order to consider all three alternatives. The next step is for the Council to adopt an FPA among Alternatives 1-3, and a stock definition Option (as applicable), for these two species.

Table 4. Groundfish species evaluated via the 10 Factors since June, adopted under Alternative 1 as PPA in March

Stripetail rockfish	Rosethorn rockfish
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Stock Definition Options:

The Council could adopt Alternative 1 for any or all of the 42 species considered under this action, thus this section presents the PPA stock definition Option for species adopted under Alternative 1 and potential stock definitions for the remaining species (or stocks, as applicable).

The Council adopted Option 1 (single stock, single area) for cabezon and kelp greenling and Option 2 (two stocks, two areas) for blue and deacon rockfishes as PPA (Table 5). Out of the species with Alternative 1 as PPA, there are 4 species that require stock definitions: blue and deacon rockfishes, cabezon, and kelp greenling. As described above, the Council adopted Alternative 1 and Option 1 as PPA for both rosethorn and stripetail rockfishes in March (see Table 5); however, based on recommendations by the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel and Groundfish Management Team, the Council directed staff to complete a full 10-Factor analysis for these species to inform their final decision on FPA in September.

Table 5. The Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) Option, proposed stock delineation(s), population structure (Pop Struct), current management scale, assessment year (Assess Yr.), assessment category and area stratification for the species without defined stocks considered under Option 1

Species	Opt.	Potential Stock Delineations
Blue/ Deacon Rockfish	2 (PPA)	Oregon and Washington
Cabezon	1 (PPA)	Washington
Kelp Greenling	1 (PPA)	Washington
Rosethorn Rockfish	1 (PPA)	Coastwide
Stripetail rockfish	1 (PPA)	Coastwide

Black, copper, and quillback rockfishes were defined under Amendment 31 and their definitions are not reconsidered as part of this action (Table 1). Black and copper rockfishes would remain in the FMP under their current delineations off of Oregon and Washington only; whereas, quillback rockfish would remain as three stocks, as indicated in Table 6. All species adopted under Alternative 1 would remain in the FMP and continue to be actively managed by the Council.

Table 6. The stocks defined under Amendment 31 and their delineations to remain in the FMP, per the PPA, under this action.

Species	Stock(s)
Black rockfish	An Oregon stock and a Washington stock
Copper rockfish	Washington and Oregon stock
Quillback rockfish	Washington stock, Oregon stock, and California stock

If the Council adopts Alternative 1 for any of the remaining species that do not already have their stocks defined, the next step is to adopt an FPA stock definition Option. Therefore, of the 42 species considered in this action, stocks for up to 39 could be defined, depending on how many species are adopted under Alternative 1. Table 7 outlines the potential stock definition Option delineations for Council consideration.

Table 7. Potential PPA stock definitions Options for all 39 species without definitions, if adopted under Alternative 1

Species	Opt 1	Opt 2	Opt 3	Proposed Stock Delineations
Black and yellow rockfish	*	*	*	Opt 1 Coastwide or California/Oregon or Opt 2 California and Oregon
Blue rockfish	*	*	*	Opt 1 Coastwide, Opt 2 N/S of 42° N. lat. Opt 3 state-specific
Bronzespotted rockfish	*			Opt1 Coastwide or California-only
Brown rockfish	*	*	*	Opt 1 Coastwide, Opt 2 N/S of 42° N. lat. Opt 3 state-specific
Butter sole	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Cabazon	*	*	*	Opt 1 Coastwide, Opt 2 N/S of 42° N. lat. Opt 3 state-specific
Calico rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only
Chameleon rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only
China rockfish	*	*	*	Opt 1 Coastwide, Opt 2 N/S of 42° N. lat. Opt 3 state-specific
Curlfin sole	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Deacon rockfish	*	*	*	Opt 1 Coastwide, Opt 2 N/S of 42° N. lat. Opt 3 state-specific
Dwarf-red rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only
Flag rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California/Oregon or Opt 2 California and Oregon
Freckled rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only
Gopher rockfish	*	*		Opt 1 Coastwide or California/Oregon or Opt 2 California and Oregon

Species	Opt 1	Opt 2	Opt 3	Proposed Stock Delineations
Grass rockfish	*	*		Opt 1. Coastwide or California/Oregon or Opt 2 California and Oregon
Greenblotched rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Halfbanded rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Harlequin rockfish	*	*		Opt 1 Coastwide or Oregon/Washington. Opt 2. Oregon, and Washington
Honeycomb rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only
Kelp greenling	*	*	*	Opt 1 Coastwide, Opt 2 N/S of 42° N. lat. Opt 3 state-specific,
Kelp rockfish	*	*		Opt 1 Coastwide or California/Oregon or Opt 2. California and Oregon
Light dusky rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or Oregon/Washington. Opt 2. Oregon, and Washington
Leopard shark	*	*		Opt 1 Coastwide or California/Oregon or Opt 2. California and Oregon
Mexican rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only
Olive rockfish a/	*	*		Opt 1 Coastwide or California/Oregon or Opt 2 California and Oregon
Pink rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California/Oregon or Opt 2 California and Oregon
Pinkrose rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only
Pygmy rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Rock sole	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Rosethorn rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Rosy rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Sand sole	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Speckled rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Starry flounder	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Stripetail rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Swordspine rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only
Tiger rockfish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide
Treefish	*			Opt 1 Coastwide or California-only

PFMC
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