

G2. Phase 2 Stock Definitions – Final Action

September 2025

Introduction

- The Council is required to identify stocks in need of conservation and management in the EEZ, per the MSA
- Process to determine this is provided in National Standards guidance at Section 600.305(c)
- Larger “stock definitions” action with multiple subparts



September 2024

Scoping

Purpose and Need

September 2024

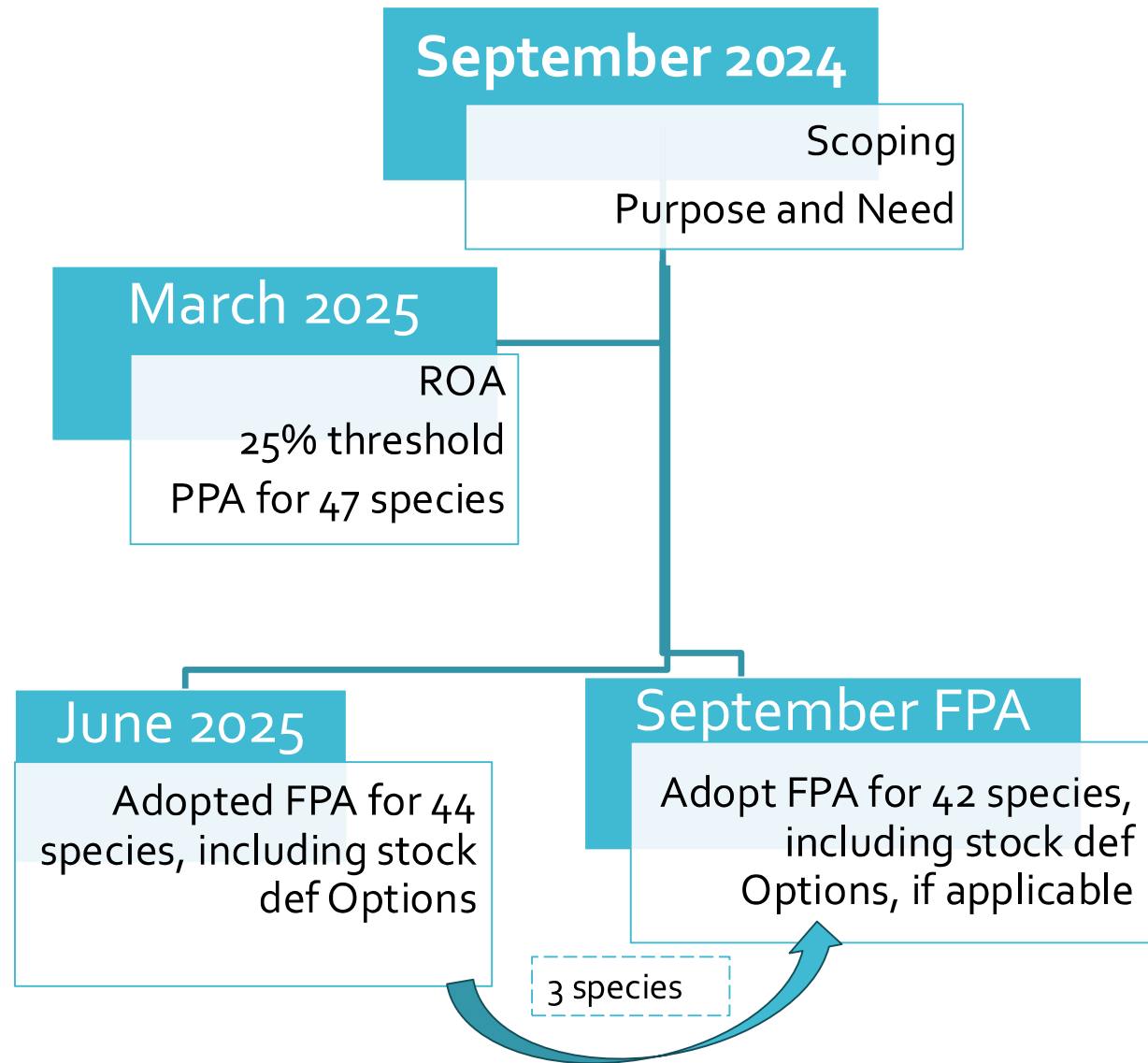
Scoping

Purpose and Need

March 2025

ROA

25% threshold
PPA for 47 species



Council Action:
Adopt Final Preferred
Alternatives for 42
Species, including an
FMP Amendment

Council FPA Tasks

1. Adopt FPA for the 42 remaining species, as appropriate
2. Adopt the FPA stock definition Options for the species adopted under Alternative 1, if not previously defined, as appropriate
3. Adopt revised language to the FMP in conjunction with PPA decision-making, as appropriate
4. Provide guidance on next steps, as appropriate

September FPA

Materials

- Attachment 1 – Draft EA/RIR/RFA/MSA Analysis and Appendix with 10 Factor Analysis and Stock Definitions Analysis
- Attachment 2 – Draft Language for FMP Amendment
- Attachment 3 – Summary of Decision Points
- State, AB, and SSC Reports

Council Action

Adopt Final Preferred Alternative including a Fishery Management Plan Amendment

Alternatives

No Action: All species remain in FMP as currently defined and managed. The Council would not define stocks of the species in the FMP other than the ones already defined.

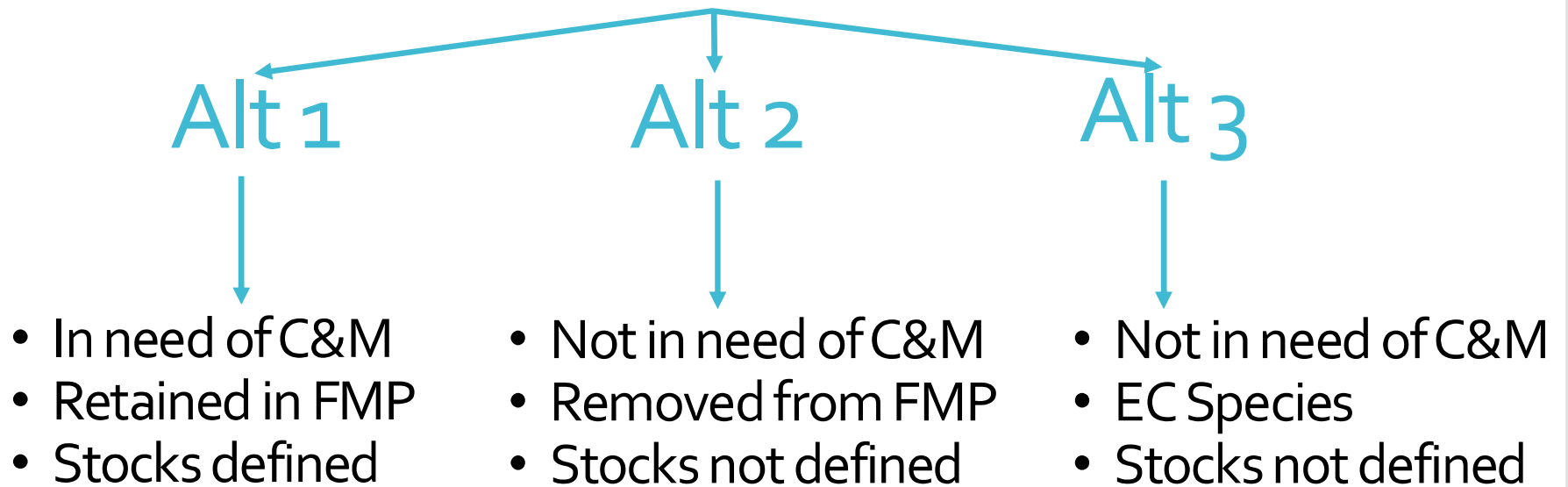
Alternative 1: Species/stocks identified as in need of conservation and management in the EEZ and would remain in the FMP.

- Stocks defined (**Options 1, 2, 3**)

Alternative 2: Species/stocks identified as not in need of conservation and management. Stocks of the species not defined and species removed from FMP.

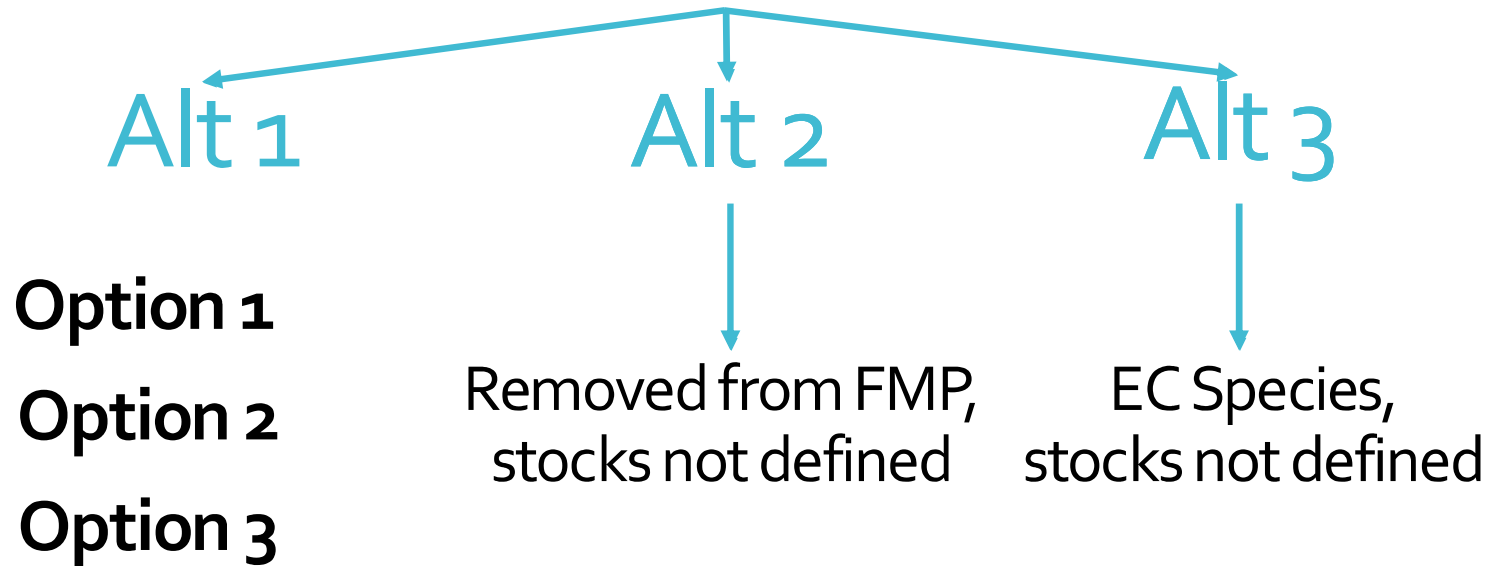
Alternative 3: Species/stocks identified as not in need of conservation and management. Species identified as an ecosystem component (EC) species in FMP Chapter 3. Stocks of the species not defined.

Council Action



Council Action

Stock definition options



Alternatives

Alternative 1: Species identified as in need of conservation and management in the EEZ and would remain in the FMP. Stocks of the species will be defined as one or more stocks, consistent with the options below.

- **Option 1** would amend the FMP to define the species as a single stock within the Fishery Management Unit (FMU).
- **Option 2** would amend the FMP to define the species as two stocks within the FMU.
- **Option 3** would amend the FMP to define the species as three stocks within the FMU.

Stock Definition Aspects

- Definition delineates stock boundaries
- Status is determined at same scale as definition
- OFL/ABC is at same scale as geographic definition
- ABC/ACL could be subdivided into regional amounts

PPA: March and June 2025

- **March**

- Alternative 1 adopted as PPA – stripetail and rosethorn rockfishes

- **June**

- Stripetail, rosethorn, harlequin rockfishes added to 10 Factor Analysis
- 40 species adopted under one of the action Alternatives as PPA bringing the total to 42 for September

PPA: Alt 1

In total, 7 species or stocks of species preliminarily found to be in need of conservation and management in the EEZ

Species	Stock Preliminarily found in need of C&M	PPA Stock Delineations
Blue/Deacon Rockfish	OR and WA	2 Stocks: OR and WA
Cabazon	WA	1 Stock: WA-Only
Kelp Greenling	WA	1 Stock: WA-Only
Stripetail Rockfish	NA*	1 Stock: Coastwide
Rosethorn Rockfish	NA*	1 Stock: Coastwide
Black Rockfish**	OR and WA	2 of 3 Stocks: OR and WA
Copper Rockfish**	OR and WA	1 of 2 Stocks: WA and OR
Quillback Rockfish**	CA, OR, WA	3 Stocks: WA, OR, CA

*Species adopted under Alternative 1 as PPA in March 2025 but added to full 10-Factor evaluation in June 2025. No determination yet on need for conservation and management in the EEZ.

**Stocks already defined via A31 or A35

Stock Definition Aspects

- Of the species adopted under Alt 1, 6 need stock definitions
- Proposed definitions are
 - Consistent with Literature Review and BSIA
 - Consistent with assessment delineations
 - Consistent with current management

PPA: Alt 2

26 species or stocks of species were preliminarily determined not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ, proposed for removal from the FMP

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

*Species added to full 10-Factor Analysis in June 2025

PPA: Alt 3

12 species were preliminarily determined not in need of C&M in the EEZ, proposed for designation as EC species

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

Appendix to Attachment 1

10-Factor 600.305(c) Analysis of 42 Species

***Stock Definitions Analysis of Species
Under Alt 1 PPA***

305(c) 10 Factors - Conservation & Management in the EEZ

- Decision should be based on consideration of 10 Factors at §600.305(c), determination of whether species is in need of conservation and management in the EEZ
- Evaluation considers specific circumstances of fishery
- Biological, economic, social, operational considers that can and should be addressed by Federal management
- No factor dispositive or required

305(c) 10 Factors

- (i) The stock is an important component of the marine environment.
- (ii) The stock is caught by the fishery.
- (iii) Whether an FMP can improve or maintain the condition of the stock.
- (iv) The stock is a target of a fishery.
- (v) The stock is important to commercial, recreational, or subsistence users.
- (vi) The fishery is important to the Nation or to the regional economy.
- (vii) The need to resolve competing interests and conflicts among user groups and whether an FMP can further that resolution.
- (viii) The economic condition of a fishery and whether an FMP can produce more efficient utilization.
- (ix) The needs of a developing fishery, and whether an FMP can foster orderly growth.
- (x) The extent to which the fishery is already adequately managed by states, by state/Federal programs, or by Federal regulations pursuant to other FMPs or international commissions, or by industry self-regulation, consistent with the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other applicable law.

305(c) 10 Factors

1. Address Factors (i) - (iii), considering the stock's role as a fishery resource and component of the marine environment.
2. Address Factors (iv) – (ix), considering the key economic and social reasons for conservation and management.
3. Consider Factor (x) before deciding to remove a stock from or continue to include a stock in the FMP.

*Other considerations - Vulnerability

Analysis – Other considerations

Vulnerability: Productivity-Susceptibility Analysis (PSA)

- Requested by SSC to evaluate species for EC designation
- Analyzed for West Coast groundfish in Cope et al (2011)
- PSA is dated, does not account for area of principal mortality, but provides some helpful adjunct information
- Differentiates stocks of low, medium, high, and major concern of vulnerability to the fishery

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis

Are the additional species in need of conservation and management?

- **Factor (i)** – Species in this analysis occupy a diverse range of habitats, depths, serve as predator & prey; considered important components of the marine environment
- **Factor (vii)** – The FMP and Council process broadly provide an avenue for communication, stakeholder input, use of BSIA; analysis does not necessarily support one alt or another
- **Factor (x)** – states manage nearshore rockfish in state waters; this analysis does not speak to states' ability to independently manage

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis – Additional Deep Shelf Species

Stripetail and Rosethorn Rockfishes

- Factors (ii) and (iii) weigh in favor of finding to be in need of conservation and management
 - Principal mortality in the EEZ
- Factors (iv), (v), (vi) weigh against need of conservation and management
 - Not identified as important to fishery participants or the region
- Factors (viii) and (ix) may weigh in favor of finding to be in need of conservation and management or at least monitoring as EC
 - Recent increases in commercial and recreational landings

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis – Additional Deep Shelf Species

Harlequin Rockfish

- Factors (ii) and (iii) may weigh against finding to be in need of conservation and management
 - Principal mortality in the EEZ, but de minimis catch
- Factors (iv)-(ix) weigh against need of conservation and management
 - Not identified as important to fishery participants or the region
 - No developing fishery present

Council Task - FPA

Adjustments to FPA from PPA as needed

- Species added to full evaluation
- Additional, fishery or species-specific rationale
- Different conclusion from preliminary finding of need for conservation and management in the EEZ
- Moving species not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ between alternatives 2 & 3
- Guidance based on FPA decision, as appropriate

Ensuring Consistent Rationale

Species with Inconsistent PPA Rationale

Alt 1 PPA Stock	Stock with similar Factor (ii) & (iii) conclusions
Black rockfish (OR)	Black rockfish (CA)
Blue/deacon rockfish (OR and WA)	Blue rockfish (CA)
Quillback rockfish (CA and OR)	Other nearshore rockfish in CA/OR (i.e. Brown rockfish)
Cabazon (WA)	Cabazon (OR/CA)
Kelp Greenling	Kelp Greenling (OR/CA)

→ Each stock does not have principal mortality in the EEZ, Factors (ii) and (iii) do not support finding

Ensuring Consistent Rationale

Additional Consideration for Copper Rockfish

- Stocks already defined via A₃₁ → CA and OR/WA stocks
- Principal mortality off WA is in the EEZ (0.87 mt)
- Total mortality for OR/WA stock is principally in state waters (10.63 percent)

Environmental Assessment

***Attachment 1:
Draft EA/RIR/RFA/MSA Analysis***

Resource Components

Resource Components with Possible Impacts				
Component	Groundfish Species Considered for Removal or EC Designation	All other Groundfish Species in the FMU	Essential Fish Habitat	Social and Economic Resources
Impact Finding				
No Action/ Alt 1	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact
Alt 2	No Significant Impact	No Impact	No Impact	No Significant Impact
Alt 3	No Significant Impact	No Impact	No Impact	No Significant Impact

Impact Analysis

Groundfish species considered for removal or EC designation

- Fishing operations in the EEZ not expected to change
- Species are not considered 'caught in the fishery' in the EEZ or caught in small numbers
- Changes to management and scientific monitoring
 - NMFS no longer responsible for data collection, assessments
- IFQ
 - Shelf Rockfish North complex, the Shelf Rockfish South complex, the Other Flatfish complex, and starry flounder impacted
 - Low individual vessel attainment, low contributions of species considered
 - Starry flounder is only individual quota, has low value

Other groundfish species in the FMU

- Fishing operations in the EEZ not expected to change
- Low contributions of removed species to complex ACL attainment
- Changes to management
 - Reduces workload on assessors
 - Require management changes to stock complexes
 - Could increase management burden on states, temporarily on fishery participants

Essential Fish Habitat

- Boundary/extent would not be affected
- Overlap between species, minimal changes in habitat types covered expected

Impact Analysis

Economic and Social Resources

- Described with groundfish resources
- Additional analysis to come with RIR/RFA

Tribal and Cultural Resources

- PPA generally aligns with Tribal requests
- Additional analysis to come if FPA changes from PPA
- Some potential changes to set-asides process

Council Action:
Adopt Final Preferred
Alternatives for 42
Species, including an
FMP Amendment

Council FPA Tasks

1. Adopt FPA for the 42 remaining species, as appropriate
2. Adopt the FPA stock definition Options for the species adopted under Alternative 1, if not previously defined, as appropriate
3. Adopt revised language to the FMP in conjunction with PPA decision-making, as appropriate
4. Provide guidance on next steps, as appropriate



Questions?

Additional Appendix Slides

Analysis Factors (i) – (iii)

- **Factor (i) - The stock is an important component of the marine environment**
 - Review of groundfish ecology
 - Index scoring based on EcoSim model (not all species)
 - Overall, all species important to the marine environment in some way
- **Factor (ii) – The stock is caught by the fishery**
 - 'Fishery' = in the EEZ
 - Principal mortality - 25% threshold adopted by the Council in March 2025
 - Considered 'mixed mortality'
 - Conclusions also considered de minimis catch
- **Factor (iii) – whether an FMP can improve the condition of the stock**
 - Ties to goal of FMP
 - Principal mortality - 25% threshold adopted by the Council in March 2025

Analysis
Factors (iv) – (vi)

- **Factor (iv) - The stock is a target of a fishery**
 - Whether a stock is sought to catch for sale or personal use or incidentally caught
 - Qualitative input & review of public comment
 - Targets per trip
 - Commercial – species with largest prop. of landings per trip
 - Recreational – probability of being top species retained in random year
- **Factor (v) – The stock is important to commercial, recreational, and subsistence users**
 - Qualitative input & review of public comment
 - Index scoring from Stock Assessment Prioritization (SAP) tool
 - Local Quotient (LQ) to determine localized importance
 - Relative importance locally compared to other species
 - Commercial – ex-vessel revenue
 - Recreational – counts

Analysis
Factors (iv) – (vi)

- **Factor (vi) – The fishery is important to the Nation or to the regional economy**
 - Qualitative input on local, regional, National markets
 - Calculation of Regional Quotient (RQ)
 - Contribution to regional economic benefit derived from groundfish fishery
 - Commercial – ex-vessel revenue
 - Recreational – counts

Analysis
Factors (vii) - (ix)

- **Factor (vii) - The need to resolve competing interests and conflicts amongst user groups and whether an FMP can further that resolution**
 - Qualitative input
 - Qualitative analysis of public comment
- **Factor (viii) – The economic condition of a fishery and whether an FMP can provide more efficient utilization & Factor (ix) – The needs of a developing fishery and whether an FMP can foster orderly growth**
 - Analysis of landings over time
 - Additional Tribal input



Analysis
Factor (x)

- **Factor (x) – The extent to which the fishery is already adequately managed by states, by state/Federal programs, or by Federal regulations pursuant to other FMPs or international commissions, or by industry self-regulation, consistent with the requirements of the MSA and other applicable law**
 - Summary of programs outside the FMP
 - No judgement on efficacy or speculation of management if removed

Shallow Nearshore

Black and yellow rockfish, China rockfish, gopher rockfish, grass rockfish, kelp rockfish, cabezon, and kelp greenling

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis

Shallow Nearshore

- Factors (ii) and (iii) weigh against finding need of conservation and management
 - Mortality is principally in state waters, hence species are not caught by the fishery and Federal management could do little to change the condition of the species
- Factors (iv), (v), (vi) mostly weigh against finding need of conservation and management, though have more mixed results
 - Species are not individually targeted
 - Species 'important' to the fishery are black-and-yellow rockfish, gopher rockfish, kelp greenling; cabezon and kelp greenling important to Tribes
 - Only gopher rockfish contribute over 1% to both regional revenue (comm) and landings (rec) (1.5% in both comm and rec), cabezon >1% for commercial (1.7%)

Deeper Nearshore

black rockfish, blue rockfish, brown rockfish, copper rockfish, deacon rockfish, olive rockfish, quillback rockfish, and treefish

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis

Deeper Nearshore

- Factors (ii) and (iii) weigh against finding need of conservation and management
 - Mortality is principally in state waters, hence species are not caught by the fishery and Federal management could do little to change the condition of the species
 - Black, copper, quillback mortality off Washington principally in Federal waters
 - Quillback off CA is 20% - under but close to threshold – can FMP improve condition?
- Factors (iv), (v), (vi) weigh in favor of finding need of conservation and management, though have more mixed results
 - Council must weigh context of Factors (ii) and (iii)
 - Black, copper, brown, blue, copper, deacon, treefish are targets
 - Important to fishery participants and region
 - Particularly black rockfish, brown rockfish, blue/deacon rockfish
 - Black, blue/deacon, quillback important to Tribes

Shallow Shelf

Calico rockfish, flag rockfish, freckled rockfish, halfbanded rockfish, honeycomb rockfish, pygmy rockfish, rosy rockfish, speckled rockfish, swordspine rockfish

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis

Shallow Shelf

- Factors (ii) and (iii) weigh in favor of finding need of conservation and management for 8/10 species, but with caveats, given the level of catch
 - All but calico and rosy are principally caught in EEZ
 - De minimis mortality of calico, pygmy, freckled, swordspine
- Factors (iv), (v), (vi) weigh against finding need of conservation and management,
 - Most are too small to be retained
 - None identified as important or targets, though may be caught with targets

Deep Shelf

Bronzespotted rockfish, chameleon rockfish, greenblotched rockfish, harlequin rockfish, Mexican rockfish, pink rockfish, pinkrose rockfish, tiger rockfish

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis

Deep Shelf

- Factors (ii) and (iii) weigh in favor of finding need of conservation and management, but with caveats given the level of catch (except Tiger)
 - Tiger does not meet 25% threshold off CA and OR (24.2% and 15.4%), but does in WA
 - All others have principal mortality in EEZ
 - De minimis mortality of chameleon, harlequin, pink, pinkrose, bronzespotted
 - Only greenblotched and Mexican rockfish have annual mortality > 0.1mt
- Factors (iv), (v), (vi) weigh against finding need of conservation and management
 - Only tiger rockfish identified as recreational target
 - De minimis mortality of all but greenblotched and Mexican rockfish

Flatfish

Butter sole, curlfin sole, rock sole, sand sole, starry flounder

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis

Flatfish

- Factors (ii) and (iii) weigh in favor of finding need of conservation and management for butter sole, curlfin sole, starry flounder
- Factors (ii) and (iii) weigh against need of conservation and management for rock sole and sand sole
- Factors (iv), (v), (vi) weigh against finding need of conservation and management, though have more mixed results
 - None identified as targets or important in the current market conditions by non-tribal fishery participants
 - Tribes have identified rock sole and sand sole as important

No Mortality

Light dusky rockfish & dwarf-red rockfish

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis

Species with No Mortality off West Coast

- Analysis could not be completed in same way due to lack of mortality data
- Overall, all factors weigh against finding these species to be in need of conservation and management
- No recent recorded mortality = not in the fishery, not important for social or economic factors

Leopard Shark

Synthesis of 10 Factor Analysis

Leopard Shark

- Factors (ii) and (iii) weigh against finding need of conservation and management
 - Mortality is principally in state waters, hence species is not caught by the fishery and Federal management could do little to change the condition of the species
- Factors (iv), (v), (vi) weigh in against need of conservation and management
 - Target off CA, but in state waters
 - Not identified as important to fishery participants or the region

Stock Definitions

Any species under Alt 1 also require stock def option:

Option 1: A single stock, single area within the Fishery Management Unit (FMU). A single stock means there is no evidence of or unknown stock structure. The stock unit could be coastwide or limited to a single state based on its known range.

Option 2: Two Stocks within the FMU, delineated by specific latitude (e.g., north/south of 42° N. lat., north/south of $40^{\circ}10'$ N. lat., etc).

Option 3: Three Stocks within the FMU, delineated at state boundaries (e.g., a California stock, an Oregon stock, and a Washington stock) and/or latitudes. Each species is defined as a state-specific stock, i.e., a California stock, an Oregon stock, and a Washington stock.

*see section 5 of Supp Att 2 for Options

Potential Stock Definition Options

Option 1
All 40 species

Species	Option 2	Option 3
Black and yellow rockfish	*	
Blue rockfish	*	*
Brown rockfish	*	*
Cabezon	*	*
China rockfish	*	*
Deacon rockfish	*	*
Gopher rockfish	*	
Grass rockfish	*	
Harlequin rockfish	*	
Kelp greenling	*	*
Kelp rockfish	*	
Leopard shark	*	*
Olive rockfish	*	*

Species	Opt 1 Proposed Stock Delineations
Bronzespotted rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Butter sole	Coastwide
Calico rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Chameleon rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Curlfin sole	Coastwide
Dwarf-red rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Freckled rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Greenblotched rockfish	Coastwide
Halfbanded rockfish	Coastwide
Honeycomb rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Light dusky rockfish	Coastwide or OR/WA
Mexican rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Pink rockfish	Coastwide or CA/OR
Pinkrose rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Pygmy rockfish	Coastwide
Rock sole	Coastwide
Rosethorn rockfish	Coastwide
Rosy rockfish	Coastwide
Sand sole	Coastwide
Speckled rockfish	Coastwide
Starry flounder	Coastwide
Stripetail rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Swordspine rockfish	Coastwide or California-only
Tiger rockfish	Coastwide
Treefish	Coastwide or California-only

Species	Opt. 1 Proposed Stock Delineations	Opt. 2	Opt. 3
Black and yellow rockfish	Coastwide or California/Oregon	California and Oregon	
Blue rockfish	Coastwide	N/S of 42° N. lat.	state-specific
Brown Rockfish	Coastwide	N/S of 42° N. lat.	state-specific
Cabezon	Coastwide	N/S of 42° N. lat.	state-specific
China rockfish	Coastwide	N/S of 42° N. lat.	state-specific
Deacon rockfish	Coastwide	N/S of 42° N. lat.	state-specific
Flag rockfish	Coastwide or California/Oregon	California and Oregon	
Gopher rockfish	Coastwide or California/Oregon	California and Oregon	
Grass rockfish	Coastwide or California/Oregon	California and Oregon	
Harlequin rockfish	Coastwide or Oregon/Washington	Oregon and Washington	
Kelp greenling	Coastwide	N/S of 42° N. lat.	state-specific
Kelp rockfish	Coastwide or California/Oregon	California and Oregon	
Light dusky rockfish	Coastwide or Oregon/Washington	Oregon and Washington	
Leopard shark	Coastwide or California/Oregon	California and Oregon	
Olive rockfish	Coastwide or California/Oregon	California and Oregon	
Pink rockfish	Coastwide or California/Oregon	California and Oregon	