

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON 2027-28 HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS, MANAGEMENT MEASURES, AND EXEMPTED FISHING PERMITS – FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN (FMP) AMENDMENT

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) recommends that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) select its April 2026 preliminary preferred alternatives (PPAs) as final preferred alternatives (FPA) for the 2027-2028 harvest specifications and management measures, with the exception of a few items noted below. Our rationale for PPA to FPA items was covered in our prior report ([Agenda Item C.7.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, April 2026](#)), which we have not repeated here.

The numbering throughout this statement corresponds with the Action Item Checklist ([Agenda Item E.6, Supplemental REVISED Attachment 1, June 2026](#)). Please see Table 1 at the end of our report for a summary of these recommendations.

HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS

1. Harvest Specifications

Alternative 2d (OFL-1) for the 2027-2028 widow rockfish harvest specifications is the only alternative below the Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) specified overfishing limit (OFL) of 6,239 metric tons (mt). This alternative will result in 2027-2028 annual catch limits (ACL) of 6,238 metric tons (mt), representing a 40 percent drop from 2026 to 2027, which will have devastating long-term effects on groundfish fishermen, processors, and markets.

MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Area Management

2. Groundfish Conservation Areas

The GAP supports the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) depth restriction changes identified in [Agenda Item E.6.a, Supplemental WDFW Report 1, June 2026](#). This would improve regulatory clarity and ease of compliance.

- North Coast (Marine Area 4): Modify the 20-fathom line depth restriction currently in place June–July to exclude Duntze and Duncan Rocks from the depth-restricted area by changing the coordinates defining the 20 fathom (fm) line (at 50 CFR 660.71(b)) as follows:
 - 48°25.00' N. lat., 124°44.06' W. long. (added)
 - 48°25.00' N. lat., 120°45.22' W. long. (added)
 - ~~48°23.90' N. lat., 124°44.20' W. long.~~ (removed)
 - 48°23.60' N. lat., 124°44.90' W. long. (unchanged)

Allocations

7. Trawl/Non-Trawl Allocations

For slope rockfish south of 40° 10' N. lat., the GAP recommends Option 4 as FPA, which would apply a five-year mortality average to determine the trawl/non-trawl allocation, and would reflect any changes in the fishery. This recommendation aligns with the Council's PPA, but the GAP wishes to note that between the April and June 2026 Council meetings, GAP members conducted outreach to trawl participants who are targeting blackgill in the Fort Bragg area to get their input on the proposed changes.

Recreational

18. Washington Recreational

The GAP supports the 2027-2028 recreational measures identified by WDFW in [Agenda Item E.6.a, Supplemental WDFW Report 1, June 2026](#).

19. Oregon Recreational

The GAP supports the 2027-2028 recreational measures identified by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) in [Agenda Item E.6.a, Supplemental ODFW Report 1, June 2026](#).

20. California Recreational

The GAP supports the 2027-2028 recreational measures identified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in [Agenda Item E.6.a, CDFW Report 1, June 2026](#).

For cowcod and yelloweye rockfish, the GAP continues to strongly support the Council PPA to implement a 1-fish sub-bag limit in December. A December opener is much preferred over April, because an April opener with high participation (as seen with vermilion/sunset) could constrain the fishery later in the season. The threat of catching too many cowcod is minimal in December because so few boats get out, and a December opener would increase participation in the fishery during an otherwise slower time. All-depth access is important to California coastwide.

Fishery Management Plan

21. Fishery Management Plan

The GAP supports the proposed FMP changes as shown in [Agenda Item E.6, Supplemental REVISED Attachment 6, June 2026](#) to remove the rebuilding plans for yelloweye rockfish and quillback rockfish off California and the administrative cleanups in Table 3-2.

Additional Item – Year-Round Trawl Gear (Midwater Rockfish) EFP

The GAP supports the application for Year-Round Trawl Gear (Midwater Rockfish) EFP: Monitoring and Minimizing Salmon Bycatch When Targeting Rockfish in the Shorebased IFQ Fishery – 2027 ([Agenda Item E.6, Supplemental Attachment 9, June 2026](#)), which would roll over

the existing EFP for one more year to allow NMFS time to take deregulatory action to transfer the EFP into management, as detailed under Agenda Item E.5 at this meeting. As noted in the application, approving this EFP would “support the continuation of the Trawl Gear EFP in 2027 in the event that the Pacific Fishery Management Council’s action to eliminate Trawl Gear EFP requirements cannot be implemented by NMFS prior to January 1, 2027.” No additional enrollment period would accompany this EFP, and this EFP does not request any off-the-top set-asides.

Regarding the EFP south of 40°10' N. lat., which is not subject to the action under E.5, the GAP recommends continuing the EFP for the necessary three years as required by the 2017 BiOp. One vessel successfully utilized the EFP to target midwater rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. shoreward of 100 fm and has indicated its intent to continue fishing in this area during the 2027 season. The vessel owner has also established delivery arrangements with a Northern California processor, creating new fishing opportunities and supporting much-needed economic activity in coastal communities that have experienced declining fishing participation and seafood landings in recent years. Continued and expanded participation will generate valuable operational and biological data for the Council and NMFS that can provide the foundation for removing prohibitive regulations south of 40°10' N. lat.

Table 1. Summary of GAP and GMT Recommendations for 2027-28 Harvest Specifications and Management Measures

#	Category	Sector	Item	GAP	GMT
2027-2028 Harvest Specifications					
1	Harvest Specifications	All	Adopt final overfishing limits, final P*/acceptable biological catches, and final preferred ACLs for stocks and stock complexes and/or any alternate HCR for analysis as applicable. Council adopted interim HCRs per for all stocks/stock complexes except widow rockfish (Agenda Item C.4.a Supplemental GAP Report 1 and Supplemental GMT Report 1).	Adopt iFPA as FPA (Section 1 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)	Widow rockfish: Alternative 2d
2027-2028 Management Measures					
Groundfish Conservation Area (GCA) Coordinate Updates					
2	Area Management	All	PPA: GCA configurations as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1 and Supplemental EC Report 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove Stonewall Bank Expansions 1 and 2, Point St. George, South Reef, Reading Rock, Point Delgada (North), and Point Delgada (South) Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Areas – never implemented but in regulation – off California and Oregon from regulation Remove RCA 150 fm boundary surrounding Lasuen Knoll 1 Consider new adjustment Modification to the 20 fm line in Washington Marine Area 4A 	Adopt PPA as FPA (Section 2 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)	Washington modification to the 20-fm line in Marine Area 4A in Agenda Item E.6.a Supplemental WDFW Report 1
Off-the-Top Deductions					

#	Category	Sector	Item	GAP	GMT
3	Off-the-Top Deductions	Research, EFPs, and IOA	<p>PPA: set asides as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1 and Supplemental GMT Report 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research: rolling 5-year median research mortality method, except for custom yelloweye rockfish (2.92mt) and petrale sole (24.1mt) • IOA: rolling 5-year mean mortality method • EFP: 0 mt (no requests) <p>See rows 9-11 for sablefish, yelloweye rockfish, & canary rockfish</p>		<p>Adopt PPA as FPA (Section 3 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)</p>
4	Tribal	Treaty Fisheries	<p>PPA: off-the-top deductions and management measures for Treaty fisheries as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a, Supplemental Tribal Report 1</p>		<p>Adopt Agenda Item E.6.a Supplemental Tribal Report 1 as FPA</p>
Harvest Guidelines					
5	Harvest Guidelines (HG)	All	<p>PPA: adopt resulting HGs for all stocks and stock complexes</p>		<p>Adopt resulting HGs from Appendix 2 of Agenda Item E.6.a Supplemental GMT Report 1 as FPA</p>
Annual Catch Targets					
6	Annual Catch Targets (ACT)	All	<p>PPA: ACTs as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational copper rockfish south of 34°27' N. lat. • Commercial non-trawl shortspine thornyhead north of 34°27' N. lat. • New recreational ACTs off California <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vermilion/sunset rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. ○ Lingcod south of 40°10' N. lat. ○ California quillback rockfish 		<p>Adopt PPA as FPA (Section 6 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)</p>

#	Category	Sector	Item	GAP	GMT
7	Allocations	Trawl/ Non-Trawl	<p>PPA: Status quo biennial trawl/non-trawl sector allocations as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1, except for slope rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big skate – 95 percent trawl, 5 percent non-trawl • Bocaccio south of 40°10' N. lat. – 39 percent trawl, 61 percent non-trawl • Cowcod south of 40°10' N. lat. - 36 percent trawl, 64 percent non-trawl • Lingcod south of 40°10' N. lat. – 40 percent trawl; 60 percent non-trawl • Longnose skate – 90 percent trawl, 10 percent non-trawl • Petrale sole – 30 mt non-trawl, remainder trawl • Shelf rockfish north of 40°10' N. lat. – 60.2 percent trawl, 39.8 percent non-trawl • Shelf rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. – 12.2 percent trawl, 87.8 percent non-trawl • Shortspine thornyhead – 71 percent trawl, 29 percent non-trawl • Widow rockfish – 300 mt non-trawl, remainder trawl <p>PPA: Slope rockfish complex south of 40° 10' N. lat.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 4 (“blackgill math” using five-year mortality average) <p>See rows 9-11 for sablefish, yelloweye rockfish, & canary rockfish</p>		<p>Adopt PPA as FPA (Section 7 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)</p>
8	Further Allocations	Non-Trawl Commercial/ Recreational	<p>PPA: status quo within non-trawl allocations as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1 for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cowcod south of 40°10' N. lat. (commercial non-trawl/recreational) • Bocaccio south of 40°10' N. lat. (commercial non-trawl/recreational) 		<p>Adopt PPA as FPA (Section 8 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)</p>
Stock-Specific Allocations					

#	Category	Sector	Item	GAP	GMT
9	Sablefish	All	<p>Sablefish north of 36° N. lat. PPA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research: 5-year rolling median • LE/OA trip limits: status quo • Recreational set-aside: 50 mt <p>Sablefish south of 36° N. lat. PPA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research: 5-year rolling median • IOA: 5-year rolling average • Recreational: status quo (10 mt) • Allocation: status quo • LE/OA share: status quo • LE/OA trip limits: status quo 		<p>Adopt PPA as FPA (Section 9 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)</p>
10	Yelloweye Rockfish	All	<p>PPA: status quo proportions as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1 and Supplemental GMT Report 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biennial allocation – 8 percent trawl, 92 percent non-trawl • Within non-trawl harvest guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Non-trawl commercial: 29 percent ○ Washington recreational: 25.6 percent ○ Oregon recreational: 23.3 percent ○ California recreational: 30.2 percent • Within non-trawl ACT – 78.4 percent ACT on HG 		<p>Adopt PPA as FPA (Section 10 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)</p>
11	Canary Rockfish	All	<p>PPA: status quo proportions as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1 and Supplemental GMT Report 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biennial allocation – 72.3 percent trawl, 27.7 percent non-trawl • Within non-trawl harvest guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Non-trawl commercial: 36 percent ○ Washington recreational: 12.3 percent ○ Oregon recreational: 18.5 percent ○ California recreational: 33.2 percent 		<p>Adopt PPA as FPA (Section 11 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)</p>
Trawl					

#	Category	Sector	Item	GAP	GMT
12	Trawl	At-Sea Whiting	PPA: whiting at-seas set-asides and IFQ trip limits as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisions to at-sea set-aside amounts for: canary and yellowtail north of 40° 10' N. lat. rockfishes, petrale and Dover soles, lingcod north of 40° 10' N. lat., and longnose skate at-sea set-asides Status quo (Option 1) at-sea set-aside amounts for all other at-sea set-aside stocks/stock complexes 	Adopt PPA as FPA for items 12-13 (Section 12 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)	
13		Shoreside IFQ	Adopt PPA for shoreside individual fishing quota (IFQ) trip limits adjustments		
Non-Trawl					
14	Open Access (OA)	OA north of 40°10' N. lat.	PPA: Trip limits as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a, Supplemental GMT Report 3 : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trip limit revisions for sablefish, shortspine thornyhead, canary rockfish, chilipepper rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat., yellowtail rockfish north of 40°10' N. lat., widow rockfish, shelf rockfish complex north of 40°10' N. lat., nearshore rockfish complex yelloweye rockfish, and cowcod Status quo management measures (e.g., trip limits, size limits, etc.) for all other stock/stock complexes 	Adopt PPA as FPA for items 14-17 (Section 13 of Agenda Item E.6.a Attachment 2: Draft 2027-28 Groundfish Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Analysis)	
15		OA south of 40°10' N. lat.			
16	Limited Entry Fixed Gear (LEFG)	LEFG north of 40°10' N. lat.			
17		LEFG south of 40°10' N. lat.			
18	Recreational	Washington	The Council recommend public review of the proposed Washington or Oregon recreational fishery management measures (Agenda Item C.7.a, Supplemental WDFW Report 2 and Agenda Item C.7.a, Supplemental ODFW Report 1) PPA for California recreational fishery management measures (as recommended in Agenda Item C.7.a Supplemental GAP Report 1)	Adopt Agenda Item E.6.a, Supplemental WDFW Report 1 as FPA	
19		Oregon		Adopt Agenda Item E.6.a, Supplemental ODFW Report 1 as FPA	
20		California		Adopt Agenda Item E.6.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 1 as FPA + December opener for cowcod and yelloweye	

#	Category	Sector	Item	GAP	GMT
Fishery Management Plan					
21	Fishery Management Plan (FMP)	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPA: Revisions to FMP removing yelloweye rockfish and California quillback rockfish rebuilding plans • NEW: Additional administrative clean-up/corrections items to Table 3-2 	Adopt PPA as FPA + Table 3-2 clean-ups in Agenda Item E.6 Supplemental REVISED Attachment 6	
Additional Item					
NA	Trawl	Shoreside IFQ	Application for Year-Round Trawl Gear (Midwater Rockfish) EFP: Monitoring and Minimizing Salmon Bycatch When Targeting Rockfish in the Shorebased IFQ Fishery – 2027 (Agenda Item E.6, Supplemental Attachment 9, June 2026)	Approve application (Agenda Item E.6, Supplemental Attachment 9, June 2026)	

PFMC
06/13/26