

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT
ON 2026 GROUND FISH HARVEST IN CALIFORNIA

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) provides the following report on harvest of select groundfish stocks of interest in 2026. A comprehensive reporting of groundfish mortality in California is found at the end of this report in Appendix 1. All values were rounded using standard rounding rules in each table for presentation purposes; for that reason, a sum of the values over rows or columns within tables may not equal the total value.

CDFW will continue to monitor fishery mortality across species and sectors over the coming months and will provide the next update to the Council in November.

Non-Trawl Commercial

Several species, including black, blue, brown, canary, widow, and yellowtail rockfish, as well as lingcod, continue to exhibit higher catches than last year, likely due to the removal of restrictions. None of these species are expected to exceed harvest limits.

Recreational

California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS) estimates are available through June 2026. As noted in CDFW's previous reports this year, recreational mortality for California scorpionfish has continued to trend high in 2026 when compared to previous years (see [Agenda Item E.2.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 1, June 2026](#) and [Agenda Item D.5.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 1, March 2026](#)). Recreational mortality Jan-Jun 2026 amounts to 97.8 mt, or 41% of the fishery HG (236 mt), which is higher than recreational mortality compared to Jan-Jun 2025 (84.2 mt). The ACL is likely to be at or near 100% attainment by the end of this year.

The ACL was 92% attained in 2025, and 65% attained in 2024. Prior to 2024, attainment was much lower and averaged 50% from 2016-2023. Though recreational mortality has been increasing over the past two years, the ACL also been largely under attained over the past decade. CDFW will continue to monitor California scorpionfish closely and will report back to the Council as appropriate.

Recreational & Commercial – Vermilion/sunset Rockfish South of 40°10' N. lat.

Through June 2026, recreational mortality of vermilion/sunset rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. is 107.9 mt, or 63% of the informal recreational share of the ACL contribution to the shelf rockfish complex (171.5 mt). Recreational mortality for the same period last year (Jan-Jun 2025) totaled 72.8 mt, which indicates a higher rate of recreational harvest this year compared to last year. According to the [Groundfish Expanded Mortality Multi-year \(GEMM\)](#) report, the Overfishing Limit (OFL) contribution to the complex for the area south of 40° 10' N. lat. was exceeded by 5.8 mt in 2025, due to overages from multiple sectors, including recreational.

The non-trawl commercial sector is expected to fully utilize, if not exceed, their informal share of the ACL contribution. The Council took inseason action in June 2026 to implement sub-trip limit reductions south of Point Conception (34°27' N. lat.) to keep non-trawl commercial landings within 100 mt; however, due to delayed rule implementation (effective Aug 20, 2026), this sector is projected to land 115 mt by the end of the year. Non-trawl vermilion/sunset rockfish landings

south of 40°10' N. lat. are 11.6 mt higher than at this time last year. This increase is reflective of a greater number of participants and a higher proportion of vessels attaining 90 percent or more of their monthly trip limits. The increase in participation in the limited entry (LE) sector is largely driven by Amendment 36 (A36). Effective August 6, 2026, A36 created a single LE non-trawl permit that allows vessels to use any legal non-trawl groundfish gear, aligning LE flexibilities more closely with open access (OA). Since implementation, there has been an increase in OA participants acquiring LE permits, allowing them to fish to the higher LE trip limits using familiar gear (e.g., vertical longline or pole gear). These changes, alongside industry-reported strong market conditions, are likely to be the drivers of the increase in landings.

Additionally, Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) landings of vermilion/sunset rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. have traditionally been minimal, however, they began to contribute more significantly to the total catch in 2025, and in 2026 over 20 mt have been landed to date. Although these landings are made to their respective quota accounts, they still track toward the ACL contribution to the complex of 271.5 mt. The increase in IFQ landings, combined with higher non-trawl landings, warrants continued monitoring of cumulative mortality.

If these increasing trends in catch continue, or even if fishery performance from here until the end of the year is average, exceedance of the vermilion/sunset OFL contribution to the shelf rockfish complex south of 40° 10' N. lat. is highly likely. However, the overall shelf rockfish complex ACL and OFL are not projected to be exceeded.

Appendix 1.

This appendix provides the most current California harvest information for the 2026 fishing season relative to Annual Catch Limits (ACLs), Harvest Guidelines (HGs), sector allocations, and Annual Catch Targets (ACTs) for 2026. Catch includes estimates of total mortality from the recreational sector, and landings from the commercial sector without discard mortality. Commercial landings are from the non-trawl fixed gear limited entry and open access sectors.

Monthly recreational catch estimates are from the California Recreational Fisheries Survey (CRFS) and RecFIN through June 2026 and reflect activity across all recreational management areas (Table 1). Commercial landings data are from PacFIN and reflect activity across all management areas from January through August 31, 2026 (Table 2). The 2026 combined recreational and commercial catches are compared to federally designated harvest specifications and management measures in Table 3.

Table 1. Estimated mortality (mt) of select groundfish species in the California recreational sector by month through June 2026. Data are from CRFS and RecFIN, are preliminary and subject to change. Note: 0.0 indicates trace mortality; a dash (-) indicates no mortality.

Stock/Stock Complex	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Yelloweye rockfish	-	-	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.3							1.1
CA Quillback rockfish	-	-	-	0.1	0.1	0.2							0.5
CA Black rockfish	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	12.9	20.8							46.2
Canary rockfish	0.0	-	0.0	6.8	3.5	3.6							13.9
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.2	0.0	-	32.4	22.1	24.5							79.2
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.2	11.2	1.4							21.8
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	1.3	0.9	1.2							3.4
Widow rockfish	-	-	-	0.6	0.5	0.9							2.1
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	0.1	0.2	0.2							0.4
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat. ^a	0.0	-	0.0	2.0	1.1	2.0							5.1
Copper rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	0.4	0.3	0.4							1.1
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^a	0.4	0.2	0.2	35.1	34.4	50.0							120.2
Copper rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.1	0.1	0.1	8.0	4.3	5.1							17.7
Copper Rockfish S. 34°27' N. lat.	0.1	0.1	0.0	3.9	1.3	2.0							7.4
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat. ^b	-	-	-	0.4	0.6	0.6							1.5
Vermilion/sunset rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	0.3	0.4	0.5							1.1

Stock/Stock Complex	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^c	0.5	0.3	0.1	71.1	62.2	55.3							189.7
Mexican Rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	0.6	1.3	0.6							2.6
Squarespot Rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.0	-	1.0	2.6	3.4							7.1
Vermilion/sunset rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.4	0.3	0.1	47.2	32.3	27.6							107.9
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	9.7	0.4	0.3							10.4
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.3							0.3
Darkblotched rockfish	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
Shortbelly rockfish	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
Splitnose rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
Longspine thornyhead N. 34° 27' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
Longspine thornyhead S. 34° 27' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
Shortspine thornyhead ^d	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
Shortspine thornyhead N. 34° 27' N. lat.	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
CA Scorpionfish	11.6	7.5	16.6	6.1	23.8	32.1							97.8
CA Cabezon	0.4	0.1	0.0	4.1	2.3	2.1							9.0
CA Kelp greenling	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.3							1.2
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	-	0.3	5.6	3.8	4.4							14.0
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.1	0.1	-	40.2	19.5	24.7							84.6
Sablefish N. 36° N. lat.	0.1	-	-	0.1	0.0	0.1							0.4
Sablefish S. 36° N. lat.	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0							0.1
Dover sole	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
English sole	-	-	-	-	-	-							0.0
Petrale sole	0.0	0.3	-	2.3	1.4	3.0							7.0
Starry flounder	-	-	-	0.1	0.0	0.1							0.2
Other flatfish	2.6	2.2	3.2	2.0	2.5	0.9							13.3
Spiny dogfish	0.1	-	-	0.0	0.1	0.2							0.4

a/ Includes catch of copper rockfish. Does not include catch of California black rockfish.

b/ Includes catch of vermillion/sunset rockfish only from the area between 42° and 40°10' N. lat.

c/ Includes catch of squarespot rockfish, vermillion/sunset rockfish, and Mexican rockfish South of 40°10' N. lat.

d/ Includes catch of shortspine thornyhead from all areas off California; however, a sub-total is also provided due to an area-specific ACT.

Table 2. Landings (mt) of select groundfish species in California commercial non-trawl fixed gear limited entry and open access sectors by month in 2026. Data are from PacFIN (08/31/26), are preliminary and subject to change. Note: Landing estimates do not include discard mortality. 0.0 indicates trace landings; a dash (--) indicates no landings.

Stock/Stock Complex	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Yelloweye rockfish	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--					0.0
CA Quillback rockfish	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--					0.0
CA Black rockfish	0.2	0.1	1.0	4.5	2.9	4.5	7.5	5.3					25.9
Canary rockfish	2.2	2.2	3.8	2.2	2.5	3.1	2.0	4.2					22.2
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	10.3	11.2	10.6	12.3	8.1	12.0	5.4	9.9					79.8
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	8.6	4.4	9.7	7.0	4.1	7.0	6.7	4.4					51.9
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--					0.0
Widow rockfish	1.4	0.6	1.4	1.4	0.6	2.0	1.1	2.5					10.9
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	2.1	0.8	0.9	2.5	0.7	2.0	1.8	1.6					12.5
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat. ^a	0.4	0.2	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.7	1.4	0.9					5.1
Copper rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1					0.3
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^a	10.3	5.9	8.7	6.0	5.7	10.5	9.7	11.0					67.9
Copper rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2					1.8
Copper rockfish S. 34°27' N. lat.	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0					0.5
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat. ^b	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	1.3	0.7	2.2	0.8					5.7
Vermilion/sunset rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat.	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2					0.9
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^c	17.2	10.0	16.2	10.1	16.6	9.9	11.1	16.8					107.9
Mexican rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.3	0.6	1.2	0.2	0.4					5.2
Squarespot rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0					0.2
Vermilion/sunset rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	13.1	7.5	11.8	6.4	12.5	5.6	7.7	12.5					77.0
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	--	--	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	1.8	0.9					3.5
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^d	4.8	3.9	5.7	6.0	4.3	6.4	3.3	5.7					39.9
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	4.4	3.4	4.7	4.9	3.1	5.5	2.9	4.1					33.0
Darkblotched rockfish	0.0	0.2		0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0					0.6
Shortbelly rockfish	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--					0.0
Splitnose rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0					0.1

Stock/Stock Complex	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Longspine thornyhead N. 34° 27' N. lat.	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.1					1.5
Longspine thornyhead S. 34° 27' N. lat.	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2					1.1
Shortspine thornyhead ^e	8.7	4.4	5.3	5.1	6.1	7.6	5.8	6.9					49.9
Shortspine thornyhead N. 34° 27' N. lat.	4.4	2.3	2.9	2.1	3.4	4.5	3.4	3.2					26.2
CA Scorpionfish	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.0					1.4
CA Cabezon	2.7	1.1	2.8	2.2	1.7	2.3	2.0	3.1					18.0
CA Kelp greenling	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2					1.0
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.8	1.0	1.5					5.5
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	8.0	4.6	5.6	5.6	3.0	5.1	4.7	5.1					41.6
Sablefish N. 36° N. lat.	34.4	29.0	50.8	51.6	65.1	105.5	113.6	208.1					658.1
Sablefish S. 36° N. lat.	25.5	18.0	22.8	23.8	22.2	26.2	25.4	18.6					182.5
Dover sole	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1					0.6
English sole	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--					0.0
Petrale sole	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0					0.4
Starry flounder	--	--	0.1	0.0	--	0.0	0.0	0.0					0.1
Other flatfish	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.0					1.5
Spiny dogfish	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	0.0	--	--					0.1

a/ Includes landings of copper rockfish. Does not include landings of California black rockfish.

b/ Includes landings of vermilion/sunset rockfish only from the area between 42° and 40°10' N. lat.

c/ Includes landings of Mexican rockfish, vermilion/sunset rockfish, and squarespot rockfish.

d/ Does not include landings of blackgill rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. due to a separate harvest limit from the slope rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat.

e/ Includes landings of shortspine thornyhead from all areas off California; a sub-total is also provided due to an area-specific ACT.

Table 3. Estimated mortality (mt) of select groundfish species in California for 2026 compared to the harvest limits for 2026. Recreational mortality estimates are through June 2026, commercial non-trawl landings are through 08/31/2026.

Stock/Stock Complex	Reference Point	Recreational Mortality (mt)	Commercial non-trawl Landings (mt)	Total (mt)	Tracking Limits (mt)	Percent Attainment
Yelloweye rockfish	CA Rec ACT ^a	1.1	0.0	1.1 ^a	9.1	12.1%
CA Quillback rockfish	Fishery HG	0.5	0.0	0.5	1.4	34.1%
CA Black rockfish	Fishery HG	46.2	25.9	72.1	234.4	30.8%
Canary rockfish	CA Rec HG ^a	13.9	22.2	13.9 ^a	51.4	27.1%
Bocaccio S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	79.2	79.8	158.9	1,012.1	15.7%
Chilipepper S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	21.8	51.9	73.7	653.8	11.3%
Cowcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	3.4	0.0	3.4	41.7	8.1%
Widow rockfish	Coastwide Non-Trawl Allocation	2.1	10.9	12.9	300.0	4.3%
Yellowtail rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.4	12.5	12.9	599.8	2.1%
Nearshore rockfish N. 42°-40°10' N. lat. ^b	Informal CA Share of Fishery HG ^c	5.1	5.1	10.2	37.6	27.1%
Copper rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	1.1	0.3	1.4	6.8	20.7%
Nearshore rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^b	Fishery HG	120.2	67.9	188.1	930.8	20.2%
Copper rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	17.7	1.8	19.5	126.3	15.4%
Copper rockfish S. 34°27' N. lat.	Rec ACT ^a	7.4	0.5	7.4 ^a	18.0	41.3%
Shelf rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat. ^d	Non-Trawl Allocation	1.5	5.7	7.3	497.7	1.5%
Vermilion/sunset rockfish 42°-40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	1.1	0.9	2.0	6.2	32.1%
Shelf rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^e	Non-Trawl Allocation	189.7	107.9	297.5	1,254.0	23.7%
Mexican rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	2.6	5.2	7.8	3.9	199.1%
Squarespot rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	7.1	0.2	7.3	5.9	123.0%
Vermilion/sunset rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	ACL Contribution to Complex	107.9	77.0	184.9	271.5	68.1%
Slope rockfish N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	3.5	3.5	266.4	1.3%
Slope rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat. ^f	Non-Trawl Allocation	10.4	39.9	50.3	144.9	34.7%
Blackgill rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Share	0.3	33.0	33.4	98.0	34.1%
Darkblotched rockfish	Coastwide Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.6	0.6	35.4	1.6%
Shortbelly rockfish ^g	EC Species Threshold	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,000.0	0.0%
Splitnose rockfish S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.1	0.1	72.7	0.1%

Stock/Stock Complex	Reference Point	Recreational Mortality (mt)	Commercial non-trawl Landings (mt)	Total (mt)	Tracking Limits (mt)	Percent Attainment
Longspine thornyhead N. 34° 27' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	1.5	1.5	95.4	1.6%
Longspine thornyhead S. 34° 27' N. lat.	Fishery HG	0.0	1.1	1.1	616.5	0.2%
Shortspine thornyhead ^b	Coastwide Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	49.9	49.9	218.3	22.9%
Shortspine thornyhead N. 34° 27' N. lat.	Non-Trawl ACT	0.0	26.2	26.2	67.0	39.1%
CA Scorpionfish	Fishery HG	97.8	1.4	99.3	236.0	42.1%
CA Cabezon	Fishery HG	9.0	18.0	27.0	154.5	17.5%
CA Kelp greenling	ACL Contribution to Complex ⁱ	1.2	1.0	2.1	92.5	2.3%
Lingcod N. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	14.0	5.5	19.6	1,789.1	1.1%
Lingcod S. 40°10' N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation	84.6	41.6	126.2	456.9	27.6%
Sablefish N. 36° N. lat.	LEFG Share + OA Share + Rec Set-Aside	0.4	658.1	658.5	11,620.0	5.7%
Sablefish S. 36° N. lat.	Non-Trawl Allocation + Rec Set-Aside	0.1	182.5	182.5	4,321.1	4.2%
Dover sole	Coastwide Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.6	0.6	2,043.7	0.0%
English sole	Coastwide Non-Trawl Allocation	0.0	0.0	0.0	430.3	0.0%
Petrale sole	Coastwide Non-Trawl Allocation	7.0	0.4	7.4	30.0	24.7%
Starry flounder	Coastwide Non-Trawl Allocation	0.2	0.1	0.2	187.7	0.1%
Other flatfish	Coastwide Non-Trawl Allocation	13.3	1.5	14.9	697.3	2.1%
Spiny dogfish	Coastwide Fishery HG	0.4	0.1	0.5	994.2	0.1%

a/ These totals only include recreational mortality as the tracking limit is specific to the California recreational sector. There is no state-specific HG or ACT for commercial non-trawl.

b/ Includes catch and landings of copper rockfish. Does not include catch or landings of California black rockfish.

c/ The fishery HG for the nearshore rockfish complex north of 40°10' N. lat. is 82.9 mt. The informal CA share of the HG is 37.6 mt, and is shared between sectors.

d/ Includes catch and landings of vermilion/sunset rockfish only for the area between 42° and 40°10' N. lat.

e/ Includes catch and landings of vermilion/sunset rockfish, Mexican rockfish, and squarespot rockfish.

f/ Does not include blackgill rockfish landings south of 40°10' N. lat. due to a separate harvest limit from the slope rockfish complex south of 40°10' N. lat.

g/ Shortbelly rockfish is an ecosystem component species and has a threshold of 2,000 mt as per FMP Amendment 30

h/ Includes catch and landings of shortspine thornyhead from all areas off California; a sub-total is also provided due to an area-specific ACT.

i/ The tracking limit is the CA kelp greenling ACL contribution to the "other fish" complex