

## Agenda Item Summary

### BACKGROUND

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) annually receives a report on the commercial nearshore fishery's logbook program and adopts rules for recreational and commercial groundfish fisheries. This summary presents information and recommendations on those two items (Issue 1, 2018 Logbook Report, and Issue 2, 2020 fishery regulations).

Oregon's commercial nearshore fishery is managed under a limited-entry permit system established by the Oregon legislature in 2004. The fleet is composed of small vessels, averaging 25 feet, which target shallow (< 180 ft.) rocky reefs. Vessels use mostly hook & line jig or bottom longline fishing gear. Cumulative landing limits ("trip limits") for two-month periods for each permitted vessel moderate the pace of this fishery so that it is open year-round. A variety of groundfish species are harvested, including black rockfish, blue rockfish, deacon rockfish and 21 other "nearshore species". Staff produce an annual report with detailed statistics on this fishery; the 2018 update is available at <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/publications/docs/2018%20Oregon%20Commercial%20Nearshore%20Fishery%20Data%20Update.pdf>.

The recreational groundfish (bottomfish) fishery consists of anglers using hook and line jig gear on privately-owned vessels or as customers of charter and guide businesses, targeting rockfish, lingcod, cabezon, greenling, and other groundfish species. Daily bag limits, time/area closures, fishing gear requirements, and minimum size limits are used to keep catch under annual limits for multiple co-occurring species while providing as much fishing opportunity as possible. Anglers have taken around 100,000 trips per year targeting groundfish recently, and black rockfish are approximately 70% of the total catch. Most of the effort occurs in the summer, but year-round opportunity is important to many anglers, businesses, and coastal communities. In 2019, the Marine Resources Program produced the first annual Sport Groundfish Newsletter to share information with stakeholders; it is available online at [www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/groundfish\\_sport/management.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/groundfish_sport/management.asp)

Regulations for these fisheries are based on federal rules, with additional state measures as needed to meet management goals. ODFW participates in developing the federal rules through the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC). Federal groundfish harvest specifications (catch limits) and management measures for 2019 and 2020 were approved by the PFMC in 2018, and adopted in state rule by reference.

Proposals for additional fishery management measures in state rule are developed annually by staff in consultation with stakeholders. These include sector-specific annual harvest guidelines in addition to the measures noted above. Recommended changes to state groundfish rules

for 2020 are presented under Issue 2. Recent updates to federal rules are also recommended for adoption by reference.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Fishery participants and other stakeholders provided public input during development of the 2020 groundfish fishery rules via several avenues.

Commercial nearshore groundfish annual limits, trip limits, and other management measures for 2020 were discussed at three public meetings, held in Pacific City, Gold Beach, and Port Orford in September. A total of 12 commercial fishers and members of the public attended these meetings.

Staff obtained input regarding proposed changes to the recreational groundfish seasons and regulations for 2020 at public meetings in Salem, Newport, Brookings, and North Bend in August. The Newport meeting was webcast to enable remote participation. Over 30 people attended the public meetings in person, and three via webcast. Staff also convened the Marine Sportfishing Advisory Committee in May and August to discuss the 2019 fishery, potential in-season adjustments, and preliminary management ideas for the 2020 season.

In addition, staff received input in person and via email and phone.

## **ISSUE 1**

### **2018 NEARSHORE LOGBOOK REPORT**

## **ANALYSIS**

ORS 508.953 requires the Department to present an annual report to the Commission on the nearshore logbook program. This report is for 2018.

Black and Blue Rockfish Limited Entry permit holders are required to complete and submit Department-issued commercial nearshore logbooks, which provide detailed information on effort (e.g., time fished, number of hooks used), locations fished, and estimated catch and discard by species or species group. This information is primarily used to evaluate catch rates for stock assessment (catch per hook over time), for marine spatial planning, and to verify or validate other information such as observer data.

Two levels of the permit exist: Black and Blue Rockfish Limited Entry Permits alone, and with an additional Nearshore Endorsement. The Nearshore Endorsement allows vessels to land greater amounts of fish defined as “nearshore species.” All other hook and line vessels (including those with Black and Blue Rockfish permits without an endorsement, as well as non-permitted vessels) are limited to an incidental amount of 15 pounds per day of all these species combined. Examples of species accessible with the endorsement include nearshore rockfish, greenling and cabezon.

In 2018, there were 112 Black and Blue Rockfish Limited Entry permits renewed; 67 with the Nearshore Endorsement and 45 without. One endorsed permit and one non-endorsed permit did not renew for 2018. Landings of nearshore species were made by 109 permitted vessels (66

endorsed and 43 not endorsed), for 97% permit participation. Fishing effort totaled 2,284 fishing days for these vessels.

In addition, 79 non-permitted vessels landed hook and line caught groundfish, and that effort totaled 393 boat days. Non-permitted vessels that catch groundfish with hook and line gear (for example, those targeting lingcod or other species not covered by Oregon’s permitted nearshore fishery) are also required to submit logbooks. The number of trips requiring nearshore logbook submissions from permitted and non-permitted vessels combined totaled 2,677, of which 2,524 were received (94% compliance).

Compliance with logbook requirements and the quality of logbook information is dependent upon the willingness of nearshore fishers and amount of detail recorded, as well as Department staff engagement with the fishers. Logbook data quality has improved over time as fishers have gained familiarity. Consistent monitoring and outreach will continue to improve and refine logbook data quality. Landings and logbook compliance rates have varied in recent years. Compliance for 2018 was slightly improved over 2017 (Table 1). Staff work collaboratively with the Oregon State Police to identify and address compliance issues with individual permit holders. Fluctuations in compliance rates may be related to intermittent vacancy in the nearshore logbook position, which was filled for the majority of 2018 and is now a permanent position.

**Table 1. Nearshore landings obtained from commercial fish tickets (Ticket lbs.), number of trips submitting logs (Submissions), and fleet compliance with the logbook submission requirement (Compliance).**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Tickets lbs.</b>	<b>Submissions</b>	<b>Compliance</b>
2018	610,284	2,524	94%
2017	595,585	2,443	93%
2016	468,955	2,070	83%
2015	569,958	2,575	90%
2014	491,674	2,141	84%
2013	531,488	2,644	96%
2012	483,373	2,418	95%
2011	464,364	2,478	95%
2010	425,743	2,037	83%
2009	549,626	1,920	64%
2008	472,438	1,790	69%
2007	438,244	1,697	71%
2006	389,390	1,949	80%
2005	421,246	2,264	84%

## OPTIONS

1. NA

## ANALYSIS

This issue includes three topics: (1) state harvest guidelines for the commercial and recreational sectors, (2) commercial nearshore fishery management measures, and (3) recreational fishery management measures.

STATE HARVEST GUIDELINES

State harvest guidelines (HGs) are numerical harvest objectives. Upon reaching an HG, the Department will determine whether action is needed to avoid exceeding an Annual Catch Limit (ACL) or negatively impacting the other sector. Harvest Guidelines are set by the Commission by allocating federal ACLs or other specifications for Oregon stocks to each sector. Since HGs were first established in state rule, the proportions have been based on historical landings, with only housekeeping changes.

Table 2 shows the 2020 recreational and commercial HGs by species/management group that result from applying the status quo allocation proportions for each sector, with three prior years for context. **Staff recommend adopting these sector HGs for 2020.**

**Table 2. State harvest guidelines for commercial and recreational groundfish management groups, in metric tons.**

Management Group	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 (proposed)
<b>Black Rockfish</b>					
Commercial HG (24.0%)	139.2	126.3	124.7	123.8	<b>122.9</b>
Recreational HG (76.0%)	440.8	400.1	394.7	392.2	<b>389.1</b>
<b>Blue and Deacon Rockf.</b>					
Commercial HG (18.6%)	NA	NA	NA	18.9	<b>18.3</b>
Recreational HG (81.4%)	NA	NA	NA	82.6	<b>80.1</b>
<b>Nearshore Rockfish (without Blue &amp; Deacon)</b>					
Commercial HG (51.3%)	NA	NA	NA	12.3	<b>12.2</b>
Recreational HG (48.7%)	NA	NA	NA	11.7	<b>11.6</b>
<b>Cabazon</b>					
Commercial HG (64.3%)	30.2	30.2	30.2	30.2	<b>30.2</b>
Recreational HG (35.7%)	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	<b>16.8</b>
<b>Greenling</b>					
Commercial HG (75.1%)	23.4	169.9	144.3	128.5	<b>118.3</b>
Recreational HG (24.9%)	5.2	56.3	47.9	42.6	<b>39.2</b>

## COMMERCIAL GROUND FISH FISHERY MANAGEMENT MEASURES

### *Staff Recommendations in Brief*

- **Black rockfish trip limits identical to initial 2019 limits for all periods**
- **Blue and deacon rockfish trip limits: 1,500 lbs per period**
- **Other nearshore rockfish trip limits: 450 lbs per period**
- **Greenling trip limits: 1,000 lbs per period**
- **Cabazon trip limits: 1,000 lbs per period**
- **Raise the daily limits for black rockfish in Black Rockfish Management Areas from 300 to 500 lbs per day from November through February**
- **Adopt recommended dressed-to-round conversion factors**

### *2019 Commercial Nearshore Season Recap*

In 2019, commercial nearshore fishing effort was similar to recent years, which have seen lower effort in general compared to earlier years of the fishery. Catch of most species was relatively stable. Variations in commercial effort and catch can be due to fluctuating weather, market demand and prices, opportunity in alternative fisheries, and other factors, as well as changes in the abundance and/or distribution of nearshore fish stocks. Trip limits for black rockfish and other nearshore rockfish were increased inseason in 2019 (effective July 5) to provide the fishery with greater opportunity to attain their full sector HGs of these species.

### *2020 Commercial Nearshore Trip Limits*

Consistent with previous years, public input supported maintaining a 12-month season for all target species. Industry still supports the use of bi-monthly cumulative trip limits that cap the amount a vessel may land in each two-month period to distribute catch across 12 months, and a risk-averse approach to setting trip limit levels.

For black rockfish, bi-monthly limits vary seasonally to allow for higher catches in the summer than in the winter in order to accommodate differences in effort and market demand. In 2019, the fishery has seen solid catch per unit effort, and is currently projected to attain about 93% of the harvest guideline after one upward in-season trip limit adjustment. For 2020, **staff recommend black rockfish trip limits identical to initial 2019 trip limits for all periods** (i.e. P1=1,500 pounds; P2=1,500; P3=1,800; P4=1,800; P5=1,500; P6=1,500).

The blue and deacon rockfish HG is higher than any historic commercial take, and catches are unlikely to approach it at current levels of market demand. **Staff recommend blue and deacon rockfish trip limits of 1,500 pounds per period, for all periods**, as initial blue and deacon rockfish bi-monthly trip limits.

For **Other Nearshore Rockfish**, staff recommend **bi-monthly trip limits of 450 pounds per period for all periods** in 2020. This trip limit level was supported at recent public meetings.

The greenling stock is abundant and productive. Market demand for greenling is relatively low, and catch has been well below the allowable harvest level, with attainment of the commercial HG projected to be 8% in 2019. No fisher has been limited by the 1,000 pounds per period limit this year. For 2020, **staff recommend greenling trip limits of 1,000 pounds per period**, which public input favored. This will maintain harvest opportunity while avoiding concerns that might arise from higher trip limits, such as local depletion, negative market impacts, and/or undesirable fishery interactions (e.g., bycatch and wastage of other species).

Cabezon attainment in 2019 is projected to be 96%, with high 2018 catch rates carrying over into this year. Cabezon trip limits in 2019 were 1,000 pounds per period. Fishers expressed support for 1,000 to 1,500 pounds per period in 2020. Based on projections and industry's feeling that 2020 will be another strong catch rate year for cabezon, **staff recommend cabezon trip limits of 1,000 pounds per period for all periods**.

Staff will monitor attainment for all species/management groups and adjust trip limits up or down in-season as necessary.

### ***Black Rockfish Management Areas***

Black Rockfish Management Areas (BRMAs; Appendix 1) were established in 1995 to address concerns about conflicts between recreational and commercial fishing as the commercial nearshore fishery developed rapidly. BRMAs were established around popular recreational fishing areas for black rockfish, the primary target species in the recreational groundfish fishery, and commercial vessels were limited to the lesser of either 200 pounds or 65 black rockfish per trip when fishing in a BRMA. At that time, this regulation provided the only limitations on participation and catch in the commercial nearshore fishery. In 2003-2004, the fishery transitioned to a system that limited the number of participating vessels, capped recreational and commercial sector total catches, and implemented bi-monthly cumulative trip limits for the commercial fishery. This basic management structure remains in place today.

In 2010 the Commission adopted a Department recommendation to increase the BRMA trip limit to 300 pounds in response to input received at the Department's annual public meetings. In 2018, the subject was again raised during public meetings; this time with a request to eliminate BRMAs altogether, given the limit on the number of commercial vessels and catch controls that have been put in place since the BRMAs were established. In December 2018, the Commission heard public testimony advocating the elimination of BRMAs, and instructed staff to evaluate this proposal.

Staff examined data on the spatial distribution of fishing effort and catch from commercial fishery logbooks and landing receipts (fish tickets) and from recreational charter boat observers. Public input from both commercial and recreational fishers was obtained at annual public meetings.

Staff concluded that total commercial catch of black rockfish and the 12-month commercial season would be unlikely to change if the BRMAs were removed, due to the other catch and effort controls on the commercial fishery. Commercial vessels would presumably be able to attain bi-monthly cumulative trip limits in fewer fishing trips, increasing efficiency by lowering costs and providing more flexibility. However, some commercial fishing effort could shift into the BRMAs if they are removed or relaxed; data to evaluate the potential for such a shift do not exist.

Input received at public meetings was mixed for both commercial and recreational sectors. Commercial participants on the south coast (Brookings, Port Orford) were largely neutral, because little of the commercial fishery occurs inside BRMAs in that region. Commercial participants on the north coast (Newport, Depoe Bay, Pacific City) supported a variety of different options for eliminating or increasing limits for some or all of the year in BRMAs. Some participants expressed strong concerns that potential commercial effort shift into BRMAs could reignite conflicts with recreational fishery participants. Others felt this risk is low, and preferred eliminating areas to increase the efficiency of the commercial fleet. Recreational fishery participants generally favored retaining BRMAs and associated trip limits for commercial vessels, with concerns primarily around issues of potential localized depletion due to commercial effort shift into BRMAs, and conflict with sport fishing in areas of high recreational use.

The primary concern regarding potential spatial effort shift and the impacts thereof cannot be quantitatively evaluated. **Staff recommend a conservative approach of raising BRMA commercial daily landing limits for black rockfish from 300 pounds to 500 pounds during the winter, periods 1 (Jan-Feb) and 6 (Nov-Dec).** Because little recreational fishing occurs over the winter, the potential for conflict is low. Commercial participants will be able to attain their bi-monthly cumulative trip limits in fewer fishing days during periods 1 and 6, when there are few fishable days due to poor weather. This limited change may also provide data for evaluating effort shift in the future.

### ***Conversion Factors***

Commercially-caught fish are usually landed round (whole), but may be dressed at sea and landed in that condition when conversion factors exist in state rule to allow the calculation of round weight from dressed weight. The conversion is necessary because round weight is used for tracking catch against quotas and for calculating state landing taxes.

**Staff recommend reinstating conversion factors that were previously adopted in state rule** for several species, which were inadvertently removed from OAR in a previous rulemaking action. In addition, **staff recommend adding conversion factors for petrale sole and Pacific cod in headed and gutted, and gilled and gutted, conditions.** The values for these conversion factors are derived from recovery rates previously established and documented<sup>1</sup>. Adding them into OAR will allow these species to be dressed at sea shortly after capture, which can increase the quality and value of the product. Federal regulation changes will be necessary to allow landings of dressed petrale sole and Pacific cod in the West Coast Groundfish Trawl Catch Shares Fishery; adopting these conversion factors into OAR at this time will enable trawlers to land these species dressed as soon as federal rules allow, but not before.

## RECREATIONAL GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT MEASURES

### *Staff Recommendations in Brief*

- **General marine fish bag limit: 5 fish**
- **New sub-bag limit: 1 copper, quillback, or China rockfish**
- **Depth restriction: Fishing limited to shoreward of the 40 fathom line June through August, and allowed at all depths September through May**
- **All other rules status quo**

### *2019 Recreational Groundfish Season Recap*

In 2019, the daily bag limit for the ‘Marine Fish’ group (rockfish, greenling, Pacific cod, cabezon, skates, spiny dogfish, leopard shark, soupfin shark, and other marine species not listed elsewhere in the Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations) was five fish, with a sub-bag limit of one cabezon when open (beginning July 1). Two lingcod were allowed under a separate bag limit. Fishing was restricted to inshore of the 40 fathom management line from May 1 through September 30, in order to reduce bycatch of yelloweye rockfish. Fishing with longleader gear was allowed outside of 40 fathoms all year, with a separate bag limit of ten midwater rockfish species (yellowtail, widow, canary, blue, deacon, redstripe, greenstriped, silvergray, and bocaccio rockfishes).

Recreational groundfish effort was relatively high in 2019 although not quite as high as in the two preceding years, with 90,702 angler-trips targeting bottomfish through September. The 5-year average is just over 97,000 angler-trips per year, which is a notable increase from prior years when it was closer to 70,000. Two inseason changes were made in 2019 to keep catch under federal Annual Catch Limits: retention of cabezon was prohibited beginning August 17, and copper, quillback, and China rockfishes were prohibited beginning August 23. Both of these restrictions

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<sup>1</sup> Crapo, C., B. Paust, and J. Babbitt. 2004. Recoveries and Yields from Pacific Fish and Shellfish. Alaska Sea Grant College Program Marine Advisory Bulletin No. 37, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

applied only when fishing from a boat; shore-based catch of these species is much lower, and is accounted for separately. The Department allowed the recreational HG for nearshore rockfish to be exceeded prior to closing this year because this group, unlike the other species/management groups, has a regional quota shared between California, Oregon, and Washington, and consultation with California and Washington fishery managers indicated that their fisheries would not take their full shares of the jointly-managed quota.

The Department lifted the seasonal depth restriction approximately one month ahead of the normal schedule on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. The depth restriction is used to keep impacts to yelloweye rockfish under the low quotas for this stock as it rebuilds from overfished status. The yelloweye quota was raised (although still small) for 2019 due to the stock’s increasing abundance, and it was apparent in late August that there was no risk of exceeding it, even with the depth restriction removed early. Allowing all-depth groundfish fishing early enabled anglers to target lingcod offshore during September, rather than waiting until October which often has worse weather and ocean conditions. In addition, the shift of some effort to more offshore waters led to a slight reduction in impacts to the Nearshore Rockfish group.

Total recreational impacts for all quota-managed species/groups through September (the most current data at the time this summary was prepared), as well as 2019 year-end projections, are shown in Table 3. These figures include estimates for shore and estuary catch to account for all groundfish mortality (kept fish and post-release mortality) due to recreational fishing in Oregon, and therefore differ slightly from the values shown on the Sport Groundfish Estimates webpage, [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/groundfish\\_sport/estimates.asp](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/MRP/finfish/groundfish_sport/estimates.asp), which shows only the ocean-boat catch targets and estimates.

**Table 3. 2019 Recreational groundfish impacts through September 30, projected through the full year, and 2019 HGs, in metric tons.**

	Impacts thru 9/30	Projected year-end impacts (% of HG)	2019 Rec. HG
Black Rockfish	301.7	323.5 (82%)	392.2
Blue and Deacon Rockfish	11.0	13.0 (14%)	82.7
Cabezon	16.1	16.5 (98%)	16.8
Canary Rockfish	35.0	38.5 (54%)	70.9
Greenling	21.4	23.2 (54%)	42.6
Minor Nearshore Rockfish	17.1	17.3 (149%)	11.6
Yelloweye Rockfish	4.0	4.3 (61%)	7.1

2019 was the second full year the longleader fishery has been allowed. This gear is configured with lures and hooks at least 30' above the bottom to reduce catch of yelloweye rockfish. Longleader trips accounted for 2.2% of all angler-trips targeting groundfish in 2019, compared to 4.5% in 2018. The decrease may be partly due to the shorter depth restriction duration in 2019 than the year before, providing more opportunity to fish traditional bottomfish gear (and retain lingcod) at all depths. The longleader fishery continues to provide a significant opportunity for certain ports, such as Winchester Bay, which does not have much nearshore rocky reef in the area open to fishing during the depth restriction. The distribution of longleader trips and traditional groundfish trips by port and charter/private boats in 2018 and 2019 is shown in Appendix 2.

Staff note that the encounter rate of yelloweye rockfish on longleader trips increased from 2018 to 2019. While there were approximately half as many longleader trips in 2019, there were three times as many yelloweye rockfish encountered. Although the total impact on yelloweye rockfish from longleader fishing is small (93 yelloweye rockfish in 2019, encountered on 1,954 trips that retained 19,778 of the target midwater species), and some increase is to be expected as yelloweye rockfish become more abundant, this amount of change was unexpected. However, given relatively low numbers of longleader trips and resulting small sample sizes for estimates, more observations are needed to assess if this issue reoccurs. The Department will continue monitoring in order to better understand the bycatch potential of the longleader fishery and what to expect in the future.

### ***2020 Recreational Bag Limits and Depth Restriction***

The majority of public input continued to support a 12-month season as a primary management objective. Bag limits and other measures proposed by staff have been developed to meet that goal.

**For the general marine fish bag limit, staff recommend status quo, 5 fish.** The bag limit is the key tool used to moderate catch to ensure a full 12-month season, while staying under harvest guidelines for multiple co-occurring species. Because black rockfish are so commonly encountered coastwide in this fishery (~70% of total catch), catch of this species is the primary driver of the general marine bag limit. Bag limits of 5, 6, and 7 fish were analyzed to illustrate the resulting projected impacts on black rockfish (Table 4). Staff caution that there is considerable uncertainty in the projections. Since 2015, the model has ranged from under-predicting black rockfish impacts by 50%, to over-predicting by 21%.

**Table 4. 2020 bag limit alternatives with projected impacts on black rockfish.**

2020 bag limit	Projected black rockfish total impacts, mt	Percent of black rockfish HG (HG=389 mt)
5 fish	351	90%
6 fish	367	94%
7 fish	384	99%

Variability in effort levels is a major factor and can be difficult to predict. In general, beginning in 2015 recreational groundfish effort jumped to an average of more than 101,000 angler-trips per year, from approximately 72,000 trips per year on average for the 10 years prior.

Uncertainty around future effort and catch levels is the primary reason staff recommend a 5-fish bag limit as the best balance of opportunity and a low risk of inseason bag reduction or early closure. Fishery dynamics are also a consideration: more angler trips occur in August than any other month, with 20-25% of the total annual black rockfish catch. Since 2017, August black rockfish impacts have ranged from 50-99 metric tons. This rapid accumulation means that it is difficult to make a timely, moderate in-season bag limit reduction to slow catch if necessary. Beginning 2020 with a 6-fish bag limit would increase the risk of an inseason reduction to a 4-fish bag later in the year. Public input during consideration of 2018 and 2019 regulations indicated that a 4-fish bag was highly undesirable and that anything below 5 fish would likely lead to reduced participation and effort. For 2019, angler effort remained in the high range seen in the last 5-years, with a 5-fish daily bag for the entire year.

Some members of the public have asked for the use of a sub-bag limit for black rockfish to allow for a higher overall daily bag limit. Since they are so widely distributed and frequently encountered, it is difficult to fish for other species in the marine bag limit without catching some black rockfish. Anglers continuing to fish for other species after filling a sub-bag would be required to discard black rockfish, increasing wastage. Even when a descending device is used, some released fish die from barotrauma and/or handling injury. A sub-bag of 6 black rockfish with a general marine bag of 7 fish was tried in 2017, but catch was still the highest on record and the fishery closed early after exceeding the black rockfish Annual Catch Limit. A sub-bag limit does not appear to be an effective measure to allow a higher overall marine bag while limiting black rockfish catch. In addition to questionable effectiveness, a sub-bag for black rockfish would have several drawbacks: it would add more complexity to the fishing regulations, and correctly distinguishing black rockfish from blue or deacon rockfish would be a challenge for many anglers, who could risk an unintended violation if they landed too many black rockfish, or unnecessarily discard blue or deacon rockfish they could keep. Staff are not recommending a sub-bag limit for black rockfish because the limited potential benefit does not appear to be worth the cost/risk.

Staff note that the Department has the ability to raise the bag limit inseason if it can do so without exceeding quotas. While it may be challenging to make such a change with confidence before the Labor Day weekend due to the likely need to wait until we have been able to observe effects of the high effort in August, staff will continue to look for such an opportunity and consult with the Sportfishing Advisory Committee on anticipated effort during the 2020 season.

In addition to maximizing stability for the 2020 season, a 5-fish bag is expected to slow impacts on the Other Nearshore Rockfish, extending the period of time those species may be retained. This is true even if a sub-bag is used for that group (see below), due to greater bycatch during longer fishing trips with a higher general marine bag.

Staff recommend a **new sub-bag limit of one copper, quillback, or China rockfish**. Unlike black rockfish, these species are infrequently encountered by most anglers, and are easier to distinguish from other species, making a sub-bag limit a viable management approach. The Nearshore Rockfish HG is expected to be reached during the summer based on recent effort and catch rates, and retention of copper, quillback, and China rockfish (which are >97% of the total catch of all species in the Nearshore Rockfish group) will be prohibited when estimated catch plus the projected discard mortality for the rest of the year equals the HG. Starting the year with a one-fish sub-bag limit for these three species in aggregate will slow the accumulating impacts and delay the need for an inseason prohibition for these species as long as possible. With staff-recommended bag and sub-bag limits, projections suggest the HG for these species will be met in early August. Although it does not have the other drawbacks described for black rockfish above, a sub-bag for copper, quillback, and China rockfish would add regulatory complexity.

**For cabezon, staff recommend status quo**, a sub-bag limit of 1 cabezon, and a cabezon season of July 1 through the earlier of December 31, or projected HG attainment. In recent years, the cabezon HG has been approached and retention prohibited in mid-August, and staff anticipate the same in 2020.

Staff recommend **status quo for the separate offshore longleader fishery**: a bag limit of 10 fish, of specified midwater rockfish only, seaward of the 40 fathom line only, with specified gear.

For the **lingcod bag limit, staff recommend status quo, two fish**. Lingcod opportunity has been limited by the bycatch of associated species, especially yelloweye rockfish, and also other nearshore species such as China rockfish. A lingcod bag limit of 3 fish would increase bycatch of those species, and so far most public input and staff recommendations have not favored “spending” those impacts on a third lingcod.

**For the seasonal depth restriction in 2020, staff recommend limiting the fishery to shoreward of the 40 fathom line from June 1 through August 31,** and allowing fishing for groundfish at all depths from January 1 – May 30 and September 1 – December 31. The seasonal depth restriction during the summer months of highest recreational fishing effort continues to be a useful measure to reduce yelloweye rockfish interactions. The Department has committed to a cautious approach of liberalizing fishing opportunities that are expected to increase yelloweye rockfish bycatch in measured steps as the stock rebuilds and the available quota slowly increases. This recommendation follows that approach. Retention of groundfish other than Pacific cod, sablefish, and flatfish would continue to be prohibited on all-depth halibut trips, even when the groundfish fishery is open to fishing at all depths.

Total projected recreational impacts in 2020 by species or management group under the staff-recommended regulations are shown in Table 5. As noted above, there is substantial uncertainty in these projections due to high variability in effort and catch between and within years, as well as changing regulations across years. For example, in 2019 actual black rockfish impacts are on track to be approximately 11% lower than predicted by pre-season modeling, whereas yelloweye rockfish impacts will be approximately 40% higher than predicted.

**Table 5. Projected 2020 recreational groundfish impacts, in metric tons, under staff-recommended management measures**

Species/Management Group	Projected year-end impacts (% of HG)	2020 Recreational Limit
Black Rockfish	350.6 (90%)	389.1
Blue and Deacon Rockfish	21.7 (27%)	80.1
Cabazon	16.8 (100%)*	16.8
Canary Rockfish	50.2 (75%)	66.7
Greenling	26.1 (67%)	39.2
Minor Nearshore Rockfish	11.6 (100%)*	11.6
Yelloweye Rockfish	4.8 (67%)	7.2

\* Cabazon and Minor Nearshore Rockfish impacts are projected to exceed the 2020 HG under recommended rules. Retention will be prohibited inseason when necessary to remain at or below the HG.

## OPTIONS

1. Staff recommendations as reflected in draft OAR's:

### **Adopt updated federal groundfish rules by reference.**

#### **Harvest guidelines for 2020 (in metric tons):**

Black rockfish – Commercial: 122.9; Recreational: 389.1

Blue and Deacon rockfish – Commercial: 18.3; Recreational: 80.1

Nearshore Rockfish – Commercial: 12.2; Recreational: 11.6

Cabazon – Commercial: 30.2; Recreational: 16.8

Greenling – Commercial: 118.3; Recreational: 39.2

#### **Commercial nearshore bimonthly limits for 2020:**

- Black rockfish:
  - 1500 pounds in period 1; 1500 pounds in P2; 1800 pounds in P3; 1800 pounds in P4; 1500 pounds in P5; 1500 pounds in P6;
- Blue rockfish and deacon rockfish combined: 1500 pounds in each period;
- Other nearshore rockfish combined: 450 pounds in each period;
- Cabazon: 1,000 pounds in each period; and
- Greenling species: 1,000 pounds in each period.

#### **Commercial Black Rockfish Management Areas:**

Increase the commercial daily black rockfish landing limits in the Black Rockfish Management Areas from 300 pounds to 500 pounds during periods 1 (Jan-Feb) and 6 (Nov-Dec).

#### **Conversion Factors:**

*Restore values previously in OAR and inadvertently removed:*

- Thresher shark, gutted and headed 1.41
- Blue shark, gutted and headed 1.49
- Pacific spiny dogfish, gutted and headed 1.81
- Shortfin mako shark, gutted and headed 1.45
- Soupfin shark, gutted and headed 1.96
- Other sharks, gutted and headed 1.72
- Swordfish gutted and headed, with fins and bloodline removed 1.45

*Add new conversion factors:*

- Pacific cod:
  - Gilled and gutted 1.23; Gutted and headed 1.58
- Petrale sole:
  - Gilled and gutted 1.16; (ii) Gutted and headed 1.51

#### **Recreational bag limits and depth restriction for 2020:**

- General marine fish bag limit: 5 fish
- New sub-bag limit: 1 copper, quillback, or China rockfish
- Fishing limited to shoreward of the 40 fathom line June through August, and allowed at all depths September through May
- All other rules status quo

2. Modify staff proposal for one or more items.
3. Status quo

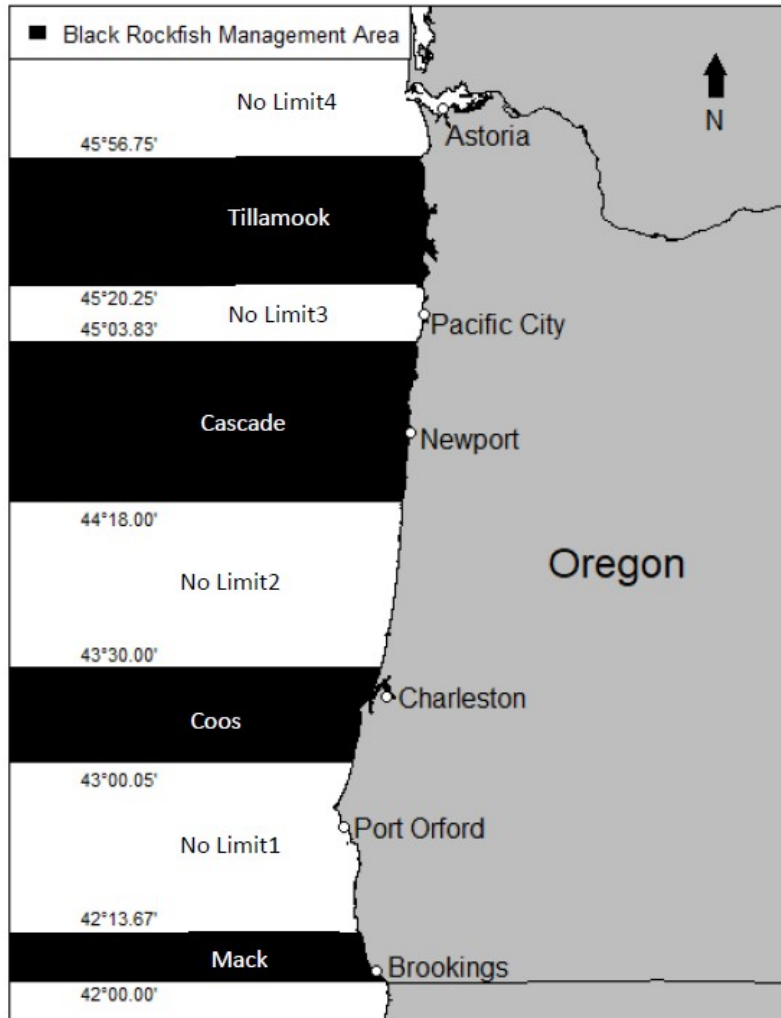
**STAFF  
RECOMMENDATION**

1. Option 1

<b>DRAFT MOTION</b>	I move to adopt the recommended recreational and commercial groundfish regulations as proposed by staff in Attachment 3.
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	Upon Filing



### Oregon Black Rockfish Management Areas



### Background: Commercial Rule (only)

- Limited to 300 lbs/day of Black Rockfish in named spatial areas
- Rule first established in 1995 (200 lbs/day or 65 fish); modified for 2010 to current limit
- Fishery became limited entry in 2004; with bimonthly limits
- OAR can be changed by OR F&W Commission; eliminated or modified
- OR F&W Commission requested evaluation in 2019

Appendix 2. Recreational groundfish trips by port, for charter and private anglers, 2018 and 2019 (thru Sept.)

**2018 Charter**

Port	Total groundfish angler-trips	Longleader angler-trips	Traditional groundfish angler-trips	Percent longleader
Astoria	96	0	96	0.0%
Garibaldi	8435	1,183	7252	14.0%
Pacific City	1670	0	1670	0.0%
Depoe Bay	16361	1,658	14703	10.1%
Newport	14879	699	14180	4.7%
Florence	0	0	0	0.0%
Winchester Bay	0	0	0	0.0%
Charleston	3297	78	3219	2.4%
Bandon	2214	0	2214	0.0%
Port Orford	0	0	0	0.0%
Gold Beach	780	0	780	0.0%
Brookings	3561	0	3561	0.0%
<b>Charter Total</b>	<b>51,293</b>	<b>3,618</b>	<b>47,675</b>	<b>7.1%</b>

**2019 Charter (data through September)**

Port	Total groundfish angler-trips	Longleader angler-trips	Traditional groundfish angler-trips	Percent longleader
Astoria	0	0	0	0.0%
Garibaldi	8321	714	7607	8.6%
Pacific City	1066	0	1066	0.0%
Depoe Bay	14985	315	14670	2.1%
Newport	15017	365	14652	2.4%
Florence	0	0	0	0.0%
Winchester Bay	0	0	0	0.0%
Charleston	2537	0	2537	0.0%
Bandon	1970	0	1970	0.0%
Port Orford	0	0	0	0.0%
Gold Beach	698	0	698	0.0%
Brookings	3226	0	3226	0.0%
<b>Charter Total</b>	<b>47,820</b>	<b>1,394</b>	<b>46,426</b>	<b>2.9%</b>

**2018 Private**

Port	Total groundfish angler-trips	longleader angler-trips	Traditional groundfish angler-trips	Percent longleader
Astoria	547	0	547	0.0%
Garibaldi	5072	77	4995	1.5%
Pacific City	3598	0	3598	0.0%
Depoe Bay	3172	0	3172	0.0%
Newport	8957	54	8903	0.6%
Florence	4	0	4	0.0%
Winchester Bay	585	497	88	85.0%
Charleston	8665	217	8448	2.5%
Bandon	1714	48	1666	2.8%
Port Orford	400	0	400	0.0%
Gold Beach	2586	9	2577	0.3%
Brookings	14534	0	14,534	0.0%
<b>Private Total</b>	<b>49834</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>48,932</b>	<b>1.8%</b>

**2019 Private (data through September)**

Port	Total groundfish angler-trips	longleader angler-trips	Traditional groundfish angler-trips	Percent longleader
Astoria	403	0	403	0.0%
Garibaldi	4158	144	4014	3.5%
Pacific City	2799	0	2799	0.0%
Depoe Bay	2463	0	2463	0.0%
Newport	8037	74	7963	0.9%
Florence	0	0	0	0.0%
Winchester Bay	1026	304	722	29.6%
Charleston	7063	123	6940	1.7%
Bandon	1767	11	1756	0.6%
Port Orford	405	0	405	0.0%
Gold Beach	4795	0	4795	0.0%
Brookings	12021	6	12,015	0.0%
<b>Private Total</b>	<b>44937</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>44,275</b>	<b>1.5%</b>