

DRAFT

AMENDMENT 32
REVISIONS TO THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR
GROUNDFISH OF THE
GULF OF ALASKA

On page 3-1, the third paragraph and species assemblage lists under AREAS AND STOCKS INVOLVED, are revised to read as follows:

Diversity of commercial bottomfish species in the Gulf of Alaska is intermediate between the Bering Sea, where few species occur, and the Washington-California region, where more species are present. The most diverse genus in the Gulf of Alaska is the rockfish group (*Sebastes*), of which more than 30 species have been identified in this area. Several species of rockfish have been of significant commercial interest, including the Pacific ocean perch (*s. alutus*), shortraker rockfish (*s. borealis*), rougheye rockfish (*s. aleutianus*), dusky rockfish (*s. ciliatus*), northern rockfish (*s. polyspinis*), and yelloweye rockfish (*s. ruberrimus*). Pacific ocean perch was the subject of a substantial foreign trawl fishery from the 1960's through mid 1980's, and of a domestic fishery after that time. Although Pacific ocean perch is found throughout the Gulf, the biomass and fishery have been concentrated in the eastern area. For management purposes rockfish are classified into three distinct assemblages that are based on their habitat and distribution. These assemblages are:

Aurora rockfish (<i>s. aurora</i>)	Canary rockfish (<i>s. oinniger</i>)
Blackgill rockfish (<i>s. melanostomus</i>)	China rockfish (<i>s. nebulosus</i>)
Boccacio (<i>s. oaucisoinis</i>)	Copper rockfish (<i>s. caurinus</i>)
Chilipepper (<i>s. goodei</i>)	Quillback rockfish (<i>s. maliqer</i>)
Darkblotch rockfish (<i>s. crameri</i>)	Redbanded rockfish (<i>s. babcocki</i>)
Greenstriped rockfish (<i>s. elonqatus</i>)	Rosethorn rockfish (<i>s. helvomaculatus</i>)
Harlequin rockfish (<i>s. varieaates</i>)	Tiger rockfish (<i>s. nigrocinctus</i>)
Northern rockfish (<i>s. Bolysoinis</i>)	Yelloweye rockfish (<i>s. ruberrimus</i>)
Pacific ocean perch (<i>s. alutus</i>)	
Pygmy rockfish(<i>s. wilsoni</i>)	Pelaqic Shelf Assemblage
Redstripe rockfish (<i>s. proriger</i>)	
Rougheye rockfish (<i>s. aleutianus</i>)	Black rockfish (<i>s. melanoos</i>)
Sharpchin rockfish (<i>s. zacentrus</i>)	Blue rockfish(<i>s.mystinus</i>)
Shortbelly rockfish (<i>s. jordani</i>)	Dusky rockfish (<i>s. œiliatus</i>)
Shortraker rockfish (<i>s. borealis</i>)	Widow rockfish (<i>s. entomelas</i>)
Silvergrey rockfish (<i>s. brevispinis</i>)	Yellowtail rockfish (<i>s. flavidus</i>)
Splitnose rockfish, (<i>s. diploproa</i>)	
Stripetail rockfish (<i>s. saxicola</i>)	
Vermilion rockfish (<i>s. miniatus</i>)	
Yellowmouth rockfish(<i>s. reedi</i>)	

The four most valuable slope species, Pacific ocean perch, shortraker, rougheye, and northern rockfish, have been managed separately from the remainder of the slope assemblage in

recent years to prevent possible overfishing. However, in spite of reductions in fishing mortality, the biomass of Pacific ocean perch remains well below historic levels.

The Council's policy is to achieve optimum yield and proper conservation and management in the Gulf of Alaska by managing fisheries to ensure timely rebuilding of depressed stocks of Pacific ocean perch. The Council considers minimizing controllable Pacific ocean perch mortality necessary to maximize the probability of rebuilding success. Specifically, this policy (1) provides a framework calculation for the annual fishing mortality of Pacific ocean perch that is projected to rebuild to a target biomass of B_{msy} , in a reasonable length of time, as detailed in Section 4.2, and (2) seeks to reduce the total mortality of Pacific ocean perch in other target fisheries by defining the overfishing level in the three regulatory areas (western, central, and eastern). The overfishing level in each of the three areas will be proportionate to the occurrence of Pacific ocean perch biomass in the areas.

On page 4-1, under Section 4.2.1, Setting Harvest Levels, the first paragraph is revised to read as follows:

A procedure has been developed whereby the Council can set annual harvest levels by specifying a total allowable catch (TAC) for each groundfish fishery on an annual basis. The procedure consists of five steps:

On page 4-1, under Section 4.2.1, Setting Harvest Levels, the following text is appended to the end of (L) to read as follows:

The Council has examined biological and socioeconomic information and has adopted a rebuilding plan for Pacific ocean perch. Rebuilding is defined to have occurred when the current total biomass of mature females is equal to, or greater than, B_{msy} . Other procedures notwithstanding, this rebuilding plan establishes the annual TAC of Pacific ocean perch as follows:

(a) determine the current and target biomass and optimal fishing mortality rate. For purposes of this rebuilding plan, the target biomass is B_{msy} , the total biomass of mature females that would produce the maximum sustainable yield, on average. The optimal fishing mortality rate is the rate that maximizes expected biological and economic yields over a range of plausible stock-recruitment relationships.

(b) determine the fishing mortality rate halfway between the optimal fishing mortality rate and the fishing mortality rate estimated to be sufficient to supply unavoidable bycatch of Pacific ocean perch in the Gulf based on 1992 bycatch rates.

(c) when the current biomass of mature females is less than B_{msy} , adjust the resultant fishing mortality rate in (b) by the ratio of current biomass to B_{msy} . When B_{msy} is attained, the fishing mortality rate will be the optimal fishing mortality rate.

(d) the TAC of Pacific ocean perch is the amount of fish resulting from the adjusted fishing mortality rate in (c).

(e) the TAC is apportioned among regulatory areas in proportion to population biomass distribution.