

COMMENT BY SAC OFFICE

The California Fish and Game Commission voted this morning (December 12, 2018) to approve changes to state recreational fishing regulations. The changes are for implementation in early 2019. This action mirrors recreational fishing regulation changes as stated by the following excerpts from NOAA Federal Rule Making action (as applicable to Southern California). The Fish and Game Commission decision we have been advised will go through a final step in the process within the Office of Administrative Law. It is then expected to be approved, published and then put into effect. Changes include 75 fathom RCA's, 40 fathoms waypoints in the CCA, year round scorpionfish and a reduction to a 1 lingcod bag limit. The coordinates of the CCA waypoints are included below as well as season information.

STATEMENT BY NMFS IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER

AGENCY:

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION:

Final rule.

SUMMARY:

This final rule establishes the 2019-2020 harvest specifications and management measures for groundfish taken in the U.S. exclusive economic zone off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California, consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan. This final rule revises the

management measures that are intended to keep the total catch of each groundfish stock or stock complex within the harvest specifications. These measures are intended to help prevent overfishing, rebuild overfished stocks, achieve optimum yield, and ensure that management measures are based on the best scientific information available.

DATES:

This final rule is effective January 1, 2019.

CALIFORNIA

The Council manages recreational fisheries off of California in five separate management areas. The 2019 and 2020 California season structure includes additional time and depth opportunities. Table 16 shows the season structure and depth limits by management area for 2019 and 2020.

Management area	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Northern	Closed			May 1—Oct 31 < 30 fm						All Depth.		
Mendocino	Closed			May 1—Oct 31 < 20 fm						All Depth.		
San Francisco	Closed		April 1—Dec 31 < 40 fm.									
Central	Closed		April 1—Dec 31 < 50 fm.									
Southern	Closed		Mar 1—Dec 31 < 75 fm.									

Table 16—California Recreational Fishery Season Structure and Depth Limits by Management Area for 2019 and 2020

Size, bag, and sublimits will remain the same as 2018 for all stocks except for lingcod. To keep within allowable limits, the lingcod bag limit is split into separate limits for north (42° N lat. (California/Oregon border) to 40°10' N lat. (Northern Management Area)) and south (40°10' N lat. to the U.S. border with Mexico (Mendocino Management Area, San Francisco Management Area, Central Management Area, and Southern Management Area)). In the north area, the bag limit is 2 lingcod per day; in the south area the bag limit is 1 lingcod per day. Additionally, this rule allows year-round retention of California scorpionfish in the Southern management area.

Modifications to Depth Restrictions Within the Western CCA

This final rule modifies the allowed fishing depths from 20-fm (37-m) to 40-fm (73-m) for the commercial fixed gear fishery and the recreational fishery inside the Western Cowcod Conservation Area (CCA). This rule also adds new waypoints approximating the 30-fm (55-m)

and 40-fm (73-m) depth contours around Santa Barbara Island, San Nicolas Island, Tanner Bank, and Cortes Bank because waypoints approximating these contours do not exist at these depths currently. Fisheries are allowed to operate in areas shallower than the depth limit. This final rule increases the area open to fishing within the Western CCA from 40.4 mi² (104.6 km²) to 150.4 mi² (389.5 km²).

(s) The 40 fm (73 m) depth contour around Santa Barbara Island off the state of California is defined by straight lines connecting all of the following points in the order stated:

- (1) 33°30.87' N lat., 119°02.43' W long.;
- (2) 33°29.87' N lat., 119°00.34' W long.;
- (3) 33°27.08' N lat., 119°01.65' W long.;
- (4) 33°27.64' N lat., 119°03.45' W long.;
- (5) 33°29.12' N lat., 119°04.55' W long.;
- (6) 33°29.66' N lat., 119°05.49' W long.; and
- (7) 33°30.87' N lat., 119°02.43' W long.

(t) The 40 fm (73 m) depth contour around Tanner Bank off the state of California is defined by straight lines connecting all of the following points in the order stated:

- (1) 32°43.40' N lat., 119°08.56' W long.;
- (2) 32°41.36' N lat., 119°05.02' W long.;
- (3) 32°40.07' N lat., 119°05.59' W long.;

(4) $32^{\circ}41.51' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}09.76' W$ long.; and

(5) $32^{\circ}43.40' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}08.56' W$ long.

(u) The 40 fm (73 m) depth contour around San Nicholas Island off the state of California is defined by straight lines connecting all of the following points in the order stated:

(1) $33^{\circ}19.30' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}41.05' W$ long.;

(2) $33^{\circ}19.42' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}27.88' W$ long.;

(3) $33^{\circ}14.31' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}17.48' W$ long.;

(4) $33^{\circ}12.90' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}17.64' W$ long.;

(5) $33^{\circ}11.89' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}27.26' W$ long.;

(6) $33^{\circ}12.19' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}29.96' W$ long.;

(7) $33^{\circ}15.42' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}39.14' W$ long.;

(8) $33^{\circ}17.58' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}41.38' W$ long.; and

(9) $33^{\circ}19.30' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}41.05' W$ long.

(v) The 40 fm (73 m) depth contour around Cortes Bank off the state of California is defined by straight lines connecting all of the following points in the order stated:

(1) $32^{\circ}30.00' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}12.98' W$ long.;

(2) $32^{\circ}28.33' N$ lat., $119^{\circ}06.81' W$ long.;

(3) $32^{\circ}25.69'$ N lat., $119^{\circ}03.21'$ W long.;

(4) $32^{\circ}24.66'$ N lat., $119^{\circ}03.83'$ W long.;

(5) $32^{\circ}28.48'$ N lat., $119^{\circ}14.66'$ W long.; and

(6) $32^{\circ}30.00'$ N lat., $119^{\circ}12.98'$ W long.