

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME PROPOSED CHANGES TO RECREATIONAL GROUND FISH REGULATIONS FOR 2017-2018**

***Season Structure***

CDFW supports the following recreational RCA configuration and season structures (Fig 1). The season structure prioritizes increasing season lengths and depths when possible, recognizing the constraints imposed from black and yelloweye rockfishes. Compared to the 2016 season structure, the proposal for 2017-2018 would provide increased opportunities in almost all areas. (Note: the California scorpionfish season will remain the same as 2016; i.e., open January 1 through August 31, closed September 1 through December 31)

CDFW also supports allowing retention of petrale sole and starry flounder year-round in all depths.

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Management Area	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Northern	Closed				May 1 – Oct 31 <30fm						All Depth	
Mendocino	Closed				May 1 – Oct 31 <20fm						All Depth	
San Francisco	Closed				April 15 – Dec 31 <40fm							
Central	Closed			April 1 – Dec 31 <50fm								
Southern	Closed		Mar 1 – Dec 31 <60 fm									

Figure 1. Proposed California recreational groundfish season structure for 2017-2018.

***Area Closures - Hotspots/YRCAs***

During public scoping, CDFW staff asked for input to identify areas that were known “hot spots” for yelloweye rockfish and cowcod. Staff explained that areas may need to be closed as part of a tradeoff for allowing access to deeper depths to ensure that allowable limits of overfished species were not exceeded. Hot spot identification was solely focused on yelloweye rockfish and cowcod and not on canary rockfish since it has now been declared rebuilt. These closures would be used preseason to minimize overfished species impacts and reduce the possibility of disruptions to the fishery.

CDFW supports implementing area closures (hotspots and/or YRCAs) preseason to ensure that encounters with overfished species are minimized if deeper depth restrictions are contemplated.

***Bag Limits***

CDFW supports modifying bag limits for 2017-2018 as outlined below in Table 1.

Table 1. Proposed changes to bag limits for 2017-2018. Bag limits apply statewide

Species	Status Quo	Proposed Change
Black Rockfish	5	3
Bocaccio	3	Up to 10 w/in RCG
Canary Rockfish	zero	1
Lingcod	3	2