



2025 MENDOCINO Management Area Recreational Groundfish Regulations Summary^{1, 2, 3}



Ocean waters between 40°10' N. latitude (near Cape Mendocino) and 38°57.5' N. latitude (Point Arena)

These regulations are subject to in-season change. It is the reader's responsibility to know and abide by all regulations in effect at the time of fishing activity. Check for [current regulations](#) prior to fishing

(California Code of Regulations, Title 14).

(Shore-based anglers and spear divers are exempt from seasons and depths. See footnote 2.)

Text in **red** represent changes in regulation for 2025.

Certain areas within the management area may further prohibit or restrict fishing
(e.g., [marine protected areas](#))^{1,3}

DESCENDING DEVICES REQUIRED⁴: No Person shall take or possess any federal groundfish from any boat or other floating device in ocean waters without a descending device in possession.

THESE ROCKFISHES MAY NOT BE TAKEN OR POSSESSED IN CALIFORNIA:

Bronzespotted Rockfish, Cowcod, [Quillback Rockfish](#), and [Yelloweye Rockfish](#) (§28.55)

FISHING IS CLOSED year-round, at all depths **NO RETENTION** at any time (zero fish per person)

Species Group	<p>NEARSHORE ROCKFISH, CABEZON and GREENLING</p> <p>Nearshore Rockfish: (§1.91(a)(1) black, black and yellow, blue, brown, calico, China, copper, gopher, grass, kelp, and olive rockfishes; treefish</p> <p>Cabazon and Greenlings (§28.28 and §28.29)</p>	<p>SHELF and SLOPE ROCKFISH and LINGCOD</p> <p>Shelf Rockfish, (§1.91(a)(3)) bocaccio; canary, chilipepper, dusky, flag, greenblotched, greenspotted, greenstriped, harlequin, honeycomb, Mexican, pink, redstripe, rosethorn, rosy, shortbelly, silvergray, speckled, squarespot, starry, stripetail, tiger, vermilion, widow, and yellowtail rockfishes</p> <p>Slope Rockfish, (§1.91(a)(4)) aurora, bank, blackgill, darkblotched, redbanded, rougheye, sharpchin, shortraker, splitnose, and yellowmouth rockfishes; Pacific ocean perch</p> <p>Lingcod (§28.27)</p>
Jan - Mar	Jan 1 – Mar 31: Closed - unlawful to possess in all waters	Jan 1 – Mar 31: Closed - unlawful to possess in all waters
April	April 1 – April 30: Closed - unlawful to possess in all waters	<p>April 1 – April 30: 50 Fathom - Offshore Only</p> <p>Take is prohibited shoreward of the 50 fathom (300 feet) Rockfish Conservation Area boundary line, which is a series of connected waypoints defined in Federal regulations (50 CFR Part 660, Subpart C)</p>
May - Sep	<p>May 1 – Sep 30: 20 Fathom - Inshore Only</p> <p>Take is prohibited seaward of the 20 fathom (120 feet) boundary line, which is defined by connecting the appropriate set of waypoints adopted in Section 35.00 of these regulations</p>	<p>May 1 – Sep 30: 20 Fathom - Inshore Only</p> <p>Take is prohibited seaward of the 20 fathom (120 feet) boundary line, which is defined by connecting the appropriate set of waypoints adopted in Section 35.00 of these regulations</p>
Oct	Oct 1 – Oct 31: Closed - unlawful to possess in all waters	<p>Oct 1 – Oct 31: 50 Fathom - Offshore Only</p> <p>Take is prohibited shoreward of the 50 fathom (300 feet) Rockfish Conservation Area boundary line, which is a series of connected waypoints defined in Federal regulations (50 CFR Part 660, Subpart C)</p>
Nov	<p>Nov 1 – Nov 30: 20 Fathom - Inshore Only</p> <p>Take is prohibited seaward of the 20 fathom (120 feet) boundary line, which is defined by connecting the appropriate set of waypoints adopted in Section 35.00 of these regulations</p>	<p>Nov 1 – Nov 30: 20 Fathom - Inshore Only</p> <p>Take is prohibited seaward of the 20 fathom (120 feet) boundary line, which is defined by connecting the appropriate set of waypoints adopted in Section 35.00 of these regulations</p>
Dec	Dec 1 – Dec 31: Closed - unlawful to possess in all waters	<p>Dec 1 – Dec 31: 50 Fathom - Offshore Only</p> <p>Take is prohibited shoreward of the 50 fathom (300 feet) Rockfish Conservation Area boundary line, which is a series of connected waypoints defined in Federal regulations (50 CFR Part 660, Subpart C)</p>

2025 Daily Bag Limit and Minimum Size Limit for All Anglers and Divers

Species	Daily Bag Limit	Min. Size Limit ⁵	Filleting Aboard a Vessel ⁶
RCG Complex includes all species of Rockfishes, Cabezon and Greenlings (\$1.91 (a)(1), 1.91(a)(3), 1.91(a)(4), 28.55, 28.28, and 28.29).	10 fish in combination per person EXCEPT: <u>Copper rockfish:</u> 1 fish per person <u>Vermilion rockfish:</u> 2 fish per person	All Rockfish: No minimum size limit Cabezon and Greenlings: No minimum size limit	All Rockfish: No minimum length. Fillets must have entire skin attached Cabezon and Greenlings: No minimum length. Fillets must have the entire skin attached
Lingcod (\$28.27)	2 fish per person	22" total length	Minimum 14" in length with the entire skin attached

Recreational Regulations for other groundfish species can be found on the CDFW [Sportfishing Regulations website](#)

- Certain areas may prohibit or restrict fishing, including State and federal Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) or other State and federal conservation areas. Check CDFW's website at wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MPAs for MPAs, or the [Ocean Sportfishing Interactive Web Map](#) for MPAs and other closures.
- Divers and shore-based anglers are exempt from season and depth restrictions affecting the RCG complex and other federally managed groundfish (§27.20(b)(1)(C) and §27.20(b)(1)(D)). Shore-based anglers are fishermen that fish from beaches, banks, piers, jetties, breakwaters, docks, and other manmade structures connected to the shore. Divers are spear fishermen entering the water either from the shore or from a boat or other floating object. The possession and transit provisions described for shore-based anglers, and divers are as follows:
 - When angling from shore (includes beaches, banks, piers, jetties, breakwaters, docks, and other man-made structures connected to the shore), all species, except those listed in §28.55(b)(1), may be taken and/or possessed year-round. No vessel or watercraft (motorized or non-motorized) may be used to assist in the take, transport and/or possession of these species under this provision.
 - When diving or spearfishing, as authorized in §28.90, all species, except those listed in §28.55(b)(1), may be taken and/or possessed year-round. When boat-based groundfish fishing is closed, all types of fishing gear, except spearfishing gear, are prohibited to be aboard the vessel or watercraft (motorized or non-motorized) when taking and/or possessing these species under this provision.
- TRANSIT PROVISION: In waters where groundfish species or species groups are closed to take or possession but authorized for take or possession in other areas, those species or species groups may be possessed aboard a vessel that is anchored, drifting, or transiting in or through that closed area. While anchored, drifting, or transiting through an area closed to take or possession of these groundfish species or species groups, no gear may be deployed other than for the take of crustaceans with hoop nets used pursuant to §29.80(b), Dungeness crab traps used pursuant to §29.80(c), and dip nets used pursuant to §28.80.
 - It is unlawful to possess a groundfish species or species group within a Groundfish Management Area (GMA) where the take and possession of those species are prohibited in all waters of that GMA or in excess of the bag limit of that GMA, regardless of if the groundfish species or species group were taken in a different GMA where the take or possession is authorized (§27.20(b)(1)(A)(1)).
- No person shall take or possess any federal groundfish as defined in §1.91 and all greenlings of the genus *Hexagrammos* from any boat or other floating device in ocean waters without having a descending device in possession and available for immediate use to assist in releasing rockfish to the depth of capture (§27.20(b)(1)(D)(2)).
- Total length is the longest straight-line measurement from the tip of the head with the mouth closed to the end of the longest lobe of the tail (§1.62). A measurement method illustration is available in the current Ocean Sport Fishing Regulations booklet, available on the CDFW website.
- For the purpose of these regulations, the definition of fillet is the flesh from one side of a fish extending from the head to the tail which has been removed from the body (head, tail, and backbone) in a single continuous piece (§7.65(a)). No person shall fillet on any boat or bring ashore as fillets any fish except in accordance with requirements established in §27.65(b). See regulations for information on gear restrictions (§28.65 – 29.00) and species-specific fillet regulations (§27.65).