



State of California
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Ocean Salmon Project & Groundfish Project
Marine Region



<https://wildlife.ca.gov/oceansalmon>
<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/Groundfish>

Incidental Retention of Groundfish in the 2021 Salmon Troll Fishery

Salmon trollers that retain groundfish are considered to be participating in the Federal Groundfish Open Access (OA) Fishery with non-trawl gear. Information below is to assist salmon trollers in understanding select Federal Groundfish OA Fishery regulations pertaining to incidental groundfish catch in the Salmon Troll Fishery. Trip limits and other management measures pertaining to the directed Groundfish OA Fishery are found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §660.330.

Groundfish trip limits are based upon one or two-month cumulative periods: Period 1 = Jan-Feb, Period 2 = Mar-Apr, Period 3 = May-Jun, Period 4 = Jul-Aug, Period 5 = Sep-Oct, Period 6 = Nov-Dec. Fishers need to keep track of their catch by calendar month to avoid exceeding limits, and must have copies of landing receipts on board the vessel, immediately available for inspection. All groundfish species are subject to the OA trip limits, seasons, size limits and Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Area (NT-RCA) restrictions listed in the Groundfish OA south of 40°10' N. lat. trip limit table (see OA trip limit link below).

******When salmon trolling exclusively outside an NT-RCA, groundfish may be retained up to the OA south of 40°10' N. lat. trip limits on the same trip. See OA trip limit table for complete information on limits and restrictions******

When salmon trolling inside an NT-RCA for all or part of a trip, different retention rules apply, as follows:

Yellowtail rockfish incidental trip limit south of 40°10' N. lat.

Salmon trollers may retain and land up to 1 lb. of yellowtail rockfish for every 2 lbs. of Chinook salmon landed, with a cumulative limit of 200 lbs. per month, both within and outside an NT-RCA. The 200 lbs. per month counts towards the OA cumulative limit of 4,000 lbs. per 2 months for the minor shelf rockfish limit in the area between 40°10' and 34°27' N. lat. and is not in addition to the 4,000 lbs. per 2 months.

******If yellowtail rockfish are retained while salmon trolling inside the NT-RCA, then the retention or possession of other species of groundfish is prohibited at anytime on the same trip [50 CFR 660.330(12)(iii)]******

******Regardless of how, when or where they were taken, the retention or possession of all other groundfish species while salmon trolling within the NT-RCA is prohibited******

******Salmon trollers lawfully trolling in an NT-RCA may not simultaneously have other gear on board the vessel that is unlawful to use for fishing within the NT-RCA [50 CFR 660.330(d)]******



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Non-trawl Rockfish Conservation Areas (NT-RCA) – are depth-based areas **closed** to the take, retention, or possession of certain groundfish. NT-RCA boundary lines are defined by a series of connected waypoints which are intended to approximate depth contours [50 CFR §660.70, §660.330(d)]. NT-RCAs for the area south 40°10' N. lat. are in Table 1. The area between the shoreward (shallow) and seaward (deeper) boundary lines is closed to the take, retention, or possession of certain groundfish while salmon trolling. NT-RCA coordinates can be downloaded from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Depth-Based Boundary Lines on the West Coast web page:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/data/depth-based-boundary-lines-west-coast>

Table 1. NT-RCAs for the area south 40°10' N. lat.

Salmon Management Area	NT-RCA	Retention Rule
Fort Bragg	40°10' to 38°57.5' N. lat.; area between 40 fm to 125 fm	Take, retention, or possession of groundfish is prohibited, except for incidental yellowtail rockfish in the salmon troll fishery
San Francisco	38°57.5' to 37°11' N. lat.; area between 50 fm to 125 fm	
Monterey and South	37°11' to 34°27' N. lat.; area between 50 fm to 125 fm	
	34°27' N. lat. to U.S./Mex. border; area between 100 fm to 150 fm	

Groundfish Fishery Vessel Monitoring Program – a federal vessel monitoring program that consists of a vessel monitoring system (VMS) unit and declaration reports. A NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) type-approved VMS unit is required to be installed on any commercial fishing vessel using OA gears to take, retain, or possess groundfish in, or transiting through federal waters (the ocean area 3-200 nm offshore, excluding Monterey Bay [50 CFR §660.14]). A VMS unit must be operating and maintained in good working order continuously, 24 hours a day throughout the fishing year. Additionally, a declaration report identifying gear type and fishery must be submitted via email or phone to NOAA OLE before a vessel leaves port [50 CFR §660.13(d)(3)].

If salmon trollers intend to lawfully troll or transit through federal waters and take, retain or possess groundfish, including taking, retaining, or possessing yellowtail rockfish in the NT-RCA, a NOAA OLE type-approved VMS unit is required on the vessel and declaration reports must be submitted prior to leaving port.

A VMS unit is not required on vessels that use open access gear types and stay exclusively in state waters (inside 3 nm) to take, retain, or possess groundfish or non-groundfish species.



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More information on VMS can be found at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/west-coast/resources-fishing/vessel-monitoring-system-west-coast>

Landing Groundfish - means to begin transfer of fish, offloading fish, or to offload fish from any vessel. Once transfer of fish begins, all fish aboard the vessel are counted as part of the landing. All fish from a landing must be removed from the vessel before a new fishing trip begins. Transfer of fish at sea is prohibited under 50 CFR §660.12 [50 CFR §660.60(h)(2)].

Any person landing groundfish shall sort species or species groups prior to the first weighing after offloading and shall keep a copy of the landing receipt (dock ticket or e-tix) on board the fishing vessel throughout, and for 15 days following, each period for which cumulative landings by individual vessels are limited [FGC §8046.1; 50 CFR §660.12(8)].

Vessel identification – in addition to general commercial fishing vessel registration and salmon permit marking requirements, vessels involved in operations that take, retain or possess groundfish, including incidentally taking, retaining, or possessing yellowtail rockfish while salmon trolling, require specific identification depending on the length of the vessel. The length of a vessel is the length set forth in United States Coast Guard (USCG) records or in state records, if no USCG record exists [50 CFR §660.403(b), §660.20(a)]. The operator of a vessel engaged in commercial fishing for groundfish must keep the identifying markings listed below clearly legible and in good repair, and must ensure that no part of the vessel, its rigging, or its fishing gear obstructs the view of the official number from an enforcement vessel or aircraft [§660.20(2)].

For all commercial fishing vessels

- The vessel registration number, preceded by the letters “FG”, must be printed in black Roman letters and Arabic numerals, block style, no less than 2 inches high of a thickness easily readable from another vessel, and placed on a white background.
- The vessel registration number must be permanently affixed to both sides of the vessel.
- Vessels larger than 25 ft (7.6 m) in length must display the vessel's CF or USCG doc number on the port and starboard sides of the deckhouse or hull, and on a weather deck so as to be visible from above.

Vessels between 25 and 65 ft (7.6 and 19.8 m)

- The vessel's CF or USCG doc number must be at least 10 inches (25.4 cm) high in block Arabic numerals and contrast with the background.

Vessels over 65 ft (19.8 m)

- The vessel's CF or USCG doc number must be at least 18 inches (45.7 cm) high in block Arabic numerals and contrast with the background.



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Additional Information and Resources

NOAA Fisheries Salmon Fishing Regulations Booklet – see **Groundfish Retention in the Commercial Salmon Fishery** section for additional management measures:

https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2021-05/2021-05_SalmonFisheries_booklet.pdf?null

Rockfish identification images for nearshore, shelf, and slope species can be found on CDFW website at:

<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/Groundfish/Nearshore-Shelf-And-Slope>

Open Access (OA) trip limits for south of the 40°10' N. lat. management line can be found on NOAA Fisheries West Coast Groundfish Commercial Fishing Regulations page:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/west-coast-groundfish#commercial>

Groundfish trip limits, NT-RCA boundary lines and other management measure changes may occur inseason. To receive notifications on when inseason changes occur, sign up for the Groundfish Email Group:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USNOAAFISHERIES/subscriber/new>

For Further Questions, Please Contact:

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