

per 2 months to 30,000 lb (13,608 kg) per 2 months, providing that only large footrope or midwater trawl gear is used to land any groundfish species during the entire limit period. The limited entry small footrope trawl Dover sole limit, (i.e., if small footrope gear is used at any time in any area (north or south, seaward or shoreward of the RCA) during the entire limit period) is decreased from the previously scheduled limit of 12,500 lb (5,670 kg) per 2 months to 11,000 lb (4,990 kg) per 2 months. South of 40°10' N. lat., the limited entry trawl Dover sole limit is decreased from the previously scheduled limit of 34,000 lb (15,422 kg) per 2 months to 30,000 lb (13,608 kg) per 2 months. The limited entry trawl shortspine thornyhead limit north of 40°10' N. lat. is decreased from the previously scheduled limit of 2,400 lb (1,089 kg) per 2 months to 900 lb (408 kg) per 2 months, providing that only large footrope or midwater trawl gear is used to land any groundfish species during the entire limit period. The limited entry small footrope trawl shortspine thornyhead limit, (i.e., if small footrope gear is used at any time in any area (north of south, seaward or shoreward of the RCA) during the entire limit period) is decreased from the previously scheduled limit of 1,000 lb (454 kg) per 2 months to 300 lb (136 kg) per 2 months. South of 40°10' N. lat., the limited entry trawl shortspine thornyhead limit is decreased from the previously scheduled limit 2,400 lb (1,089 kg) per 2 months to 900 lb (408 kg) per 2 months.

In response to reduced trip limits for shortspine thornyhead and the need to maintain the catch ratio of 5 lb (2.27 kg) longspine thornyhead to 1 lb (0.45 kg) shortspine thornyhead, the Pacific Council also recommended an adjustment in longspine thornyhead trip limits. Therefore, the limited entry trawl longspine thornyhead limit north of 40°10' N. lat. is decreased from the previously scheduled limit of 11,500 lb (5,216 kg) per 2 months to 4,500 lb (2,041 kg) per 2 months, providing that only large footrope or midwater trawl gear is used to land any groundfish species during the entire limit period. The limited entry small footrope trawl longspine thornyhead limit, (i.e., if small footrope gear is used at any time in any area (north of south, seaward or shoreward of the RCA) during the entire limit period) is decreased from the previously scheduled 5,000 lb (2,268 kg) per 2 months to 2,000 lb (907 kg) per 2 months. South of 40°10' N. lat., the limited entry trawl longspine thornyhead limit is decreased from the

previously scheduled limit of 11,500 lb (5,216 kg) per 2 months to 4,500 lb (2,041 kg) per 2 months. The limited entry trawl sablefish limit north of 40°10' N. lat. is decreased from the previously scheduled limit of 9,000 lb (4,082 kg) per 2 months to 7,000 lb (3,175 kg) per 2 months, providing that only large footrope or midwater trawl gear is used to land any groundfish species during the entire limit period. The limited entry small footrope trawl sablefish limit, (i.e., if small footrope gear is used at any time in any area (north or south, seaward or shoreward of the RCA) during the entire limit period) is decreased from the previously scheduled limit of 3,000 lb (1,361 kg) per 2 months to 2,300 lb (1,043 kg) per 2 months. South of 40°10' N. lat., the limited entry trawl sablefish limit is decreased from the previously scheduled limit of 9,000 lb (4,082 kg) per 2 months to 7,000 lb (3,175 kg) per 2 months.

*Limited Entry Midwater Trawl Widow Rockfish Coastwide and Yellowtail Rockfish North of 40°10' N. Lat.*

Retention of widow rockfish coastwide and yellowtail rockfish north of 40°10' N. lat. in the limited entry midwater trawl fisheries is being prohibited during November and December to reduce the potential for incidental catch of canary rockfish. Limited entry landed catch data through August 15, 2003, in PacFIN, indicate that the catch of canary rockfish was at 29 percent of the annual target (4 mt landed out of a 14 mt landed catch OY). However, total mortality of canary rockfish in all commercial, recreational, and experimental fisheries, including the trip limit adjustments in this inseason action, is estimated to be 43.5 mt out of a 44-mt total catch OY by the end of the year. Because canary rockfish co-occur with yellowtail and widow rockfish, opportunities for directed midwater widow and yellowtail rockfish fisheries are being eliminated to keep the total estimated mortality of canary rockfish within its total catch OY for 2003.

Therefore, limited entry midwater trawl fisheries for widow rockfish coastwide are being reduced during November and December from the previously scheduled 12,000 lb (5,443 kg) per 2 months to no retention (i.e., closed). Limited entry midwater trawl fisheries for yellowtail rockfish north of 40°10' N. lat. are being reduced during November and December from the previously scheduled 18,000 lb (8,165 kg) per 2 months to no retention (i.e., closed).

*Limited Entry Fixed Gear and Open Access Sablefish Limits North of 36° N. Lat.*

Landed catch in the daily trip limit (DTL) fishery for sablefish north of 36° N. lat. is tracking behind schedule (i.e., the fishery will not attain the OY for 2003 if cumulative limits remain as previously scheduled). Total fleet landed catch data through September 12, 2003, in PacFIN, indicate that the non-trawl DTL sablefish fishery combined with the non-trawl primary sablefish fishery was at 66 percent of the annual target (1,667 mt landed out of a 2,518 mt landed catch OY). With an estimated 851 mt of the OY available for non-trawl sablefish fisheries and with the primary sablefish fishery ending on October 31, 2003, there is room for additional harvest opportunity in the DTL sablefish fishery. Thus, because sablefish catch in the DTL fishery is tracking behind schedule for the year and because the impact of this fishery on shortspine thornyhead is likely minimal, the DTL sablefish fishery north of 36° N. lat. will be increased during November and December from the previously scheduled 300 lb (136 kg) per day or one landing per week of up to 800 lb (363 kg), not to exceed 3,200 lb (1,452 kg) per 2 months to 300 lb (136 kg) per day or one landing per week of up to 900 lb (408 kg), not to exceed 3,600 lb (1,633 kg) per 2 months.

*Limited Entry Fixed Gear and Open Access Minor Deeper Nearshore Rockfish Limits South of 40°10' N. Lat.*

At their September 8–12, 2003 meeting, the Pacific Council recommended increasing limited entry fixed gear and open access trip limits for minor deeper nearshore rockfish as soon as practicable after the Pacific Council meeting. The Pacific Council recommended the increase because commercial landings of minor deeper nearshore rockfish south of 40°10' N. lat. were lower than expected in 2003. Minor deeper nearshore rockfish are managed within an overall harvest guideline for minor nearshore rockfish. The minor nearshore rockfish harvest guideline is shared between the commercial and recreational sectors. In addition, the minor nearshore rockfish harvest guideline is included as a subset of the minor rockfish OY. There are two minor rockfish OYs, one for the area north of 40°10' N. lat. and one for the area south of 40°10' N. lat.

Subsequent to the Pacific Council meeting, the Pacific Council's Groundfish Management Team (GMT) held a meeting in Seattle, WA, October 14–16, 2003. The GMT discussed