

(18) *Application of requirements.*

Paragraphs IV.B. and IV.C. pertain to the commercial groundfish fishery, but not to Washington coastal tribal fisheries, which are described in Section V. The provisions in paragraphs IV.B. and IV.C. that are not covered under the headings "limited entry" or "open access" apply to all vessels in the commercial fishery that take and retain groundfish, unless otherwise stated. Paragraph IV.D. pertains to the recreational fishery.

(19) *Rockfish Conservation Areas.* For 2003, the Council has introduced several RCAs and a YRCA and has retained the CCAs used in 2001 and 2002. Collectively, any geographically defined area where specific fishing activities are prohibited (closed) or otherwise restricted intended to protect a particular groundfish species or species group or intended to protect a complex of species is referred to as a Groundfish Conservation Area. The YRCA, the CCAs, and the larger depth-based RCAs are Groundfish Conservation Areas. Larger RCAs intended to protect a complex of species, such as overfished shelf rockfish species, have boundaries defined by a series of coordinates intended to approximate particular depth contours, such as 100 fm (183 m), 150 fm (274 m), 250 fm (457,) etc. Different gear types or fishing sectors may have RCAs with differing boundaries.

(a) *Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area.* The coordinates of the YRCA are defined at § 660.304(d). Recreational fishing for groundfish is prohibited within the YRCA. It is unlawful for recreational fishing vessels to take, retain, possess, or land groundfish inside the YRCA.

(b) *Cowcod Conservation Areas.* The coordinates of the Cowcod Conservation Areas (CCAs) are defined at § 660.304(c). Recreational and commercial fishing for groundfish is prohibited within the CCAs, except that recreational and commercial fishing for rockfish and lingcod is permitted in waters inside 20-fathoms (36.9-m). It is unlawful to take and retain, possess, or land groundfish inside the CCAs, except for rockfish and lingcod taken in waters inside the 20-fathom (36.9-m) depth contour, when those waters are open to fishing. Commercial fishing vessels may transit through the Western CCA with their gear stowed and groundfish on board only in a corridor through the Western CCA bounded on the north by the latitude line at 33°00'30" N. lat., and bounded on the south by the latitude line at 32°59'30" N. lat.

(c) *Limited entry trawl groundfish coastwide and open access exempted*

*rawl south of 40°10' N. lat.*

*Conservation Area.*

(i) The trawl RCA is closed to limited entry groundfish trawl fishing coastwide and to open access exempted trawl fishing (except for pink shrimp trawling) south of 40°10' N. lat. Fishing with limited entry groundfish trawl gear is prohibited within the trawl RCA north of 40°10' N. lat. and fishing with any trawl gear is prohibited within the trawl RCA south of 40°10' N. lat., unless that vessel is trawling for pink shrimp. Coastwide, it is unlawful to take and retain, possess, or land groundfish taken with limited entry groundfish trawl gear in the trawl RCA. South of 40°10' N. lat., it is unlawful to take and retain, possess, or land any species of fish taken with any type of trawl gear in the trawl RCA. Trawl vessels may transit through the trawl RCA, with or without groundfish on board, provided all groundfish trawl gear is stowed either: (1) below deck; or (2) if the gear cannot readily be moved, in a secured and covered manner, detached from all towing lines, so that it is rendered unusable for fishing; or (3) remaining on deck uncovered if the trawl doors are hung from their stanchions and the net is disconnected from the doors. These restrictions do not apply to vessels fishing with midwater trawl gear for Pacific whiting or taking and retaining yellowtail rockfish or widow rockfish in association with Pacific whiting caught with midwater trawl gear or to taking and retaining yellowtail or widow rockfish with midwater trawl gear when trip limits are authorized for those species (November-December 2003.) If a vessel fishes in an RCA, it may not participate in any fishing on that trip that is inconsistent with the restrictions that apply within the RCA. For example, if a vessel participates in the pink shrimp fishery within the RCA, the vessel cannot on the same trip participate in the DTS fishery outside of the RCA. Nothing in these Federal regulations supercede any State regulations that may prohibit trawling shoreward of the 3 nm State waters boundary line.

(ii) Between the U.S. border with Canada and 40°10' N. lat., the trawl RCA is defined along an eastern, inshore boundary approximating 100 fm (183 m) in January through June and October through December, and approximating 75 fm (137 m) in July and August. Between 40°10' N. lat. and 34°27' N. lat., the trawl RCA is defined along an eastern, inshore boundary approximating 50 fm (91 m) in January and February and 60 fm (110 m) in March through December. Between 34°27' N. lat. and the U.S. border with

Mexico, along the mainland coast of California, the trawl RCA is defined along an eastern, inshore boundary approximating 100 fm (183 m) throughout the year. Between 34°27' N. lat. and the U.S. border with Mexico, adjacent to the islands offshore of California, the trawl RCA is defined along an inshore boundary approximating 20 fm (37 m) throughout the year. Boundary coordinates are provided below at paragraph (e) of this section.

(iii) Between the U.S. border with Canada and 38° N. lat., the trawl RCA is defined along a western, offshore boundary approximating 250 fm (457 m) in March through October, and approximating 250 fm (457 m) with some modifications to provide open areas to allow winter petrale sole fishing in January, February, November, and December. Between 38° N. lat. and the U.S. border with Mexico, the trawl RCA is defined along a western, offshore boundary approximating 150 fm (274 m) throughout the year. Boundary coordinates are provided below at paragraph (e) of this section.

(d) *Non-Trawl (Limited Entry Fixed Gear and Open Access Nontrawl Gears) Groundfish Conservation Area.*

(i) The non-trawl RCA is closed to non-trawl gear (limited entry or open access longline and pot or trap, open access hook-and-line, pot or trap, gillnet, set net, trammel net and spear) fishing for groundfish. Fishing with non-trawl gear is prohibited within the non-trawl gear RCA. It is unlawful to take and retain, possess, or land groundfish taken with non-trawl gear in the non-trawl gear RCA. Limited entry fixed gear and open access non-trawl gear vessels may transit through the non-trawl gear RCA, with or without groundfish on board. These restrictions do not apply to vessels fishing for species other than groundfish with non-trawl gear. If a vessel fishes in an RCA, it may not participate in any fishing on that trip that is inconsistent with the restrictions that apply within the RCA. For example, if a vessel participates in the salmon troll fishery within the RCA, the vessel cannot on the same trip participate in the sablefish fishery outside of the RCA.

(ii) Between the U.S. border with Canada and 46°16' N. lat., the non-trawl gear RCA extends to the shoreline. Between 46°16' N. lat. and 40°10' N. lat., the non-trawl gear RCA is defined along an eastern, inshore boundary approximating 27 fm (49 m) throughout the year. Between 40°10' N. lat. and the U.S. border with Mexico, the non-trawl gear RCA is defined along an eastern, inshore boundary approximating 20 fm