



National Marine Fisheries Service, Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115
www.nwr.noaa.gov



PUBLIC NOTICE

For Information Contact:
The Groundfish Branch (206) 526-6140

NMFS-SEA-07-01
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 9, 2007

PACIFIC COAST GROUND FISH FISHERY REQUEST FOR INDUSTRY COOPERATION IN REDUCING 2007 TRAWL PETRALE SOLE CATCH

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) estimates that 2007 petrale sole catch is proceeding at a higher than anticipated rate. As of February 2, 2007, the estimated 2007 petrale sole catch is 600 metric tons (mt.) Favorable weather, a reduced Dungeness crab season, and aggregation of the petrale sole stock has contributed to higher than anticipated catch levels, and available information shows that it is likely the catch of petrale sole in February 2007 will be equivalent to that of January 2007. By the end of February, the catch of petrale sole could be 1,200 mt out of a coastwide optimum yield (OY) of 2,499. If that level of petrale catch occurs, it will likely lead to reductions for the summer petrale fishery and a possible elimination of petrale sole fishing opportunities in November-December 2007.

A summer and November-December petrale fishery may still be able to be held if the catch of petrale sole in the bottom trawl fishery is voluntarily reduced in February. Analysis of available information shows that a February 2007 catch level of 200-300 mt of petrale sole may still allow for enough management flexibility to prosecute a summer petrale fishery and would leave some opportunity for November-December petrale fishery.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council has expressed its desire to have petrale sole fishing opportunities throughout the 2007 calendar year. Therefore the National Marine Fisheries Service is requesting that the industry voluntarily reduce its catches of petrale sole during the month of February.

Visit the NMFS Northwest Region website for current groundfish management regulations, VMS information, and RCA boundary coordinates.

<http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Groundfish-Halibut/index.cfm>

Groundfish E-mail Group

Subscribe to "wgroundfish"