

*DTS Complex (Dover sole, Thornyheads, and Trawl-Caught Sablefish).* In January 1994, the cumulative monthly trip limit for the DTS complex was 50,000 lb (22,680 kg) per month, including no more than 30,000 lb (13,608 kg) of thornyheads and 12,000 lb (5,443 kg) of trawl-caught sablefish. On July 1, the cumulative monthly limits were reduced to 30,000 lb (13,608 kg) of the DTS complex, including no more than 8,000 lb (3,629 kg) of thornyheads and 6,000 lb (2,722 kg) of trawl-caught sablefish. The sablefish "per trip" limit of 1,000 lb (454 kg) or 33.333 percent of the Dover sole and thornyheads (equivalent to 25 percent of the DTS complex), whichever is greater, continued throughout 1994, as did the 5,000-lb (2,268-kg) trip limit on sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm). Even though the sablefish harvest guideline applied only north of the Conception subarea (36°00'00" N. lat.), these trip limits were applied coastwide to avoid effort shifts into the Conception area. At the October Council meeting, the trawl allocation was projected to be exceeded by 15 percent. Consequently, on December 1, north of the Conception subarea (36°00'00" N. lat.), all landings of sablefish were prohibited; the thornyhead trip limit was reduced to 1,500 lb (680 kg) per month and a Dover sole trip limit was imposed of 6,000 lb (2,722 kg) per month, removing the need for an overall DTS cumulative limit. At year's end, the limited-entry trawl allocation for sablefish was expected to be exceeded by about 15 percent; thornyheads were expected to exceed their combined harvest guideline by about 2 percent, and Dover sole was far below its harvest guidelines (42 percent below its coastwide harvest guideline and 30 percent below its Columbia subarea harvest guideline). These "underages" were not addressed by increasing the trip limits for Dover sole because of the species' association with sablefish and new information supporting more cautious management of Dover sole.

For 1995, the Council recommended two cumulative monthly trip limits for the DTS complex: 35,000 lb (15,876 kg) north of Cape Mendocino and 50,000 lb (22,680 kg) south of Cape Mendocino. This differential trip limit is intended to provide additional protection for shortspine thornyheads, the most valuable and least abundant species in the DTS complex, while encouraging the harvest of Dover sole in more southern areas. Further protection for shortspine thornyheads is intended by managing the two thornyhead species separately in 1995. A cumulative trip

limit is set for both shortspine and longspine thornyheads combined of 20,000 lb (9,072 kg) per month, of which no more than 4,000 lb (1,814 kg) may be shortspine thornyheads. The trip limits for trawl-caught sablefish remain the same as established in July 1994 (6,000 lb (2,722 kg) cumulative per month, and 1,000 lb (454 kg) or 33.333 percent of the Dover sole and thornyheads per trip). The exception is that the trip limit for sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm) is reduced to 500 lb (227 kg) to reflect the lower overall trip limits for sablefish in recent years.

*Nontrawl Sablefish.* Small daily trip limits were applied to the nontrawl fishery again in 1994, until 72 hours before, and 72 hours after, the regular ("open") season, that started on May 15, 1994. A 250-lb (113-kg) daily trip limit was applied only north of the Conception subarea (36°00'00" N. lat.), the same area covered by the harvest guideline. In the Conception area, where there is no harvest guideline and landings had been below the 425-mt ABC, the daily trip limit was 350 lb (159 kg) to accommodate most landings without encouraging excessive effort shifts into that area. The trip limit for sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm) (1,500 lb (680 kg) or 3 percent of all legal sablefish on board, whichever is greater) remained in effect. All further landings of sablefish caught north of 36°00'00" N. lat. were prohibited on December 1, 1994. In 1994, the nontrawl allocation is expected to be exceeded by 28 percent.

The Council recommended continuing the 350-lb (159-kg) daily trip limit in the Conception area for 1995, and increasing the northern daily trip limit for sablefish to 300 lb, slightly increasing the amount that could be taken outside the regular season for the nontrawl limited-entry fishery. The same daily trip limit is applied to the limited-entry and open-access fisheries to avoid effort shifts into the open-access fishery. This increase is intended primarily to bring landings closer to the open-access allocation, that was not achieved in 1994. These trip limits for the limited-entry fishery will apply outside the regular season and any subsequent "mop-up" fishery.

Under current regulations at 50 CFR 663.23(b)(2), the start of the regular nontrawl sablefish fishery is 3 days before the first opening in Alaska. The implementation of an individual quota (IQ) system in Alaska in 1995 would radically change the opening date of the regular season, from mid-May to late February, off Washington, Oregon, and California. The Council has discussed this problem and recommended the

following new management regime for the nontrawl sablefish fishery for implementation in 1995: (1) A delay in the regular season until August 6; (2) before the regular season, a 72-hour closure during which all nontrawl groundfish gear, both open-access and limited-entry, must be out of the water and sablefish landings are prohibited; (3) an exception which, 24 hours before the regular season begins, allows pot gear (both open-access and limited-entry) to be set and baited; (4) removal of the 72-hour closure at the end of the regular season, and instead resume the same daily trip limits used before the regular season; (5) a 1-month mop-up fishery, about 3 weeks after the end of the regular season, under cumulative trip limits; followed by (6) resumption of the daily trip limits. Trip limits for nontrawl sablefish smaller than 22 inches (56 cm) would remain in effect during the regular and mop-up fisheries. The States may require inspections of vessel holds before the regular and mop-up fisheries.

*Whiting.* The Council recommended continuation of the 10,000-lb (4,536-kg) trip limit for whiting taken before and after the regular whiting season and inside the 100-fathom (183-m) contour in the Eureka subarea (40°30'00"-43°00'00" N. lat.). In 1995 as in 1994, the regular season begins on March 1 between 42°00'00"-40°30'00" N. lat., and on April 15 north of 42°00'00" N. lat. and south of 40°30'00" N. lat., as stated at 50 CFR 663.23(b)(3)(i). Additional regulations, including the allocation of whiting to vessels that deliver shoreside and those that deliver at-sea, are found at 50 CFR 663.23(b) (3) and (4).

*Lingcod.* The harvest guideline for lingcod was first established in 1994, but specific trip limits were not recommended until 1995. The Council recommended a cumulative trip limit of 20,000 lb (9,072 kg) per month. A minimum size limit of 22 inches (56 cm), which previously had been implemented in the California recreational fishery, is applied coastwide for both commercial and recreational fisheries. The size limit is intended to minimize harvest of immature fish, that are needed to sustain the reproductive potential of the stock.

*Black Rockfish.* Black rockfish off the State of Washington continue to be managed under the regulations at 50 CFR 663.23(b)(1)(iii). The Council has considered trip limits off the State of Oregon but has not yet submitted its recommendation to NMFS for review.