Recreational Fishing in the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region

Presentation to the MLPA North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
August 22-23, 2007 • San Rafael, CA
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Acknowledgements

• Tom Baty, Bill Bernard, Josh Churchman, Michael Corden, Peter Grenell, Russ Herring, Jim Hobbs, Ken Jones, Tom Mattusch, Craig Merrilees, Paul Pierce, Phil Sanders, Ben Sleeter, Sean White, Jay Yokomizo
• Including others with expertise and knowledge of recreational fishing in the study region

Purpose of Presentation

• Overview of some recreational fisheries in NCCSR
• Identification of areas different recreational fishers use
• Factors that affect recreational fishers
Sources of Information

- Nearshore Fishery Management Plan (NFMP) [http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/nfmp/index.html]
- Abalone Recovery and Management Plan (ARMP) [http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/armp/index.html]
- Abalone Report Cards, creel surveys and index sites
- Ocean Salmon Project
- California Recreational Fisheries Surveys (CRFS) [http://www.recfin.org/]
  - Provides data and estimates of marine finfish catch and angler effort
  - Updates the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS)
    1. Fourth year of CRFS program, major improvement over MRFSS
    2. Finer spatial resolution and area estimates
    3. Increased sampling effort
  - Incorporates the California Department of Fish and Game’s (CDFG) Ocean Salmon Project

Modes

- Boat based
  - Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessels (CPFV)
  - Private and/or rental skiffs
  - Kayaks
    - Angling, diving or freediving
- Shore-based fishing
  - Beach and bank or fishing from man-made structures
  - Poke-poling
  - Shore picking
  - Diving or freediving
Primary Target Species/Groups

- Salmon
- RCG Complex (rockfish, cabezon, greenling)
- Lingcod
- California Halibut
- Abalone
- Clams
- Surfperch

Salmon

- Modes: CPFV, private skiffs, kayaks, occasionally shorefishing
- Methods: trolling, mooching, jigging
- Key Habitats: open ocean waters (surface to 200 ft) follow schools of baitfish
- Generally NCCSR-wide: Duxbury buoy, Slide Ranch, Rocky Point, Farallon Islands, Muir Beach, 10 Mile Beach

RCG Complex and Lingcod

- Modes: CPFV, private skiffs, kayaks, shorefishing, spearfishing
- Methods: bottomfishing with shrimp flies (sometimes with bait), leadheads, swimbait, and iron/metal jigs, spearfishing
- Key habitats: rocky reefs and ledges, including highspots and drop-offs, kelp habitats.
- Key areas: Duxbury Reef, Colorado Reef, area south of Pt. Reyes, Farallon Islands, Pigeon Pt, Pescadero, Fanny Shoal, Ocean Cove, Salt Point
Halibut

- Modes: CPFV, private skiffs, kayaks, shorefishing, spearfishing
- Methods: drift-fishing, slow trolling, casting, live bait
- Key Habitats: shallow to deep sandbottoms (sometimes gravel beds), mouths of bays and estuarine habitats
- Key Areas: varies by year (examples are Stinson Beach, Bolinas, Duxbury Reef)

Crab

- Modes: CPFVs and private skiffs
- Primary Habitat: deeper sand bottoms for Dungeness crab and hard bottoms for rock crab
- Methods: baited crab pots, sometimes hoop nets.
- Key Areas: shelf areas between Farallon Islands and Golden Gate Bridge, Bolinas, 10 Mile Beach, Drakes Bay, Manchester, generally most sandy areas in NCCSR
- Some crabbing effort is affected by productivity of the recreational salmon fishery

Shore-Based Fishing

- Modes: fishing from beach and banks or man-made structures
- Methods: rod and reel including surf casting
- Key Areas: Beaches, jetties, piers, docks, and accessible rocky intertidal/subtidal areas
- Primary Species: surfperch, stripers, flatfishes, rays, skates, sharks, cabezon, lingcod, rockfish, smelt
Poke-Pole Fishing

Mode: Beach and bank or man-made
- Method: angling with short line 4 inches
- Key Habitats: Any rocky reef or jetty during minus tides
- Key Areas: Princeton Jetty, Bodega Bay Jetty, Muir Beach, Duxbury Reef (south to Slide Ranch), James Fitzgerald State Marine Park
- Species: Monkey-face prickleback, lingcod, cabezon, grass rockfish

Red Abalone

- Modes: Shore-based, private skiff, kayaks
- Methods: freediving or rock picking (primarily at low tides)
  - Access sites from shore and by boat or kayak
- Key Areas: any publicly accessible rocky intertidal area north of Golden Gate Bridge
  - Some examples include: Lawson’s Landing and Nick’s Cove, Salt Point, Ocean Cove, Timber Cove, Fort Ross

Clamming

- Occurs in intertidal areas during daylight hours, generally at minus tides
- Methods: Digging by hand (with rake, shovel, garden hand fork, or trowel)
- Key Areas: Tomales Bay, Bolinas Bay, Drake’s Bay, Bodega Bay
- Clam Species:
  - common littleneck (Protothaca staminea)
  - gaper (Tresus nuttallii)
Factors Affecting Recreational Fishing

- Access is key issue for all modes
- Distance from ports or home
- Weather and safety
- Regulations and seasons
  - Seasonal closures, bag limits, size limits, and existing area closures

Rockfish Conservation Area

- Large-scale closed areas extending length of the U.S. West Coast
- Can vary year to year
  - Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) recommends recreational RCA depths; adopted by Fish and Game Commission
- Affects recreational groundfish areas due to depth restrictions
  - In 2007 recreational RCA in NCCSR restricts fishing deeper than 30 fathoms (180 feet)

Common Themes Among Modes

- Overlapping target species
- Common fishing grounds
  - Exception: Farallon Islands (mainly CPFVs and private skiffs)
- Some multi-use areas:
  - Duxbury Reef, Bolinas Lagoon (and adjacent areas), in and around Tomales Bay, in and around Bodega Harbor, Ocean Cove, Salt Point
Common Themes Among Modes

- Access is key issue for all modes
  - Sites that provide access for multiple uses and species are important
  - Many shore-based anglers use same sites as boat-based modes (example Ocean Cove)
- Weather and safety
- Regulations and seasons affect fishing