Recreational Fishing in the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region

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Jason Vasques, Associate Marine Biologist
California Department of Fish and Game, Marine Region
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- 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](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/nfmp/index.html)
- Abalone Report Cards, creel surveys and index sites
- Ocean Salmon Project
- California Recreational Fisheries Surveys (CRFS)
Sources of Information

- California Recreational Fisheries Surveys (CRFS) [http://www.recfin.org/](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, striper, 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