



Meeting Summary

Commercial Nearshore Advisory Panel

June 30, 2025, 5:00 pm-7:00 pm

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) convened a meeting of the Commercial Nearshore Advisory Panel (CNAP) on June 30, 2025. Five of 10 CNAP members attended, along with ODFW staff and the Oregon State Police. The meeting was held to provide an update on the status of the commercial nearshore fishery, discuss potential in-season adjustments to bimonthly limits, and obtain feedback on a draft survey to gauge support for holding a permit lottery when permits are lost from the fishery. ODFW staff presented results from analyses of potential in-season adjustments to Black Rockfish vessel limits, as harvest was projected to be very close to the commercial harvest guideline (HG) by the end of the year. Staff also reviewed 2025 landings of other state management groups to date and discussed in-season adjustments to those species projected to fall below their harvest guidelines. Staff sought input from the CNAP as to what could be driving below-average landings and also asked members how nearshore logbooks were being filled out to determine whether set information could be used to inform an analysis investigating the overlap between fixed gear and whale distributions. Black Rockfish Management Areas (BRMAs) and future public meetings were also discussed.

In-season Adjustments to Bimonthly Vessel Limits

CNAP members were not in favor of reducing Black Rockfish vessel limits for Periods 4-6 and preferred that staff continue to evaluate landings at the end of each bimonthly period before considering lowering limits. One member asked whether the goal was to attain the HG or stay below it. He felt that in years past, staff have increased vessel limits later in the season because limits earlier in the season were set too low. Members agreed that they would like to attain the HG and not leave fish on the table, although one member was not opposed to erring on the side of caution. Members agreed to staff's proposed increases to vessel limits for Other Nearshore Rockfish, Cabezon, and Greenling and thought these adjustments would help shift effort away from Black Rockfish. No alternative management measures were proposed, so staff acknowledged that Status Quo would likely be the primary management strategy going forward for Periods 4-6 but that they would closely monitor the catch and make in-season adjustments as needed.

Several members said markets for black rockfish have been tighter along the entire coast and that effort in general has likely been lower due to buyer-imposed limits, participation in other fisheries, weather, and family commitments. The lack of dredging in Port Orford was also cited as a potential reason for reduced effort, as live buyers there had been struggling to get consistent access to quality water sources. Another member thought that the decline in effort may be linked to the decline of kelp and noted that catch of some species had declined over the past few years. Another member thought that the ocean seemed healthy along the north coast and suggested that cooler May/June temperatures may have affected the black rockfish bite.

Permit Lottery Survey

Staff asked members for their feedback after reviewing the draft survey questions to gauge support for a CNAP proposal to set permit lottery thresholds at the number of permits existing today, such that any non-renewed permits would cause a new permit to be issued through a lottery going forward. One member suggested that staff consider putting an age limit on the permit lottery to bring new entrants into the fishery. While several members agreed that the fishery needed younger participants, they also suggested that an age limit would likely not be possible due to state laws against discrimination. Members expressed concern about new permits affecting the value of current permits and wanted to ensure that any permits obtained through the lottery would be restricted in length to that of the lost permit. Members also wanted to include a stand-down period to ensure that a permit obtained through the lottery was fished by the permit holder and not sold shortly after being obtained. The CNAP felt that the survey should be open to anyone with a commercial boat license and not restricted to Black/Blue and Nearshore-Endorsed permit holders.

New, emerging, or other issues

Staff gave a brief overview of the OPAL2 project examining the overlap of whales and fixed gear and asked members how sets were being recorded in nearshore logbooks. Staff learned that most fishers were not recording the start and end blocks for individual sets; rather, the start and end blocks where fishing occurred for the day were being recorded. Staff noted that using the logbook information in the analysis would likely underestimate the number of sets and vertical lines in the water. Members said that it would be easier to record individual sets if there was an electronic logbook for the fishery where location could be entered by the push of a button, like the Federal e-logbook system.

Staff asked for feedback on potential locations to hold the 2025 public meeting on the north coast and why attendance was so poor in 2024. Members said that the ODFW office in Tillamook was a good venue and easy for Garibaldi fishermen to attend. Good fishing weather was cited as a reason why attendance might be poor. Increased advertising and using different avenues for advertising the meetings could also be beneficial, such as working with port staff in Port Orford to get the word out. One member suggested having virtual options for both meetings instead of just the Port Orford meeting, as the issues along the south coast might not be as relevant to north coast fishers.

One member asked whether there had been any questions from recreational fishers about BRMAs. Staff said that they would be re-evaluating BRMAs this year and had fielded a number of inquiries from the recreational sector, as they are now seeing commercial fishing gear in locations where it hasn't been before. As BRMAs really limit the number of black rockfish that can be taken, the member hoped they would not be re-instated due to public comment from the recreational sector. The hope was that staff would focus on educating the public on the restrictions in place that already reduce the amount and effort of commercial nearshore fishers (e.g. limited entry, harvest guidelines, vessel limits).

Public Comment

No public comment was given and the meeting wrapped up.