

Subject: Comment for Management Plan Review Team

From: Mike Marsh <swamp@blarg.net>

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To: OCNMSmanagementplan@noaa.gov

Management Plan Review Team,
NOAA Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS),
115 East Railroad Ave, Suite 301,
Port Angeles, WA 98362-2925

Please accept my comments regarding the current management review for the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

Populations of China Rockfish, Tiger Rockfish and Canary Rockfish in the portion of the Marine Sanctuary encompassing Tatoosh Island, the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Neah Bay are reported to have declined greatly, and are currently under heavy fishing pressure by recreational fishers. It has also been stated that the limit on catch of these fish was increased to 10 fish per day as compensation for reduction or elimination of permitted take of salmon.

This management "strategy" makes no sense at all. I make two points:

1. Replacement rate for these populations. Considering the long lives of individual rockfish (75 to as much as 120 years), it is likely that their rates of reproduction and survival are quite low. The rates of take allowed by WDFW should be less than replacement rate for each population. Furthermore, rebuilding these populations, even if human predation were stopped, would take a long time.

2. Piscine sacrifice! If the above supposition and the statement in the background below is correct, then permitting excessive take of a slow-reproducing species as a SOP for fishermen prohibited from catching a fast-reproducing fish like salmon makes no sense whatever. These fish are simply being sacrificed, and after they are gone, the managers will be faced with the same demands from fishermen, as well as a real blot on their conservation record.

Please close the rockfish fishery for the foreseeable future.

Rockfish, as a major recognizable member of coastal bottom communities, are sought by non-fishing recreational divers. The Makah Tribe can profit by encouraging and catering to this segment of the diving community.

Thank you for your work to protect the OCNMS.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Marsh
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