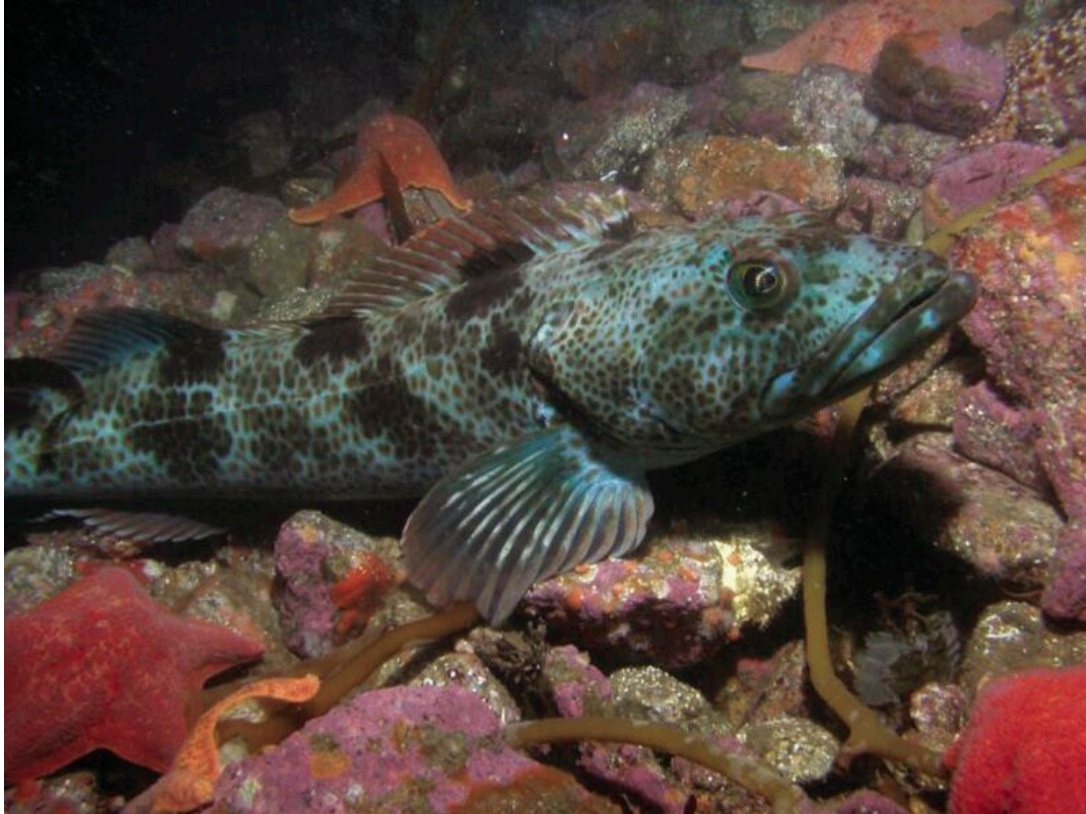


## Crescent City votes to support fishery

November 3, 2023



The Crescent City Council will join growing support by submitting a letter urging the Pacific Fisheries Management Council to allow the nearshore groundfish season to go forward in 2024.

The letter argues that preventing the 2024 season to go forward would create a ripple effect that would decimate hotel tax and sales tax revenues.

“We’re asking them to look at different options for different species of fish versus blanket closure on all fishing,” Crescent City Manager Eric Wier said. “This decision by (California Department of Fish and Wildlife) caught everyone completely by surprise. You could keep any one of a number of these fish up until a week before the closure.

“They gave everyone one week notice the entire fishery was going to be closed.”

The city’s letter states forcing anglers to go beyond the 50-fathom, or 300-foot, boundary creates a dangerous situation to smaller watercraft.

“Most of our sport fishermen have smaller boats that are not designed to handle the conditions this far offshore,” the city’s letter states. “Thus, fishing past the 50-fathom boundary is not a realistic or safe alternative for local sport fishermen.”

At its September meeting in Spokane, Wash., the PFMC let a California Department of Fish and Wildlife decision to close the nearshore groundfish season to protect the quillback rockfish from being overfished stand. The department’s closure of the nearshore groundfish fishery statewide took effect Sept. 16.

At the Spokane, several PFMC members questioned data provided to the Council and the CDFW from the Northwest Science Center, pointing out a discrepancy in the data modeling versus what near-shore fishermen are experiencing.

Marc Gorelnik, an at-large PFMC member from California, questioned the Northwest Science Center’s findings that 28.6 percent of quillback rockfish stock were removed in one year when just 4.5 percent of copper rockfish, which coexists with the quillback, were taken.

“It’s hard for me to imagine that we can possibly remove that much quillback,” Gorelnik said in September.

Visitors come to Del Norte County to enjoy the beaches and Redwoods and to fish. Visitors generate revenue to support motels, restaurants, merchants and gaming and just enjoy the benefits of Crescent City.

“It’s absolutely a big hit to the tourism industry,” Wier said. “Everything in the industry has a ripple effect. Whether it’s people not coming here at all or they are staying shorter or not eating in our restaurants or not staying in our hotels or shopping in our stores.

“It’s hard to calculate all the effects, but it is not good to have the fishery closed for an extended of time.”