

WSR 22-24-112
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE

[Order P2022-19—Filed December 7, 2022, 11:21 a.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: The department is considering amending WAC 220-353-050 to add certain bottomfish (also known as "groundfish") to the list of commercially taken species that are permitted to be possessed, transported through the waters of the state, and landed in the dressed condition. The agency is considering limiting the allowance to specific sectors operating under the federal groundfish fisheries regulations.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.013, 77.04.020, 77.12.045, 77.04.055, and 77.12.047.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: To ensure accurate data collection for stock assessments, fish are currently required to be landed into Washington ports in the whole (also known as "round") condition, unless specifically exempted by regulation. Some commercial fishers have requested that additional species, such as rockfishes, be exempted because dressing them at sea would preserve their marketability and reduce discarding early in the trip due to spoilage.

Other Federal and State Agencies that Regulate this Subject and the Process Coordinating the Rule with These Agencies: The agency participates in the conservation and management of bottomfish through the Pacific Fishery Management Council (council). This rule would not conflict with regulations adopted by the council and implemented into federal regulations by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Process for Developing New Rule: Agency study.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by contacting Whitney Roberts, 1111 Washington Street S.E., Olympia, WA 98501, phone 855-925-2801, project code 2303, TTY 1-800-833-6388 or 711, email commercialrockfish@PublicInput.com, website <https://publicinput.com/commercialrockfish>; or Whitney Roberts, 1111 Washington Street S.E., Olympia, WA 98501, phone 360-902-2675, TTY 1-800-833-6388 or 711, email Whitney.Roberts@dfw.wa.gov, website wdfw.wa.gov.

Additional comments: Assistance for additional accessibility and persons with disabilities, contact Title VI/ADA compliance coordinator, phone 360-902-2349, TTY 1-800-833-6388 or 711, email Tittle6@dfw.wa.gov.

December 7, 2022
Chris Fredley
Acting Rules Coordinator