

Red Abalone Project Team Proposal from Ken Morrill

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Zone proposal.

Regardless of how many zones are proposed south of the Humboldt County line, Humboldt and Del Norte counties should be managed as a separate zone. This section of coastline is biologically different than counties to the south and the population of red abalone is much lower here, near the limit of their ecological range. The threshold for density that has been set in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties has never been, and will never be, met in this northern section of coastline. Therefore, using these requirements to manage the fishery in these counties will assure that a recreational red abalone season will never be restored in these waters.

I suggest this fishery can, and should, be managed as it has been for decades, using catch data and by establishing a minimum size that will assure the fishery will not be negatively impacted.

The only data that exists to manage the fishery in these northern waters is that of historical catch. Allowing a TAC similar to what has been harvested in the past and adopting a size limit of ten inches would cause little impact to the population of red abalone. If the annual limit were to be set at one abalone per fisherman, the greatest number of fisherman would be able to partake in this sport. Abalone tags should be sold on a first come first serve basis and the revenue from tag sales should be used exclusively for red abalone data collection and management.

If a minimum size limit of ten inches were to be adopted for red abalone in California, there would be little impact to the abalone population. Opening up the entire California coastline would allow the TAC to be increased - translating to more fisherman having the opportunity to enjoy the sport and more revenue for CDFW to manage the fishery.

We do not need density data, which is expensive to collect and of questionable value, to manage this fishery (or any other game for that matter). We need only to increase size limits, thereby reducing the number of individuals organisms legally available for harvest. Keeping things simple, by using increased size limits, will also allow an open access fishery to be restored.

CDFW can save tens of thousands of dollars on unneeded data collection and analysis with this simple strategy.