



Figure 3.6-1: International Pacific Halibut Commission Statistical Areas

Offshore Artificial Structures

Artificial structures include artificial reefs utilized by rockfish. Artificial reefs are often composed of concrete, tires, or sunken ships; these features create habitat for sea life.

Offshore Water Column: Pelagic Zone

The pelagic zone is home to the highly migratory species (e.g., high seas salmon), other relatively large pelagics, and early life stages of groundfish inhabiting the epipelagic/mesopelagic area or that are in association with fronts, current systems, and macrophyte canopies or drift algae associated with the TMAA.

3.6.1.2 Essential Fish Habitat

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) (16 United States Code [U.S.C.] §1801 et seq.), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA), **mandates identification and conservation of EFH**. The MSFCMA defines EFH as those waters and substrates necessary (required to support a sustainable fishery and the managed species) to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity (i.e., full life cycle). These waters include aquatic areas and their associated physical, chemical, and biological properties used by fish, and may include areas historically used by fish. Substrate types include sediment, hard bottom, structures underlying the waters, and associated biological communities. **Federal agencies are required to consult with NMFS and to prepare an EFH Assessment if potential adverse effects on EFH are anticipated from their activities**. A detailed EFH Assessment has been prepared for the TMAA.

The NMFS and regional Fishery Management Councils (FMCs) develop EFH descriptions for federally managed fish species and include them in their respective Fishery Management Plans (FMPs). The FMPs identify and describe EFH, describe the EFH impacts (fishing and nonfishing), and suggest measures to conserve and enhance the EFH. The NPFMC developed FMPs for all fisheries occurring within the boundary of the TMAA. A description of designated EFH for the life stage that occurs within the TMAA is presented in Tables 3.6-1 and 3.6-2. The GOA is defined in the FMP as the U.S. EEZ of the North Pacific Ocean, exclusive of the Bering Sea, between the eastern Aleutian Islands at 170°W longitude and Dixon Entrance at 132°40'W longitude and includes the Western, Central, and Eastern regulatory areas (USDC, NOAA 2005).

Table 3.6-1: The Fish and Invertebrate Species with EFH Designated in the Gulf of Alaska TMAA

Fishery Management Plan	Species	Eggs	Larvae	Early Juvenile	Late Juvenile	Adult
Scallop	Weatherwane scallop				X	X
Groundfish	Arrowtooth flounder		X		X	X
	Atka mackerel		X			
	Dover sole	X	X		X	X
	Dusky rockfish		X			X
	Flathead sole	X	X		X	X
	Northern rockfish		X			X
	Pacific cod	X	X		X	X
	Pacific ocean perch		X		X	X
	Rex sole	X	X		X	X
	Rock sole		X		X	X
	Sablefish	X	X		X	X
Sculpins				X	X	