## Preliminary Assessment of the Responses of Rockfish Populations to Rockfish Conservation Areas in Central California

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## Introduction

Between 1987 and 1998, California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) (Now Department of Fish and Wildlife) conducted sampling onboard 2,267 sport fishing trips: recording catch-rates, size, and species compositions for nearly 300,000 fishes

Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) were established in 2002 after seven rockfish species (Bocaccio, Canary Rockfish, Cowcod, Darkblotched Rockfish, Pacific Ocean Perch, Widow Rockfish, and Yelloweye Rockfish) were declared overfished

This collaborative project was formed between P.I.'s Dr. Sue Sogard and Dr. John Field of the the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and Dr. Rick Starr of Moss Landing Marine the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and Dr. Rick Starr of Moss Landing Marine
Laboratories (MLML) with the goal of assessing how 12 years of RCAs have affected rockfish Laboratories (MLML) with the goal of assessing how 12 years of RCAs have affected rockfis
populations, especially in relatively shallower regions of the RCA, which were previously

## Results and Discussion

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Sealimut


- 2012-13 CPUE - 1996-98 CPUE Yellowtail Rockfish


[^0]:    Mean catch per unit effort (CPUE) increased at all sites relative to 1996-98 catch-rate data (Fig 2A) Yellowtail Rockfish, collected from 2012-13, were significantly larger at Cordell Bank, a result of ontogenetic shift to deep water (Fig 2B )

    Significant differences were found among mean total lengths of Yellowtail Rockfish, Canary Rockfish, 'Northern Blue' Rockfish and Widow Rockfish caught in the RCA and those caught in the respective REF sites. These also likely represent ontogenetic shifts to deeper water (Fig 2C).
    Yellowtail Rockfish (Sebastes flavidus) comprised the largest portion of fishes caught (Figs 2A and 2D)

