

bycatch data on an continual basis.

Catch and bycatch in this fishery will be periodically reviewed by the Whiting PDT and the Whiting Monitoring Committee. If adjustments to the specifications for this fishery are necessary to ensure that bycatch remains minimal, the Council may take action through a framework adjustment.

3.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

During the development of this framework adjustment, the Council considered only one alternative to address some issues (season, area, and bycatch restrictions, for example) because the data collected through the experimental fisheries have been compiled and analyzed and appear to best support one specific alternative rather than a range. The “range” of possible alternatives for season, area, gear specifications, etc. were identified and assessed throughout five years of experimental fishing.

The Council did consider two alternatives for adjusting the Framework 33 “rolli provisions to allow for this raised footrope trawl fishery to occur during the months of October and November when Blocks 124 and 125 are scheduled to be closed. Both of these alternatives were proposed by the Groundfish Committee and considered by the Council during the development of Framework 33, but action was delayed until the Council could develop this framework adjustment to address the raised footrope trawl fishery in its entirety. The alternative that was rejected is described below, including the rationale for its rejection.

The Council rejected “Option 2” for adjusting the Framework 33 October/November “rolling closure.” This option would have moved the boundary of the October-November closure (Blocks 124 and 125) so as not to include the raised footrope trawl fishery area. Only the top half of Blocks 124 and 125 would be closed during October and November (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Option 2 (Rejected) – Modify the Boundary of the October/November Closure

