

REPORT ON THE 2006 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES IN AREA 2A

The 2006 Area 2A total allowable catch (TAC) of 1,380,000 lb set by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) was allocated as sub-TACs as follows:

Treaty Tribes	508,000 lb (35% + 25,000 lb)
Non-Tribal Total	872,000 lb (65% - 25,000 lb)
Non-Tribal Commercial	346,424 lb (includes incidental sablefish)
Washington Sport	249,152 lb
Oregon/California Sport	276,424 lb

All weights in this report are net weight (gutted, head-off, and without ice and slime.) The structure of each fishery and the resulting harvests are described below.

NON-TRIBAL COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

A sub-TAC of 346,424 lb (31.7% of the non-tribal share + 70,000 lb for the incidental sablefish fishery) was allocated to two fishery components: 1) a directed longline fishery targeting on halibut south of Point Chehalis, WA; and 2) an incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fisheries off Washington, Oregon, and California. An additional 70,000 lb was allocated to an incidental catch fishery for limited entry, sablefish-endorsed vessels operating with longline gear north of Pt. Chehalis, WA. This allowance for the tiered sablefish fishery is only available in years when the overall Area 2A TAC exceeds 900,000 lb.

Incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery A quota of 41,464 lb (15% of the non-Indian commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as an incidental catch during Chinook fisheries. According to the Catch Sharing Plan, the primary management objective for this fishery is to harvest the troll quota as an incidental catch during the May/June salmon troll fishery. If any of the allocation for this fishery remains after June 30, the fishery may continue to retain incidentally caught halibut in the salmon troll fisheries until the quota is taken. The final catch ratio established preseason by the Council at the April meeting was one halibut (minimum 32") per three Chinook landed by a salmon troller, except that one halibut could be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 35 halibut could be landed per trip. The "C-shaped" yelloweye rockfish conservation area (YRCA) in the North Coast subarea off Washington was designated as an area to be avoided (a voluntary closure) by salmon trollers.

- Halibut retention was permitted in the salmon troll fisheries beginning May 1. Of the halibut taken in the salmon troll fisheries through October 24, 2006, 3,355 lb were landed in Oregon and 30,462 lb were landed in Washington for a total of 33,817 lb (18.4% under quota.)

Directed fishery targeting on halibut A quota of 234,960 lb (85% of the non-tribal commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the directed longline fishery targeting on halibut in southern Washington, Oregon, and California. The fishery was confined to the area south of Subarea 2A-1 (south of Point Chehalis, WA; 46° 53.30' N. lat.). In addition, between 46° 53.30' N. lat. and 46° 16' N. lat., the fishery was confined to an area seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour and, between 46° 16' N. lat. and 40° 10' N. lat., to an area shoreward of a boundary line approximating the 30-fm depth contour and seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour. One-day fishing periods of 10 hours in duration were scheduled by the IPHC for June 28, July 12, July 26, August 9, August 23, September 6, and September 20. A 32" minimum size limit with the head on was in effect for all openings. Vessel landing limits per fishing period based on vessel length were imposed by IPHC during all openings as shown in the following table. Vessels choosing to operate in this fishery could not land halibut in the incidental catch salmon troll fishery, nor operate in the recreational fishery.

Fishing period limits (dressed weight, head-off in pounds) by vessel size.

Vessel Class/Size	6/28/06 Opening	7/12/06 Opening	7/26/06 Opening
A 0 - 25 ft.	670 lb	755 lb	200 lb
B 26 - 30 ft.	840 lb	945 lb	240 lb
C 31 - 35 ft.	1,345 lb	1,510 lb	385 lb
D 36 - 40 ft.	3,705 lb	4,165 lb	1,065 lb
E 41 - 45 ft.	3,985 lb	4,480 lb	1,145 lb
F 46 - 50 ft.	4,770 lb	5,365 lb	1,370 lb
G 51 - 55 ft.	5,320 lb	5,985 lb	1,530 lb
H 56+ ft.	8,000 lb	9,000 lb	2,300 lb

- The June 28 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 78,000 pounds, leaving 156,960 pounds for later openings.
- The July 12 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 113,000 pounds, leaving 43,960 pounds for later openings.
- The July 26 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 45,000 lb, over the quota by 1,040 lb.

Incidental halibut catch in the primary sablefish longline fishery north of Point Chehalis

A quota of 70,000 lb was allocated to the limited entry primary sablefish fishery in Area 2A as an incidental catch during longline sablefish operations north of Point Chehalis, WA. The primary sablefish season began on April 1 and closed October 31, although incidental halibut retention was not available until May 1. Properly licensed vessels were permitted to retain up to 100 lb of dressed weight (headed-and gutted) halibut per 1,000 lb of dressed weight sablefish, plus up to two additional halibut per fishing trip. The fishery was confined to an area seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour. In addition, the "C-shaped" yelloweye rockfish conservation area (YRCA) in the North Coast subarea off Washington was designated as an area to be avoided (a voluntary closure) by commercial longline sablefish fishermen.

- Through October 24, this fishery is estimated to have taken 61,394 lb.

SPORT FISHERIES (Non-tribal).

A sub-TAC of 525,576 lb (68.3% of non-tribal share – 70,000 lb for the incidental sablefish fishery) was allocated between sport fisheries in the Washington area (47.4%) and Oregon/California (52.6%). The allocations were further subdivided as quotas among seven geographic subareas as described below.

Washington Inside Waters Subarea (Puget Sound and Straits of Juan de Fuca). This area was allocated 68,607 lb (27.5% of the Washington sport allocation). Due to inability to monitor the catch in this area inseason, a fixed season was established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achieve the sub-quota. The Eastern Region (East of Low Point) opened on April 9 and continued through June 18, 5 days per week (Thursday-Monday). The Western Region opened on May 25 and continued through August 5, 5 days per week (Thursday-Monday). The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- Landings data from this fishery are not yet available.

Northern Washington Coastal Waters Subarea (landings in Neah Bay and La Push). The coastal area off Cape Flattery to Queets River was allocated 119,244 lb (47.9% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was divided into two seasons with 33,388 lb set aside for the second season. The fishery was to open May 9 and continue 3 days per week (Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday) until 85,856 lb were estimated to have been taken. The second season was to open in the week of June 22 and continue 2 days per week (Thursday and Saturday) until the entire quota for this subarea was estimated to be taken or September 30, whichever is earlier. The "C-shaped" yelloweye rockfish conservation area (YRCA) in the North Coast subarea off Washington, southwest of Cape Flattery, was closed to sport halibut fishing. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The fishery opened May 9 and continued 3 days a week, through May 18, when 63,398 lb were estimated to have been taken. The remaining quota for the May season, 22,458 lb, was not enough to continue the 3 day per week fishery; this remaining quota was transferred to the June season.
- The season re-opened on June 22 and June 24, during which days 42,408 lb were taken, for a season total of 105,806 lb, leaving approximately 13,438 lb in the subarea quota.

Washington South Coast Subarea (landings in Westport). The area from the Queets River to Leadbetter Point was allocated 53,952 lb (21.7% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was to open on May 1 and continue 5 days per week (Sunday through Thursday) offshore, until the quota was taken. A nearshore fishery was also to open May 1 and continue 7 days per week in waters between the Queets River and 47°25.00' N. lat. south to 46°58.00' N. lat., and east of 124°30.00' W. long. through the closure of the offshore fishery until either the subarea quota were estimated to have been taken, or until September 30, whichever is earlier. If there is insufficient quota remaining to open the entire subarea for another fishing day, then any remaining quota may be used to accommodate incidental catch in the nearshore fishery on Fridays and Saturdays only, or be transferred to another Washington subarea. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The 5 day per week offshore fishery and the 7 day per week inshore fishery opened on May 1 and remained open until May 17. The total catch for this subarea was 58,483 lb, exceeding the quota by 4,531 lb (8.4% overage.)

Columbia River Subarea (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 21,170 lb, consisting of 2.0 percent of the first 130,845 lb allocated to the Washington sport fishery, 4.0 percent of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 lb and 224,110 lb (minus the pounds needed for the incidental sablefish fishery), and 5.0 percent of the Oregon/California sport allocation or an amount equal to the contribution from the Washington sport allocation, whichever is greater. The fishery was to open May 1 and continue 7 days per week until 14,819 lb is estimated to have been taken or until July 16, whichever is earlier. The fishery was to reopen on August 4 and continue 3 days per week (Friday through Sunday) until the entire subarea quota has been taken or September 30, whichever is earlier. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- This 7 day per week fishery began on May 1 and closed on May 27 with a total catch of 14,357 lb (3.1% under initial quota).
- The fishery reopened August 4 and continued 3 days a week, until September 3, when 7,363 lb were estimated to have been taken, for a season total of 21,720 lb (2.6% over quota).

Oregon Central Coast Subarea (Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 254,310 lb (92% of the Oregon/California sport allocation less any amount needed to contribute to the Oregon portion of the Columbia River subarea quota).

Three seasons were set for this subarea: 1) a restricted depth (inside 40-fm) fishery to commence on May 1 and continue 7 days a week until October 31 or until the nearshore sub-quota of 20,345 lb were estimated to have been taken; 2) a fixed Spring season in all depths that was to open on May 11-13, 18-20, and 25-27, and June 1-3, and 8-10 with a catch allocation of 175,474 lb (the Spring season was to reopen for additional days if quota remains), and; 3) a Summer season in all depths that was to open on August 4-6 and which was to continue on as many weekends as possible until the total Spring-Summer quotas of 233,965 lb have been taken or until October 31, whichever is earlier. Additional fishing days may be opened if a certain amount of quota remained after August 6 and September 3, and/or an increase in the bag limit

may be considered after September 3. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person, unless otherwise specified.

- The inside 40-fathom fishery opened May 1 through September 21, taking 8,419 lb of halibut, 58.6% under quota (18.6% under the revised quota). On September 6, NMFS, ODFW, and IPHC conferred inseason and took action to provide more fishing opportunity for the Summer all-depth fishery. The agencies agreed to transfer 10,000 lb from inside 40-fm fishery to the Summer all-depth fishery, bringing the revised inside 40-fm quota to 10,345 lb.
- The fixed Spring all-depth season in May-June, held May 11-13, 18-20, and 25-27, June 1-3, 8-10, and, had a total catch of 144,938 lb, which left enough halibut in the quota to allow openings on June 22-24 and July 6-8. During these six additional spring all-depth fishery days, an additional 38,751 lb were taken. A total of 183,690 lb was taken in the Spring all-depth fishery, 8,216 lb over the Spring quota. This overage was deducted from the pounds available to the Summer all-depth fishery.
- The initial Summer all-depth season quota of 58,491 lb was reduced by the 8,216 lb overage from the Spring fishery. As a result, 50,275 lb was initially available to the Summer all-depth fishery. The Summer all-depth fishery opened on August 4-6 (Friday-Sunday). On September 6, NMFS, ODFW, and IPHC conferred inseason and took action to provide more fishing opportunity for the Summer all-depth fishery. The agencies agreed to transfer 10,000 lb from inside 40-fm fishery to the Summer all-depth fishery, bringing the revised Summer all-depth quota to 60,275 lb and leaving 28,861 lb for the remainder of the all-depth Summer season. In addition, because the remaining quota for the combined all-depth and inside 40-fm fishery was 31,267 lb (i.e., greater than 30,000 lb after September 3, as stated in the CSP and regulations), beginning September 8, the Summer all-depth fishery opened every Friday-Sunday with a two-fish bag limit. The Summer all-depth fishery closed at 11:59 pm September 21; the fishery had taken 65,859 lb, 5,584 lb over the revised summer all-depth quota (9.3% over revised Summer quota.)

South of Humbug Mountain, Oregon and off the California Coast Subarea This sport fishery was allocated 8,293 lb (3.0% of the Oregon/California quota). This area had a pre-set season of 7 days per week from May 1 to October 31 and a daily bag limit of one halibut of any size per person.

- This season is scheduled to remain open through October 31. No catch estimates are available for this fishery, but it is unlikely that this subarea quota will be taken.

TRIBAL FISHERIES

A sub-TAC of 508,000 lb (35% + 25,000 lb of the Area 2A TAC) was allocated to tribal fisheries. The tribes estimated that 36,000 lb would be used for ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) fisheries and the remaining 472,000 lb were allocated to the commercial fishery. The 2006 management plan was essentially identical to the new management plan that the tribes had agreed to for their 2005 fisheries. This plan divides the fisheries into “separately managed” fisheries and “joint restricted” fisheries.

For the separately managed fisheries, a tribe or group of tribes was allocated a certain percentage of the TAC that could be harvested any time between noon on March 5 and noon on July 30. Collectively, the separately managed fisheries were allocated 75% of the Tribal Commercial TAC. The separately managed fisheries landed 364,372 lbs in 546 landings (out of 354,000 lbs expected).

The remaining 25% of the TAC was open to all parties in the “joint restricted” fishery that was managed to last at least 40 days. The joint restricted fishery opened at noon March 20 with a 500-lb/vessel/day limit. Due to higher than anticipated effort and an inseason adjustment to the target poundage, the limit was reduced to 200 lbs/vessel/day on April 11. This limit greatly reduced participation and remained in effect until the close of the commercial fishery at midnight July 18, when it was determined the commercial quota had been attained. The joint restricted fishery had a total catch of 111,599 lbs in 410 landings (out of 118,000 lbs expected).

Fishery	Dates Held	Pounds Landed	# of Landings
Separately Managed	March 5 - July 18	364,372 lb	546 landings
Restricted, 200-500 lb/vessel/day	March 20 – July 18	111,599 lb	410 landings
Total		475,971 lb	956 landings

The C&S fishery will continue through December 31 and tribal estimates of catch will be reported by the tribes in January 2007.

2006 Area 2A TAC and Catch (in pounds)					
	Quota	Inseason Revised Quota		Catch	Over/Under
TRIBAL INDIAN	508,000			511,971 *	0.8%
Commercial	472,000			475,971	0.8%
Ceremonial & Subsistence	36,000			36,000 *	
NON-TRIBAL	872,000			852,088 ♠	-2.3%
COMMERCIAL	346,424			331,211 ♠	-4.4%
Troll	41,464			33,817 ♠	-18.4%
Directed	234,960			236,000	0.4%
Sablefish Incidental	70,000			61,394 ♠	-12.3%
SPORT	525,576			520,877 ♠	-0.9%
WA Sport	249,152			243,901 ♠	-2.1%
OR/CA Sport	276,424			276,976	0.2%
WA Inside Waters	68,607			68,607 ♠ *	--
WA North Coast	119,244			105,806	-11.3%
<i>May season</i>	85,856			63,398	-26.2%
<i>June season</i>	33,388	55,846 ♣		42,408	-24.1% of revised quota
WA South Coast	53,952			58,483	8.4%
Col River Area	21,170			21,720 ♦	2.6%
<i>Early season</i>	14,819			14,357	-3.1%
<i>Late season</i>	6,351	6,813 ■		7,363	8.1% of revised quota
OR Central Coast	254,310			257,968	1.4%
<i>Inside 40 fathoms</i>	20,345	10,345 ★		8,419	-18.6% of revised quota
<i>Spring (May-July)</i>	175,474	183,690		183,690	--
<i>Summer (August-October)</i>	58,491	60,275 ★		65,859	9.3% of revised quota
OR S. of Humbug/CA	8,293			8,293 *	
TOTAL	1,380,000			1,364,059 ♠	-1.2%

* Assumed.

♣ Washington's North Coast May season fishery had 22,458 lb remaining after it was closed which was transferred to the June season, increasing the June quota to 55,846 lb.

■ The Columbia River Early season had 462 lb remaining after it was closed which was transferred to the Late season, increasing the Late season quota to 6,813 lb.

★ Oregon's Central Coast spring all-depth fishery overage of 8,216 lb, plus 10,000 lb from the inside 40-fm fishery were transferred to the summer all-depth fishery, increasing that quota to 60,275 lb.

♠ Data from these fisheries not complete at the time of the briefing book deadline. Updates will be provided at the Council meeting, if available.

♦ Columbia River catch= 11,005 lb from WA + 10,715 lb from OR.