

NMFS REPORT ON CLOSURE OF HALIBUT RETENTION IN THE SABLEFISH PRIMARY FISHERY

Due to projected quota attainment and after joint consultation between representatives from the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the IPHC issued an inseason action closing incidental halibut retention in the sablefish primary fishery in the area North of Pt Chehalis, Washington, at 12:01 am September 1, 2015.

The groundfish regulations at 60 CFR 660.231(b)(3)(iv) currently provide that halibut may be retained in the primary sablefish fishery north of Pt. Chehalis through October 31. Therefore, NMFS recommends the Council close halibut retention in the sablefish primary fishery to make groundfish regulations consistent with the IPHC action.