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From: **Michelle Kennedy** <[michelle@poeinc.com](mailto:michelle@poeinc.com)>  
Date: Fri, Oct 21, 2016 at 10:42 AM  
Subject: Proposed 2017 Halibut Season for marine areas 3-6  
To: [pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)  
Cc: [halfcorkedcoasters@gmail.com](mailto:halfcorkedcoasters@gmail.com)

We are sport fisher-people trying to feed ourselves from one halibut season to the next. In my opinion, FIVE halibut fishing days are not going to make that happen, especially when the actual proposed dates are historically bad weather and/or tides. We'll be forced to fish Canadian and Alaskan waters just to feed our family.

Please add me to every mailing list possible concerning this subject. Will take days off work (another hit to the pocket book) to attend any & every meeting that the public is allowed in, even though it obviously didn't do any good last year... because everything was decided beforehand, as it seems now.

Thank you for your time to read this.

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# WESTPORT CHARTERBOAT ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 654 • WESTPORT, WASHINGTON 98595

November 7th, 2016

Mr. Herb Pollard, Chairman  
Pacific Fisheries Management Council

Pacific Halibut Management  
Agenda Item E.1.b.  
Subject: 2017 Westport recreational halibut dates

Dear Chairman Pollard and Council Members:

The charter boat fishery in Westport is facing a very difficult time with respect to management of the halibut fishery in our area. The recreational demand for halibut has steadily increased each year. The number of private boats fishing halibut from Westport continues to increase while the number of charter boats has remained constant for more than a decade. Conversely, the harvestable number of fish has remained fairly constant. The result was that in 2016 the directed fishery quota was taken in just 3 days.

For 2017, our Association generally agrees with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) efforts to consider a management alternative that would align the season dates for the majority of the management areas in the state. The intent of this approach is to remove the effort shifts between areas that has become more common place thereby providing a more predictable and stable fishery for each of the areas.

Our Association has been working with WDFW and we appreciate the discussions that have taken place so far, however, we do have some concerns I want to bring to the Council's attention. Before I address our concerns I'd like to fully convey the fact that we understand all affected areas will not receive their ideal goals for their particular area, the present halibut supply is just not adequate enough to keep up with demand. That's a fact. With that said, in working with the Department we feel our group has agreed to some unpopular compromises as well.

The issue of paramount concern to our Association is with respect to the weekend day that is selected for the Westport area. Sunday has been the weekend day that halibut has been open during our all depth fishery for over a decade. To some, the difference between having the area open on Saturday or Sunday doesn't mean much. It may just be a matter of what day might fit best with their schedule. For the charter boat industry in Westport it means more, it is an economic issue for an industry that is struggling financially.

The choice of the weekend day is of great importance and value to all charter businesses in Westport and to the community as a whole. Our group feels that a move from the traditional Sunday weekend day to Saturday would result in a loss of economic value to our members and the community including the motels, restaurants and the other businesses that depend on charter boat customers for their livelihoods.

The rationale is that halibut fishers will fish either weekend day, whereas our clients that come to fish for bottom fish would not automatically switch to Sundays if the halibut day is changed to Saturday. Another way to say this is that many customers will fish for bottom fish on Saturdays and then stay and Halibut fish on Sundays, but many will not do it the other way around. Changing the weekday from Tuesday to Thursday for our area does not have a major impact on our community. However, making a change to halibut fish on Saturdays in Westport versus maintaining our traditional Sunday will result in a net economic loss to the charter boat industry and our community.

**However**, in the spirit of compromise, as long as the first actual Halibut fishing day is on either Tuesday or Thursday of the first week in May, our association has agreed to align the first weekend day of Halibut fishing to Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup>. Following the first 3 directed Halibut days if sufficient quota remains the season would continue on Sunday May 21<sup>st</sup>. We feel this approach will most favorably allow our area as well as area 3 and 4 to be open for a 4<sup>th</sup> day of Sunday May 21<sup>st</sup>. We believe that starting the Halibut season on a weekday will enable areas 2 through 4 the best chance at being able to fish 4 days as previously stated. After all, the intent of aligning dates by WDFW is to reduce effort shift between management areas and potentially maximize each area's halibut opportunity. We believe this scenario would enable the best chance for that to happen.

As stated earlier we support having a common weekday Opening Day for the management areas and believe it's a commonsense approach that will create opportunity for more individual anglers to access the resource and also control catch rates to some extent. We will continue to work with WDFW and others impacted by the choice of weekdays for the remainder of the process. We'll support the weekday that best fits all whether it's Tuesdays or Thursdays.

All this may not sound like a big deal to those not closely connected to the economics of the charter boat fishery in Westport. However, with the economic disaster of the 2016 salmon fishery fresh in our mind, we cannot afford to needlessly discount economic opportunities. This is a big deal to our industry and our community.

We are committed to work with the Groundfish Advisory Panel, representatives from other areas in our state, and WDFW as we move toward the Council's final decision.

The Westport Charterboat Association's revised (compromised) preferred 2017 directed halibut fishery dates are:

- Day 1 - Tuesday May 2 or Thursday May 4
- Day 2 - Saturday May 6
- Day 3 - Tuesday May 9 or Thursday May 11
- Day 4 - Sunday May 21

Day 5 - Tuesday May 23 or Thursday May 25

Thank You for considering our concerns as you select the alternative to the Halibut Catch Sharing Plan.

Sincerely,

Steve Westrick  
President Westport Charterboat Association

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From: **Roy Tallman** <[roy.tallman@comcast.net](mailto:roy.tallman@comcast.net)>

Date: Thu, Nov 3, 2016 at 1:33 PM

Subject: Halibut season

To: [pmmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pmmc.comments@noaa.gov)

In your November meeting would you please consider a one day break instead of two between open days.

Thank you- Roy Tallman.

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From: **Zach Shelton** <[zach.shelton@gmail.com](mailto:zach.shelton@gmail.com)>

Date: Wed, Nov 2, 2016 at 1:50 PM

Subject: RE: Halibut Season Two Day Break (La Push)

To: [pmmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pmmc.comments@noaa.gov)

Hello,

I wanted to take a minute to add my two cents to the discussion about taking a two day break in the 2017 halibut season rather than the customary one day break.

I have been going to la Push for Halibut season with the same group of guys for years. It is one of the highlights of the spring each year. We leave on Wednesday morning, fish for halibut Thursday and Saturday and then head for home Sunday morning leaving us time to clean the boat before the day comes to an end. Over the course of the trip we dump a couple thousand bucks or so into the local economy in and around la Push by way of groceries, fuel and accommodations.

With the proposed changes to the season and the addition of the two day break would cause us to change the way we have been doing things including maybe not going at all. The proposed rule change would require an additional nights accommodations as well as additional days off of work. Both of these combined may make an already expensive trip downright impossible to justify.

My opinion is that the regulations should stay as they are. I don't believe an extra day of rest benefits the wild life. The proposed change drives up costs for the sportsman with no benefit to the fishery.

Thank you for your time

Zach Shelton  
[206-409-1146](tel:206-409-1146)