

**Subject:** Fwd: Area 2A Pacific Halibut for California  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Wed, 05 Oct 2011 11:15:36 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Area 2A Pacific Halibut for California  
**Date:**Wed, 05 Oct 2011 11:13:18 -0700  
**From:**Tim <[reelsteel@humboldt1.com](mailto:reelsteel@humboldt1.com)>  
**To:**[pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)  
**CC:**[Jimmy.Smith@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:Jimmy.Smith@co.humboldt.ca.us), [Flatland@mcn.org](mailto:Flatland@mcn.org), [mvojkovich@dfg.ca.gov](mailto:mvojkovich@dfg.ca.gov), Jim Yarnall  
<[j.yarnall@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j.yarnall@sbcglobal.net)>

Dear PFMC, Due largely to an apparent increase in abundance, the recreational catch of Pacific Halibut has increased in California. This may be due to increased regulations and a decrease in effort of the trawl fishery in Northern California resulting in a lower commercial bycatch. Whatever the reason, there appears to be more Pacific Halibut in Northern California waters than in the last 30 years. The recreational allocation for Southern Oregon and Northern California is very low. Too low. In fact, it is lower than the allowable bycatch for yelloweye rockfish in California. I understand that there is a lot of competition for halibut allocation for all sectors but the current allocation for Southern 2A recreation is completely inequitable. Please adjust the allocation from 5,625# to 10% of area 2A allowable catch. Sincerely, Tim Klassen Eureka Ca ph 707-499-5509

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Item D.1.c recommendation to limit recreational Pacific Halibut quota in California

**Date:**Wed, 12 Oct 2011 00:44:54 -0700 (PDT)

**From:**Robert Reed <[n6hgg@yahoo.com](mailto:n6hgg@yahoo.com)>

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

Item D.1.c

October 12, 2011

Robert Reed  
232 Warren Creek Road  
Arcata, California  
95521

Don McIsaac, Executive Director  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101  
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Mr. McIsaac,

It came to my attention that the PFMC is entertaining a recommendation to close the Pacific Halibut recreational fishing season when a 2625 pound quota is met. This recommendation should be reconsidered for several reasons.

First, the council could do a better job disseminating an intent such as this to the public in an economic region such as ours on the North Coast of California. Changes to a fishing season such as this may seem a small item in your large picture view, but they are a very big deal to businesses in an area such as ours. Lack of information made available to these businesses does a disservice to them. Please do a better job of letting them know in a timely fashion, and in a more obvious way so that they can respond.

Secondly, the far reaching negative economic impact of this new restriction deserves further study. Early season closure recommendations shoots our state and local tax revenue efforts in the foot. Such a restriction will lead to very early closure of the fishery in our area and will severely impact tax revenues generated from the sales of fuels, equipment, lodging, food, charter fishing trips and other items needed for the activity. This recommendation appears to the outside observer to have not been completely thought through to its final conclusion of negative economic impacts and its contribution to continuing government and private sector job losses.

Leaving the season at it now exists will benefit tax revenues such that the revenues collected by leaving the season as it is, could fund further, more scientific studies and assist in helping enable new law enforcement strategies to enforce new limits to this fishery if the studies say it is really needed. Closure now is premature at best.

Please reconsider this economically detrimental recommendation and leave the season as it has existed for some time so that tax revenues will not be negatively impacted.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,  
Robert Reed  
Arcata, California  
Humboldt Bay

**Subject:** Fwd: Halibut  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Thu, 13 Oct 2011 11:00:10 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Halibut  
**Date:**Thu, 13 Oct 2011 05:32:59 -0700 (PDT)  
**From:**Lonnie Dollarhide <[flatwater1@yahoo.com](mailto:flatwater1@yahoo.com)>  
**Reply-To:**Lonnie Dollarhide <[flatwater1@yahoo.com](mailto:flatwater1@yahoo.com)>  
**To:**[pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov) <[pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)>

*Hello Mr. McI, my name is Lonnie Dollarhide, I'm a sports fisherman form Humboldt Bay, Eureka California. I'm very concerned about what NOAA wants to do to our Halibut fishing here on the North Coast. The numbers that have been put out by the PFMC r so wrong. I follow the catch of all species on a daily basis during the fishing season. Their is no way possible those numbers r true on the Halibut. We around Humboldt Bay feel their should be no changes what so ever to our season on Pacific Halibut. Their is no way we r hurting this fisheries. I feel their should be a little more study on this before any if at all any action is taken, thanks, Lonnie Dollarhide.*

**Subject:** Fwd: Halibut Allocations  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Thu, 13 Oct 2011 11:00:31 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:** Halibut Allocations  
**Date:** Thu, 13 Oct 2011 09:48:25 -0700  
**From:** tim machado <[collym3@gmail.com](mailto:collym3@gmail.com)>  
**To:** [pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)

Item D.1.c

Mr. Don Mclsaac

I am a northern California, southern Oregon sport fisherman. Recently I was made aware that restrictions on the sport take of Pacific halibut in this area were to be considered by the PFMC. In the recent decade, halibut fishing has become an important component of our sport fishing effort and the local economies. Increased effort has occurred mostly as halibut availability has increased, while wasteful nearshore trawling bycatch has decreased. As past allocation strategies seem to have factored this bycatch waste into overall halibut harvest, it would seem rational that a new allocation would make these fish available for the beneficial use and harvest by sport fishermen. Further restricting the small sport sector take in this extreme southern part of the halibut habitat makes no scientific or political sense.

Respectfully,  
Timothy

Machado

# HUMBOLDT AREA SALTWATER ANGLERS, INC.

October 13, 2011

D.1.c

Mr. Don Mclsaac, Executive Director  
Public Comment – Pacific Halibut – D.1.c

Dear Mr. Mclsaac,

As president of Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers or HASA, a non-profit organization representing recreational anglers in Humboldt and Del Norte counties promoting wise resource stewardship and recreational fishing opportunities, I urge you to not to make changes to the recreational Pacific halibut season in Area 2A.

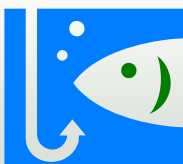
Within the last five years this fishery has developed into an important supplemental fishery providing anglers, charter boat operators and fishing related businesses a needed economic boost especially during the 2008 & 2009 seasons when salmon fishing was either closed or severely restricted.

The decision to potentially reduce fishing opportunity or recreational harvest in northern California should not be taken lightly and should be based upon accurate and timely scientific data. With the decrease in shallow water trawl fisheries the Pacific halibut numbers have greatly rebounded providing an abundance not previously seen in recent history. The Area 2A recreational catch is almost insignificant when compared to the total catch in the eastern Pacific Ocean. One should also examine how historically the allocations were given to each area and perhaps revisit these allocations based upon number of miles of habitat and population density. Perhaps additional pounds of fish could be allocated to Area 2A from the reduced bycatch from the trawl fishery.

I urge the PFMC carefully consider this issue and not make any changes until historical allocations are revisited and any change is supported by recent scientific data.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Yarnall, President  
Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers



P.O. BOX 6191  
EUREKA, CA. 95502

E-MAIL [hasa6191@gmail.com](mailto:hasa6191@gmail.com)

WEB SITE [www.humboldtuna.com](http://www.humboldtuna.com)

The Council received 3 letters  
substantively identical to this.

**Subject:** Fwd: Item D.1.c  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Thu, 13 Oct 2011 11:00:46 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Item D.1.c  
**Date:**Thu, 13 Oct 2011 17:26:39 +0000  
**From:**Jan Z <[blackorp@hotmail.com](mailto:blackorp@hotmail.com)>  
**To:**PFMC Comments <[pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)>

Item D.1.c

Mr. Don McIsaac, Executive Director PFMC:

I am a member of the Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers (HASA), a non-profit association of sport fishermen based primarily in coastal Northern California. In part our Charter specifically states that we "advocate reasonable and rational sport fishing seasons and regulations...and promote sustainable stewardship of the resource."

I hope that both scientists and politicians would agree with those sentiments. I believe that it is in the best interests of all parties concerned to have a solid scientific basis for the regulations we adopt, and a general sense of fairness regarding any limitations imposed.

At present I am unaware of any recent population dynamics studies concerning Pacific halibut in our region which suggest sport harvest levels here are endangering the species. Without adequate scientific information any dramatic changes in policy or procedure seem premature.

On a purely political level, it seems strange to me that there is a sudden demand to "do something" about a perceived danger to the halibut population from sport fishermen in Northern California. The data I've seen indicates that many times the current harvest levels in this region would have a trivial impact on the halibut biomass. I would suggest that even the mildest percentage reduction in by catch waste in other harvest sectors would have a substantially greater beneficial impact on the species than further restricting this tiny sport sector.

Separately, I would appreciate some historical context explaining how the current division of overall harvest was set. It seems likely that the dynamics

which led to the current division of harvest quotas may have changed in the years since the existing formula was adopted. If so, then perhaps the overall formula should be reevaluated.

I respectfully request that a decision to further restrict halibut harvest levels in Northern California, which would adversely impact our local economy but have no measurable impact on the species, should be delayed till we fully understand the scientific and political basis for said decision.

Jan N Zeiters  
1867 William Ct  
McKinleyville Ca  
95519

CC: Bruce Leaman IPHC

**Subject:** Fwd: Pacific Halibut issue D.1.c  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Thu, 13 Oct 2011 11:39:27 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:** Pacific Halibut issue D.1.c  
**Date:** Thu, 13 Oct 2011 11:04:15 -0700  
**From:** Mike Hart <[mike@humboldtinvestigations.com](mailto:mike@humboldtinvestigations.com)>  
**To:** [pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)

Mr. McCluskey:

I find it hard to believe that closing Pacific Halibut fishing is being considered. Here we go again with another "endangered species" ploy to close a fishery when I bet there is no research or evidence to support such action. I smell a model that somebody has developed without any real facts. In reality, the Pacific Halibut in our region have been found to be plentiful and abundant. My wife accidentally caught this Halibut while rockfishing with a red jig in 80 foot of water depth! What gives? This is absolutely crazy!

Mike Hart

My Pictures 2082.JPG

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Public Comment D.1.c.  
Proposed Halibut Catch Sharing Plans Changes for 2012

Dear Dr. McIsaac, Chairman Wolford and Council:

I am writing this on behalf of the recreational anglers in the Northern California area from Point Arena to the Oregon Border. I am a Board Member of the Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers with a membership of about 500 local anglers. In addition, I am a member of the GAP, serving as the CA Sportfishing Representative.

To the point, we are asking the Council to maintain the status quo in halibut regulations for the 2012 season and not to shut down the season should our meager 5625 pound allocation of halibut be attained by dock sampler estimations.

We understand that the Council is reacting to an August letter from the IPHC expressing concern that it appears that the area south of Humbug Mt. in Oregon has exceeded the allocation for the 2011 year and that CA has not yet reported. RecFin data shows only 21 fish of 12.1 kg average caught in southern Oregon, so we are puzzled over their concern. However, we acknowledge that CA has shown significant increases over the past several years in halibut effort and landings. There are several reasons for this:

1. There was no salmon season in 2008, a ten day salmon season in 2009 and a very poor salmon season in 2010.
2. The halibut season was extended for an additional month in 2008 and the 32" size limit was removed.
3. In 2008 our rockfish season was cut from 4 to 2 months by emergency action due to concern over yelloweye bycatch.
4. RCA restrictions for bottom trawl in our area have witnessed the halibut population numbers increasing in our area as the fish move back up the slope to the inshore waters. We catch most of our fish in 350' or water or less while avoiding rocky areas.

All these factors have led to effort shift and more catch success. For three years, without halibut to target we would have had almost no fishing opportunity. The effort shift back to salmon and a subsequent reduced halibut catch for 2011 is illustrated in the RecFin data. (We are about a quarter of the landing seen in 2008.) While these numbers may be over the 0.62% allocation of the 2A area, it is statistically insignificant. Indeed, when compared with the millions of pounds of trawl bycatch mortality as documented in the IPHC 2010 Halibut Assessment, our effect of the exploitable biomass is imperceptible, a mere 0.0014% of the exploitable biomass. It begs the question of fairness and equity.

Halibut has been a welcome relief to recreational and charter fisherman at a time when salmon opportunity was nearly eliminated. Halibut has sustained our three Charter

Vessels for about 40% of their business and provided relief for our many fishing related businesses. While salmon is the major draw, halibut helps to lessen the impact when salmon seasons are restricted. We have voluntarily restricted our effort in rockfish areas in the Cape Mendocino region over yelloweye concerns. Should we dare to attempt to fish the healthy lingcod regions in deeper waters we risk taking yelloweye, so we avoid them. The low YE bycatch this year substantiates this effort. We feel we are being penalized in every fishery we attempt with severe economic consequences.

The halibut fishery is healthy and not overfished, albeit the biomass is reducing in recent years. Much of the cause may be natural from smaller size fish per age class due to competition and ocean conditions. The southern 2A region has been allocated a pittance of the 910,000 pounds in comparison with our area and fishery population. The IPHC states the entire 2A region is less than 1% of the biomass of the entire fishery and we are 0.62% of that 1%. To state that we have any measurable effect on the population is beyond credulity. This is a regulatory issue and not one of biology. The 2011 allocation for the entire fishery is only slightly over 13% of the exploitable biomass as stated by the IPHC, when 20% is generally allowed. We also have 5% of our tiny portion allocated back to the Columbia River subarea if we understand that correctly.

The M-S Act speaks plainly to provide direction to the Council in making management decisions in situations like this when Conservation measures have major economic impacts on small communities. Conservation goal #3, Economic Goal #6 & 7, and Social Factors #15, 16 and 17 speak directly to aggressive rebuilding plans. We are an area with over 14% unemployment, our fishing and forestry resource economies are but a fraction of what they were twenty years ago. Our commercial fleet has been reduced to 10% of its former numbers in the 1980's. Resource businesses that provided two-thirds of our employment are now down to less than 30%. More data would just belabor the issue. To shut down our halibut season when only 230 fish are caught below Humbug Mt. will create severe economic loss with no measurable effect on the halibut biomass.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the council maintain the season from May 1 through October 31 for the 2012 season. Over the coming year, if the Council feels the need to make changes than many other options should be considered over just shutting down the season. Size limitations, allocations, a punch card fishery limiting the catch per person per year, or other management measures could be explored. We believe it is premature to take any action from the "status quo" at this point.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Council.

Tom Marking  
Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers, GAP sports fishing representative  
1456 Whitmire Avenue  
McKinleyville, CA 95519

COMMISSIONERS

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**HUMBOLDT BAY  
HARBOR, RECREATION, AND CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT**

(707) 443-0801  
P.O. Box 1030  
Eureka, California 95502-1030



Agenda Item D.1.c  
November 2011

October 13, 2011

Dr. Donald O. Mclsaac  
Executive Director  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101  
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Re: Agenda Item D.1 – 2012 Pacific Halibut Regulations, Nov. 2011 PFMC Meeting

Dear Mr. Mclsaac:

The staff of the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District (HBHRCD) has become aware that the Council is considering modifying the Area 2A Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan to allow sport fishery closure in the South of Humbug Mountain subarea when available information indicates that the subarea catch limit has been reached. This change in regulations may potentially have large economic consequences in our region due to loss of opportunity. While the HBHRCD is in full support of science based management decisions that protect and conserve fisheries resources, it is clear that in this instance there is currently insufficient information available to appropriately implement the proposed management changes due to lack of an existing measure of population abundance from which a valid catch limit metric can be drawn.

Very little fundamental information regarding stock characteristics and abundance of Pacific Halibut in the South of Humbug Mountain subarea currently exists due to the fact that the extensive International Pacific Halibut Commission's annual stock assessment survey does not include waters south of the California-Oregon border. As a result, the subarea has historically been allocated a very small fraction (%0.62) of the Total Allowable Catch for Area 2A based solely on the amount of suitable habitat. This perfunctory method of harvest allocation does not consider the actual abundance of Pacific Halibut on the grounds and is therefore inadequate for use as means of generating a prudent catch limit.

The HBHRCD has the capacity and expertise to conduct the biological sampling required to provide an estimate of abundance that can be used to generate a well informed catch limit for the region. Our staff is currently seeking funding to support a two year Pacific Halibut stock assessment survey in northern California waters identical to that conducted by the IPHC throughout the rest of species' geographic range. It is the recommendation of the HBHRCD that

Letter to Dr. Donald O. Mclsaac

October 13, 2011

Page 2

the Council suspend the effort to allow sport fishery closure when the subarea catch limit has been reached until our survey is complete and a science based catch limit is provided. In the interim, we recommend a season closing date of September 30, rather than October 31, so as to avoid potential gross overharvest of the resource.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Wilson', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mike Wilson  
President, Board of Commissioners

c: Board of Commissioners

**Subject:** Fwd: 2012 Area 2a Halibut Regulations  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Fri, 14 Oct 2011 07:58:48 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:** 2012 Area 2a Halibut Regulations  
**Date:** Thu, 13 Oct 2011 17:54:22 -0700  
**From:** Dick Woolsey <[dwoolz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dwoolz@sbcglobal.net)>  
**To:** [pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)

Mr. Don Mclsaac, Executive Director  
Public Comment – Pacific Halibut – D.1.c

Dear Mr. Mclsaac,

It has come to my attention that the PFMC is considering action at the November meeting that could significantly reduce the 2012 Pacific Halibut recreational season from Humbug Mt. south into California. One scenario has the season being closed after only 2625 lbs. of halibut are caught. If the fish averaged 25 lbs. this would only be 105 fish for the entire area.

This fishery has developed into an important supplemental fishery providing anglers, charter boat operators and fishing related businesses a needed economic boost. This was especially true during the 2008 & 2009 seasons when salmon fishing was either closed or severely restricted. Any reduction in the season would severely impact the already struggling local economy.

The decision to potentially reduce fishing opportunity or recreational harvest in northern California should not be taken lightly and should be based upon accurate and timely scientific data. It should also be examined how the allocations were assigned to each area, and perhaps these allocations should be revisited based upon number of miles of habitat and population densities. Perhaps additional pounds of fish could be allocated to Area 2A from the reduced bycatch from the trawl fishery. Also, because of the reduced bycatch within the trawl fishery, the numbers of Pacific Halibut seems to have increased significantly.

The Area 2A recreational catch is almost insignificant when compared to the total catch in the eastern Pacific Ocean so I urge the PFMC to carefully consider this issue and not make any changes until historical allocations are revisited and until changes can be supported by recent scientific data.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dick Woolsey

**Subject:** Fwd: Pacific Halibut issue D.1.c  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Fri, 14 Oct 2011 08:00:52 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:** Pacific Halibut issue D.1.c  
**Date:** Thu, 13 Oct 2011 20:19:03 -0700 (PDT)  
**From:** Michael and Tami Davies-Hughes <[michaeltami@yahoo.com](mailto:michaeltami@yahoo.com)>  
**To:** [pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)

Dear Mr. Don McIsaac:

Re: Item #D.1.c (Pacific Halibut closure)

I am a member of the Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers (HASA), a non-profit association of sport fishermen based primarily in coastal Northern California. In part our Charter specifically states that we "advocate reasonable and rational sport fishing seasons and regulations...and promote sustainable stewardship of the resource." I hope that both scientists and politicians would agree with those sentiments.

I believe that it is in the best interests of all parties concerned to have a solid scientific basis for the regulations we adopt, and a general sense of fairness regarding any limitations imposed. At present I am unaware of any recent population dynamics studies concerning pacific halibut in our region which suggest sport harvest levels here are endangering the species. Without adequate scientific information any dramatic changes in policy or procedure seem premature.

Also, the current division of harvest quotas seems skewed and us in Northern California should get our own share of fish. The overall formula should be reevaluated.

As a sportfisherman in Northern California, I cannot verify the numbers of Pacific Halibut that have been reported to have been caught in our area. This number of fish guesstimated seems highly inflated. If such a decision to further restrict halibut harvest levels is put in place, this will adversely impact our local economy AND have no measurable impact on the species. This issue should be delayed until we understand the scientific and political basis for this decision.  
Thanks for your consideration,

Michael Davies-Hughes  
460 Redmond Road  
Eureka, CA 95503



**Subject:** Fwd: Humboldt area halibut  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Fri, 14 Oct 2011 08:00:33 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:** Humboldt area halibut  
**Date:** Fri, 14 Oct 2011 04:17:17 -0700 (PDT)  
**From:** jon fini <[d.fini@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d.fini@sbcglobal.net)>  
**To:** [pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)

The halibut fishing here in Northern California has been getting better every year since the restrictions were placed on the drag fishing. With the obvious increase in fish populations and the limit set at one per day, it should be clear that the sport fishery is sustainable as it stands. There is no good science to change course and a derby style sport fishery will unfairly hinder those who work full time jobs and those who have smaller boats that are limited by ocean conditions.

Thank you, Jon Fini

**Subject:** Fwd: Halibut regs 2A  
**From:** "pfmc.comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>  
**Date:** Fri, 14 Oct 2011 08:00:20 -0700  
**To:** Chuck Tracy <Chuck.Tracy@noaa.gov>

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Halibut regs 2A  
**Date:**Fri, 14 Oct 2011 07:22:00 -0700  
**From:**m-morris <[m-morris@suddenlink.net](mailto:m-morris@suddenlink.net)>  
**Reply-To:**m-morris <[m-morris@suddenlink.net](mailto:m-morris@suddenlink.net)>  
**To:**[pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)

October 14, 2011

Mr. Don McIsaac, Executive Director  
Public Comment – Pacific Halibut – D.1.c

Dear Mr. McIsaac,

As a recreational angler in Humboldt and Del Norte counties I promote wise resource stewardship and recreational fishing opportunities, I urge you to not to make changes to the recreational Pacific halibut season in Area 2A.

Within the last five years this fishery has developed into an important supplemental fishery providing anglers, charter boat operators and fishing related businesses a needed economic boost especially during the 2008 & 2009 seasons when salmon fishing was either closed or severely restricted.

The decision to potentially reduce fishing opportunity or recreational harvest in northern California should not be taken lightly and should be based upon accurate and timely scientific data. With the decrease in shallow water trawl fisheries the Pacific halibut numbers have greatly rebounded providing an abundance not previously seen in recent history. The Area 2A recreational catch is almost insignificant when compared to the total catch in the eastern Pacific Ocean. One should also examine how historically the allocations were given to each area and perhaps revisit these allocations based upon number of miles of habitat and population density. Perhaps additional pounds of fish could be allocated to Area 2A from the reduced bycatch from the trawl fishery.

I urge the PFMC carefully consider this issue and not make any changes until historical allocations are revisited and any change is supported by recent scientific data.

Thank you;

Gene Morris  
3967 V St  
Eureka, Ca. 95503

707-444-3918