

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON PROPOSED
CHANGES TO THE 2014 PACIFIC HALIBUT CATCH SHARING PLAN

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) proposes the following amendments be included among the range of alternatives provided for public review for the 2014 Catch Sharing Plan (CSP). Text excerpts below are from the 2013 CSP, and proposed amendments are shown in ~~strikeout~~/underline.

PACIFIC HALIBUT CATCH SHARING PLAN FOR AREA 2A

(a) FRAMEWORK

This Plan constitutes a framework that shall be applied to the annual Area 2A total allowable catch (TAC) approved by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) each January. The framework shall be implemented in both IPHC regulations and domestic regulations (implemented by NMFS) as published in the *Federal Register*.

(b) ALLOCATIONS

This Plan allocates 35 percent of the Area 2A TAC to U.S. treaty Indian tribes in the State of Washington in subarea 2A-1, and 65 percent to non-Indian fisheries in Area 2A. The allocation to non-Indian fisheries is divided into four shares, with the Washington sport fishery (north of the Columbia River) receiving 36.6 percent, the Oregon/~~California~~ sport fishery receiving 30.7 percent, the California sport fishery receiving [a value from within the range of 1.4 – 2.1] percent, and the commercial fishery receiving 31.7 percent. Allocations within the non-Indian commercial and sport fisheries are described in sections (e) and (f) of this Plan. These allocations may be changed if new information becomes available that indicates a change is necessary and/or the Pacific Fishery Management Council takes action to reconsider its allocation recommendations. Such changes will be made after appropriate rulemaking is completed and published in the *Federal Register*.

CDFW Comments: Establishing a stand-alone California sport allocation in the CSP is consistent with the South of Humbug Policy Committee (SOHPC) recommendation #4 - to add a management line in the CSP at the Oregon/California border, and create a separate California subarea with its own CSP allocation. Consistent with SOHPC recommendation #1, CDFW proposes the 2014 California sport allocation be established as a percentage from within the range of 1.4 to 2.1 percent, which, using the 2013 Area 2A TAC of 990,000 pounds as the benchmark, would equate to a harvest target of 8,900-13,300 pounds. This target reflects the SOHPC's recommendation that the Council reduce recreational catch in California by 40 to 60 percent of the average harvest over the past five years (22,223 pounds).

In the 2013 CSP, Subdivision (f)(vi) provides that the South of Humbug Mountain subarea is allocated 3.0 percent of the Oregon/California Sport subquota, or 0.951 percent of the non-

Indian allocation. California proposes this 0.951 percent be rounded up to 1 percent and reassigned to the new California sport allocation, i.e., contributing 1 percent to the proposed California sport allocation that would be established from within a range of 1.4 to 2.1 percent. This reassignment would result in a proposed Oregon sport allocation of (31.7- 1) 30.7 percent.

(c) SUBQUOTAS

(d) TREATY INDIAN FISHERIES

(e) NON-INDIAN COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

(f) SPORT
FISHERIES

The non-Indian sport fisheries are allocated 68.3 percent of the non-Indian share, which is approximately 44.4 percent of the Area 2A TAC. The allocation is further divided as subquotas among six geographic subareas.

- (1) Subarea management. The sport fishery is divided into six sport fishery subareas, each having separate allocations and management measures as follows.

(iv) Columbia River subarea.

This sport fishery subarea is allocated 2.0 percent of the first 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 4.0 percent of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) and 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) (except as provided in section (e)(3) of this Plan). This subarea is also allocated an amount equal to the contribution from the Washington sport allocation from the Oregon/~~California~~ sport allocation

(v) Oregon central coast subarea.

This subarea extends from Cape Falcon (45°46.00' N. lat.) to Humbug Mountain, Oregon (42°40.50' N. lat.) and is allocated 92.0 percent of the Oregon/~~California~~ sport allocation minus any amount of pounds needed to contribute to the Oregon portion of the Columbia River subarea quota.

(vi) California subarea.

This sport fishery subarea is allocated [1.4 – 2.1] percent of the non-Indian subquota, which is approximately [TBD] percent of the Area 2A TAC. This area is defined as the area south of the California/Oregon border (42° N. lat.), and includes all California waters. The structuring objective for this subarea is to provide anglers the opportunity to fish in a, fixed season that is open from May 1 through [July 15 or July 31] and [September 1 through] October 31. [Additionally, the retention of salmon on a trip where Pacific halibut are retained is prohibited.] OR [Additionally, the days of the week open to fishing during the open season are (Tuesday), Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.] The daily bag limit is one halibut per person, with no size limit. Due to inability to monitor the catch in this area inseason, a fixed season will be established preseason by NMFS based on projected 2014 seasonal catch. No inseason adjustments will be made, and estimates of actual catch will be made post season.

CDFW Comments: The range of alternatives for California subarea management measures proposed above corresponds to restricted season date Alternatives 3A and 3B from the SOH Workgroup Report (Agenda Item D.2.b), and Alternatives 1b and 2. Applied individually, Alternative 3A is projected to result in estimated catch of 13,607 pounds for the subarea, while Alternative 3B is projected to result in estimated catch of 11,018 pounds. Alternative 3A and 3B would be used singly or in combination with Alternative 1B or Alternative 2, as shown above. Alternative 1B, preventing mixed trips for halibut and salmon, is projected by the Workgroup to result in 18 percent catch savings for California. Alternative 2, closing days of the week including one weekend day, would generate additional savings, and CDFW proposes consideration of an alternative which would close fishing on Sunday, Monday (and Tuesday) during the open season (i.e., reduce the number of open days to four or five days per week). California also expects projected catches, generated from an average of catches during 2008-2012, will be further reduced by approximately 2.98 percent, in response to the implementation of new Marine protected areas along California's north coast late in 2012 (described in Alternative 4 of the SOH Workgroup Report). CDFW proposes consideration of Alternative 3A or 3B individually; 3A plus 1B or 2, or 3B plus 1B or 2; all of which fall within the SOHPC-recommended catch reduction of 40 to 60 percent off California in 2014.

PFMC
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