

ENFORCEMENT CONSULTANTS REPORT ON
2014 PACIFIC HALIBUT REGULATIONS

The Enforcement Consultants (EC) has reviewed Agenda Item D.2.b and provides comment on proposals submitted in both the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) reports.

ODFW Report: The Central Coast Subarea “Depth Restriction” Alternative 2 proposes moving the nearshore recreational halibut fishery restriction to the 30 fathom line from the current 40 fathom line. Part of the rationale for this change is to extend the length of the nearshore season. Under current regulations that are in effect during a halibut nearshore fishery, groundfish retention is also allowed, but only inside of 30 fathoms. Normally, the EC would support the condensing of multiple fathom line restrictions; however, in this case the EC is making a status quo recommendation. The heaviest angling pressure for halibut in the Central Coast Subarea occurs out of Newport, Oregon. Much of the halibut effort out of Newport occurs beyond 30 fathoms; however few anglers approach the 40 fathom limit. We believe that a 30 fathom restriction will result in anglers pushing beyond the deadline (30 fathom line) and, ultimately, increased calls for service and enforcement actions.

WDFW Report: Proposal two for the Columbia River Subarea, which extends from Leadbetter, Washington to Cape Falcon, Oregon, recommends the creation of a nearshore fishery shoreward of 30 fathoms. The nearshore fishery for the area south of Cape Falcon currently has a 40 fathom restriction while the nearshore fishery north of Leadbetter, Washington has a 30 fathom restriction. To maintain consistency with each states current regulations, the EC proposes that if a nearshore fishery is adopted in the Columbia Subarea that the fathom restriction be 30 fathoms from Leadbetter, Washington to the Oregon/Washington state line and 40 fathoms from the state line south to Cape Falcon. This will likely reduce confusion for anglers that are used to fishing Oregon or Washington waters and ease the increased workload burden placed upon enforcement.

PFMC
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