PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES FOR INCIDENTAL CATCH RETENTION OF PACIFIC HALIBUT IN THE LIMITED ENTRY AND OPEN ACCESS FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

At its September 2010 meeting, the Council passed a motion to initiate consideration to allow retention of incidentally caught Pacific halibut in the limited entry directed, limited entry daily-trip-limit, and open access sectors of the fixed gear sablefish fisheries south of Point Chehalis. ODFW was given responsibility for developing a preliminary analysis of the biological, socioeconomic, and fishery management implications, based on the assumption that any allocation of halibut for incidental retention in fixed gear sablefish fisheries would come from the Area 2A non-Tribal commercial directed halibut fishery allocation (Agenda Item F.3.b, ODFW Report).

If the Council decides to advance this issue the decisions at this stage include approving a purpose and need statement and a set of alternatives to be fully analyzed; discussion of NEPA compliance and any other features of a decision document are also appropriate. The task at the second Council meeting, tentatively scheduled for September 2011, would be to consider additional analysis of alternatives and identify a preliminary preferred alternative for public review prior to final Council action.

**Council Action:**

1. Determine if the halibut bycatch retention should be advanced.
2. Provide guidance on the purpose and need statement for considering Pacific Halibut bycatch retention alternatives for fixed gear groundfish fisheries.
3. Provide guidance on alternatives for halibut bycatch retention.
4. Provide guidance on the form and content of a NEPA compliant decision document.
5. Provide guidance on schedule and process expectations.

**Reference Materials:**


**Agenda Order:**

a. Agenda Item Overview
b. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Proposal
c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
d. Public Comment
e. **Council Action:** Review and Guide Any Further Development of Alternatives for Analysis

PFMC
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