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INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED BY A CONVENTION BETWEEN CANADA
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DIRECTOR
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Council Staff Note: This letter was also sent to the
Oregon and Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife

October 27, 2014

RECEIVED

Mr. Phil Anderson, Director
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way N.
Olympia, WA 98501

OCT 29 2014

Dear Mr. Anderson:

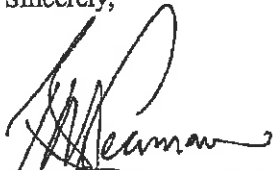
PFMC

Since 2012, the Commission or domestic parties have adopted management measures that involve size restrictions on some or all recreational catches in different areas. The Commission's consideration of the initial size restrictive regulations highlighted the issue of the mortality of fish which must be discarded by regulation, or which are discarded because the angler wishes to continue fishing in search of a larger-sized fish for retention. The latter is a common occurrence during recreational fishing for halibut. The former is similar to the effect of regulations in the commercial halibut fishery, wherein there is a minimum legal size limit for retention.

For the fish discarded in the commercial fishery, the IPHC has a process to estimate and account for the resulting mortality. Similarly, the IPHC staff will begin to estimate the mortalities in the recreational fisheries and will start using these estimates in this year's stock assessment.

In 2012, we requested that all agencies develop data collection plans which would permit the estimation of discard mortality in their recreational fisheries for Pacific halibut. We are following up on this request to inquire if the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has collected data on quantities and sizes of halibut discarded in the sport fisheries or has estimated the mortality from discards in these fisheries. If so, Steve Kaimmer (SteveK@iphc.int) is the IPHC staff person to receive these data. The information is needed by early November to incorporate into this year's stock assessment. In lieu of receiving these estimates from agencies, we will base our estimate on a percentage mortality applied to the sport catch in each region.

Sincerely,



Bruce M. Leaman, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Cc: IPHC Commissioners
Ms. Michelle Culver (WDFW)
Ms. Heather Reed (WDFW)
Dr. Don McIsaac (PFMC)