

From: Tom Peters [mailto:tpete@reninet.com]
Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2013 11:22 AM
To: '[pfmc.comments.@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)'
Cc: 'hasa6191@gmail.com'
Subject: California Pacific halibut management

First let me say that setting any restrictive season BEFORE the halibut survey data have been released appears to have more to do with politics than sound fishery management. Hopefully the survey will show that sports fishing pressure in the California zone is miniscule when compared to even bycatch rates from the groundfish fishery in earlier years.

If forced to choose between the options offered (again, with NO supporting data), I would choose the least restrictive (May 1 – July 31 and September 1 through October 31)).

Weather on the California coast offers very limited opportunity for small sport boats to go far enough offshore to catch halibut. While every year is different, maximizing POTENTIAL days on the water is most important to me. Limiting the fishery to certain days of the week suggests that weather can be predicted with uncommon accuracy and that the good days won't all fall during the closures. My experience with other weekday closures is that is exactly what happens (Murphy's Law!)

The sport fleet out of Eureka consist of boats under 26' long. Many are in the 15-20' range. We fish salmon mainly in nearshore waters. Only on those days that are calm enough (and there's few enough of those!) can we venture the several additional miles westward To fish halibut. Given the vagaries of weather, we need the most possible open days in order to find and fish those few days when conditions allow.

In previous years there was a very significant bycatch of halibut by the trawl fishery, far in excess of what the sport catch is today, even on our best year. Now the trawl fleet has been severely reduced, eliminating most of this bycatch. This makes me confident that no damage whatever will occur to the halibut population in this area, regardless of season and sport catch.

That is why I am favoring the LEAST restrictive option for 2014. When the numbers are in from the survey, I firmly believe a more liberal quota and longer season will be justified. If that is the case, I hope you will support both of these measures.

I sincerely hope that in the future our season might be set based on data and science, not on whim.

Tom Peters
221 Dollison St.
Eureka, CA 95501
tpete@reninet.com
[707-445-1666](tel:707-445-1666)

From: **Peter Nelson** <pnelson@cfr-west.org>
Date: Thu, Oct 3, 2013 at 9:22 AM
Subject: 2014 Pacific Halibut Recreational Fishery Management Options
To: pfmtc.comments@noaa.gov

The subarea management line addition and the California recreational allocation make sense, as does the fixed season. However, I suggest that the 'days of the week' option NOT be exercised: weather and at-sea conditions in this area are so changeable and challenging that the latter option may represent greater limitations on fishing pressure than are actually intended. Furthermore, I expect that limiting days of the week would impose difficulties for fishermen and charter boats that would foster resentment with vanishing returns on management objectives. In short, establish the subarea and the fixed season and examine the effects on catch rates before further restrictions.

Sincerely,

Peter A. Nelson, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Collaborative Fisheries Research West
930 Western Dr
Santa Cruz, California 95060

www.cfr-west.org

p (831) 440-8690
c (707) 267-5896

From: Tim
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2013 4:26 PM
To: pfmtc.comments@noaa.gov
Cc: Jimmy Y
Subject: Pacific Halibut options for California Recreational Fishing

My name is Tim Klassen. I am a Charter boat operator in Eureka California. After reviewing the options for the 2014 California Pacific Halibut Regulations I would favor the August closure while maintaining a May 1 to July 31 and September 1 to October 31 open season. I do not want to see a "days of the week" type of season since it is confusing to people, may encourage people to go out during unsafe weather and we would lose days in May, September and October that would not help in catch reduction much but would reduce "days on the water". I could also support "no retention" of Halibut with Salmon if the August closure is not enough. I would not support a "no retention" of Halibut with Rockfish since the 20 Fathom depth restriction keeps Halibut bycatch low and if an angler were to catch a Halibut while Rockfishing there may be temptation by some to release dead Rockfish in order to keep a trophy Halibut. Pacific Halibut fishing is an extremely important part of the economic success of the Northern California Charter fleet. Tim Klassen Reel Steel Sportfishing [707-499-4925](tel:707-499-4925)

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From: **Mark Cedergreen** <mvcedergreen@gmail.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 9, 2013 at 9:44 AM

Subject: Halibut agenda G.1.c

To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Cc: Culver Michele <Michele.Culver@dfw.wa.gov>, Reed Heather
<Heather.Reed@dfw.wa.gov>

October 9, 2013

Ms. Dorothy Lowman, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Way , STE 101
Portland, OR 97220

Re: Halibut, Agenda Item G.1.c

Dear Ms. Lowman,

The Westport Charterboat Association is strongly opposed to the Washington proposal to reduce the days per week in the North Coast subarea from 2 to 1 after the first week of the season. Our understanding of the intent of some of the North Coast participants is that they would like to discourage the effort that accompanies a 2 day week. They have assumed that by doing so many participants would simply stay home rather than go to the coast for only 1 day of fishing. We contend that they would simply go to other areas that were open for a longer weekly duration.

In 2013 we had a 5-day season in the South Coast; the North coast had a 4-day season. While we are sympathetic with their frustration over the "derby" nature of the fishery, it is a fact that we in the South Coast (with a 2-day week) are experiencing the "derby" phenomena also. If they were to go to 1 day per week much of that effort would shift to the South Coast and exacerbate our situation by shortening our season even further.

We are open to discuss any proposal that might minimize the derby nature of the fishery in both areas. However, encouraging a major shift in effort without a concomitant shift in quota allocation is not the solution.

Respectfully yours,
Mark Cedergreen
Executive Director
Westport Charterboat Association
POB 654
Westport, WA 98595

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From: **Dan Berman** <dberman@humboldtby.org>

Date: Tue, Oct 8, 2013 at 4:59 PM

Subject: Pacific Halibut management and quality of CRFS data

To: Kelly.Ames@noaa.gov

Cc: John Powell <jpowell@humboldtby.org>, Tom Marking <tmmarking@sbcglobal.net>

Hi Kelly,

The attached file showing the CRFS data on pacific halibut is part of the presentation posted on the pfmc halibut website from the meeting this summer.

This graphic shows catch occurring in Humboldt Bay, and also in close to Crescent City.

Those have to be California halibut - the Pacifics are not caught that close in.

It's easy to go from that observation, to broadly questioning whether Pacific and California are all mixed up in the CRFS data. I realize that's a question for CDFW, but wanted to let you know that I'm hearing a lot about it here in Humboldt Bay.

Best,
Dan

Dan Berman
Director of Conservation
Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District
601 Startare Drive, Eureka, CA 95502
Office: [\(707\) 443-0801](tel:7074430801)

CRFS Type 2 & 3 Sample Catch Data for Pacific Halibut from 2004 to 2011

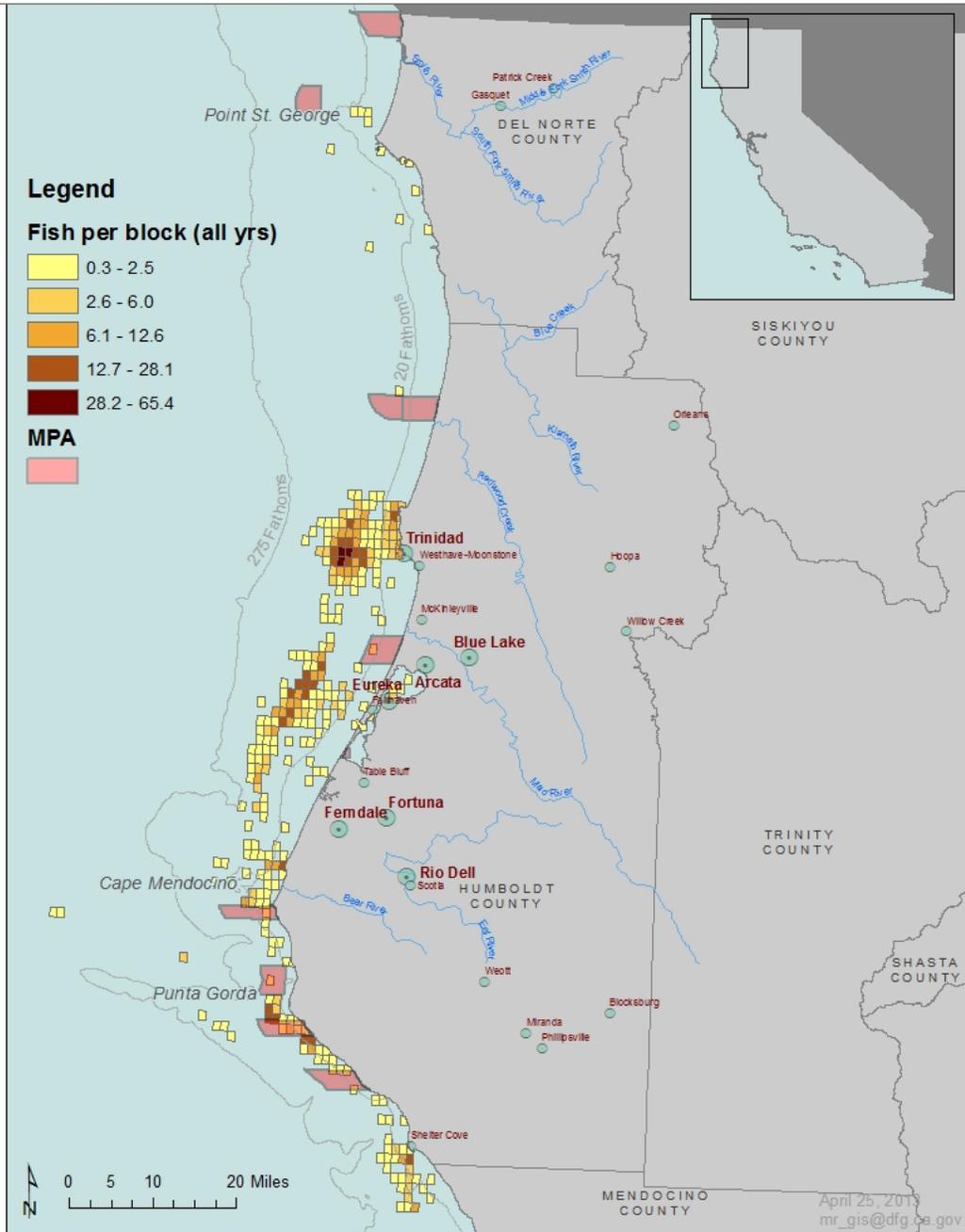


Figure 1. Map of new California north coast MPAs and locations of recreational Pacific halibut catch from 2004-2011. Recreational catch data based on CRFS information from CDFW.

October 9, 2013

Ms. Dorothy Lohman, Chairwoman
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 N.E. Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Re: Agenda Item G.1. Pacific Halibut Management in the South of Humbug Mt. Subzone of 2A

Dear Chairwoman Lohman:

The Council adopted a motion to put two alternatives out for public comment at the September, 2013 meeting. Both of these alternatives had additional measures that could be adopted to augment either of the first two alternatives. While the average angler is somewhat confused with the complexity of this topic, meetings were held in the Eureka area to gather public input to present to you prior to any final action.

Regarding the separation of the southern Oregon area from California there was unanimous agreement by all anglers. Of the two alternatives under consideration for closures: the second option to close the halibut season during the month of August only was the preferred alternative. Any further proposed Council action beyond this one month closure was somewhat contentious and varied. At issue is the impact a block closure will have on those ports that rely heavily on tourism and have launch facilities. There are basically four ports in northern California that will be affected by the council action, Crescent City, Trinidad, Humboldt Bay and Shelter Cove. Fort Bragg has only a very small incidental catch of halibut while fishing for rockfish. Of those four ports mentioned, Shelter Cove and Trinidad are heavily dependent upon tourism for their business plans. An August closure will have very detrimental impacts upon both of these ports, while the ports of Humboldt Bay and Crescent City have ocean access from bays or breakwaters. As such, these two ports can much more easily shift their fishing effort to months earlier or later than the closures proposed. Trinidad, who has just committed large financial capital improvements to their pier and have committed the bulk of their cash reserves to this effort, are very concerned about the Council Action. While a one month closure may be the preferred position by the CDFW and the Council, this option will be devastating to this small port. Trinidad has the only access to rockfishing for the Eureka/Trinidad region for the small boat owner. Loss of this launch facility will cause substantial economic harm to the region and loss of opportunity for hundreds of small boat owners.

There is really no conservation issue at stake, rather it is a politically required decision based upon allocation issues. That is not to detract from the seriousness of this Councils deliberative process, but one of clarification. The Council feels compelled to take a stepwise process to reduce harvest in the California Area through management measures over the next few years.

There is a divergence of opinion among anglers past the proposed August closure alternative. Any further action beyond this has dramatically different impacts on these ports. Those two with tourism/launch facility based businesses will suffer the heaviest financial impact. At some point in this discussion, NS 4 should come to the forefront so that one area, port or group of fisherman

don't have an unfair advantage over other areas. NS 4 implies that control measures should be fair and equitable across all groups, whenever possible. While it may seem logical to start with block closures in August, the highest harvest period, it also has the most serious financial impacts.

Hopefully, the Council will take this into consideration prior to taking any proposed action. While we acknowledge the Council's commitment to implement management measures to reduce halibut harvest, we sincerely hope that the Council will act cautiously and judiciously and long term approach. Decisions made at this meeting could have long lasting impacts on our region, particularly for the Trinidad and Shelter Cove ports.

Respectfully,

Tom Marking, GAP Representative
1456 Whitmire Avenue,
McKinleyville, CA 95519



Coastside Fishing Club
P.O. Box 5928, Napa, CA 94581

7 October, 2013

Re Agenda Item G1: Comments on Halibut CSP and 2014 Management Measures

The Coastside Fishing Club is an all-volunteer California non-profit organization of 13,000 recreational fishermen dedicated to enhancing the recreational fishing experience for all Californians. Our members are keenly interested in the opportunity to fish for Pacific Halibut off our northern coast. This is a fishery that has (re)emerged over the past decade as a focused activity for many of us. That the fishery occurs largely off of Eureka, requires many of us travel to the area where we provide significant contributions to the local economy in the way of hotels, food, and gas, in addition to our direct fishing related expenses.

In 2014 we look forward to a season that will provide for reasonable opportunities for California fishermen. We understand the intent is to manage the 2014 California fishery with an objective of staying within a take of 13,000 lbs. This represents nearly a 50% reduction in the fishery from our recent 5 year average, but we understand the obligation to sustainably manage the Pacific Halibut fishery as a responsible party to the Catch Sharing Plan.

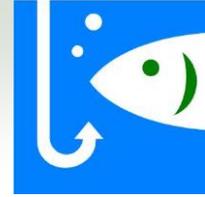
We also support the temporary 2014 adjustments to the CSP, but we look forward to the three Pacific states getting together to make further adjustments to the plan to ensure that California is provided a reasonable and responsible increase in *allocation* from prior years. This year, for the first time, the fishery in California is recognized in the CSP as a legitimate fishery, and Oregon has already made good faith overtures to identify how the CSP can be further modified to ensure that the California fishery is properly supported. What is certain, is that compared to the other states, the California fishery is small – finding 10,000 to 20,000 lbs of fish in a fishery that totals almost 1,000,000 lbs in typical years should not be a difficult task.

Thanks

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Ross', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard Ross, President
Coastside Fishing Club

HUMBOLDT AREA SALTWATER ANGLERS INC



Agenda Item G. 1.
Pacific Halibut
November 2013

October 6, 2013

Pacific Fishery Management Council
Dorothy Lowman, Chair
7700NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

RE: 2014 Pacific Halibut Regulations

Dear Chair Lowman and Council Members:

The Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers, Inc. (HASA) has some significant concerns about and interest in the development of the 2014 Pacific Halibut Regulations. Members of the HASA Board of Directors have been actively involved in the process of developing these regulations beginning with a late year 2012 meeting at the PFMC offices in Portland, Oregon and throughout the series of SOH Workgroup, SOH Policy Committee and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) meetings. The HASA Board of Directors has sought the opinions relative to these proposed regulations and season changes from the approximately 200 HASA members as well as other interested fishermen from Crescent City to Fort Bragg, California.

The fishermen involved in HASA's outreach have expressed concern about the lack of current data about the Pacific Halibut stock in the California portion of the SOH Subarea. They are aware that the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) conducted a survey of sites from the California/Oregon border to the area south of Cape Mendocino. Additionally, HASA has contributed a significant amount of funding to a Humboldt State University (HSU) graduate project designed to study the Pacific Halibut stock in the area offshore of Eureka and north to Trinidad. The fishermen know that the IPHC survey has been done and the results are known to the IPHC. The fact that the results will not be available until after the PFMC crafts the 2014 Pacific Halibut seasons and regulations causes the fishermen to question why that current data is not being considered to craft the 2014 Pacific Halibut regulations.

HASA has reached out to the charter boat fleet from Crescent City to Shelter Cove. We received responses from most of the Eureka based charter boat captains, but unfortunately none from either Trinidad or Shelter Cove. The summer months of June, July and August represent the majority of the charter boat fleet's income in any given year. The inability to fully pursue salmon, rock fish and Pacific Halibut during those three months could economically be devastating to the charter fleet.

While Eureka and Crescent City have protected public operated launching facilities, both Trinidad and Shelter Cove launching facilities are privately controlled and both launch directly into the surf by trolley and tractor respectively. The summer months are the heart of their season, as private, for profit, launch operations the two areas do not maintain full operations prior to the opening of salmon season in May and after the Labor Day holiday. The loss of any summer months, particularly July and/or August, may make

the difference between continued launch operations or the loss of those launch operations due to insufficient income. A CDFW slide featured in their September presentation to the Council indicated that these two ports represent 63% of the Pacific Halibut caught in the California portion of the SOH Subarea.

The Trinidad Rancheria purchased the Trinidad Pier and launching facility from a private party in 2003. After that purchase, the Rancheria undertook an 8.5 million project completely replacing the old wooden pier with a new concrete structure to address environmental concerns and to enhance the pier's usability by both sport and commercial fishermen. Over four million dollars of the project's costs were paid from Trinidad Rancheria funds. The pier project was completed in September of 2011. The Rancheria subsidized the operation of the pier for a number of years, prior to and after the reconstruction, from other Trinidad Rancheria business interests funds and only realized a positive cash flow from the pier, launching facility and associated fishing related operations in the summer of 2013. Their representative at a September 24, 2013 informational meeting on Pacific Halibut indicated that the loss of Pacific Halibut fishing opportunity in the mid-summer months may limit their ability to continue to fund and operate the launch and pier facilities.

HASA supports separating the SOH Subarea at the California/Oregon border, creating two areas, one in Oregon and one in California. Given the significant difference in the management and data collection methods of the two states, this action would simplify the enforcement activities of both states as well as allow the fishing public to understand and comply with the seasons and regulations within their own state.

HASA understands the need of the PFMC to respond to the IPHC's request to manage the individual subarea's seasons in a method which adheres to quotas the IPHC establishes for each subarea each year. The problem with achieving this for the 2014 season is that there is insufficient current data available to justify the significant Pacific Halibut seasons reductions represented by the season structure alternatives that were promulgated at the PFMC's September 2013 meeting in Boise, Idaho. The season restrictions proposed, based on dated data, will cause an unnecessary and sudden economic downturn in the area south of the California border for fishermen, charter boat operators, sport fishing support businesses and other businesses that benefit from the influx of sports fishermen into the area each summer.

A representative of the Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers will be in attendance at the Council's November 2013 meeting in Costa Mesa to work with the state, federal and international agencies with the intent of achieving a more reasonable solution for managing Pacific Halibut season south of the California border in 2014.

Sincerely,



Cliff Hart, President
Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers, Inc.



Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria



D.2. Public Comment

October 8, 2013

Ms. Dorothy M. Lowman, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Re: Pacific Halibut Management in the South of Humbug Mt. Subzone of 2A

Dear Ms. Lowman,

Attached you will find a Resolution from the Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria (Trinidad Rancheria) that makes specific requests regarding North Coast California Pacific halibut management in 2014.

The Trinidad Rancheria owns and operates the Trinidad Pier, Trinidad Boat Launch, Seascape Restaurant and associated harbor businesses. Trinidad bay and harbor is the economic epicenter for both tribal and non-tribal personnel in our respective community. Trinidad has historically been a fishing community dating back to the early 1800's and we recognize the immeasurable value of Pacific halibut to our regional economy and quality of life. We are home to hundreds of recreational fishermen, private boaters and charter Fishers that migrate to Trinidad each summer, and support our local community. As stewards of the ocean we are very aware of the importance of not stretching the current halibut fisheries; however as stewards to the economic lifeblood of the community of Trinidad we are very concerned of the impact the current alternatives set before you will deliver.

After careful review of the draft workgroup documents and alternative management measures currently being detailed we would like to submit to you the following:

- Halibut is an economically valuable fishery for our area, according to recent numbers 27% of the Halibut Harvest has occurred in Trinidad
- The blocking out of summer months, whether it be either alternative, May 1 through July 15 and September 1 through October 31 or May 1 through July 31 and September 1 through October 31 will effectively eliminate out-of-area fishing enthusiasts which will harm the entire community of Trinidad.
- Loss of the July and August months for halibut would be a severe revenue loss to the entire community. The loss of revenue will effectively eliminate the launch facilities.
- Aggregate revenue streams from the Launch and Charters of fishing enthusiast's drops from an average of \$23,000.00 per month for June, July and August to \$4,500.00 in September. The last two weeks of July and the month of August currently show the highest volume of launch services and aggregate revenue associated to fishing enthusiasts.
- Trinidad Harbor begins removal of the moorings soon after Salmon Season, usually the second week in September, and launch operations become dangerous and risky due to south winds.



- Since 2008 the Trinidad Rancheria has slowly emerged from subsidizing the harbor businesses with 2013 being the first year that they have been able to stand alone. The loss of the aggregate revenue streams from fishing enthusiasts will have severe consequences to the Rancheria, one of the largest employers in Trinidad.

The Trinidad Rancheria would request that the council does not rush into the implementation of such harsh management measures to reduce harvest in the South of Humbug Area (SOH) when the data necessary to assist in this decision will not be released until after the Council has acted; and

- that National Standard 2 which states, **“that conservation and management measures shall be based on the best scientific information available”** be adhered to; and
- that National Standard 4 which states, **“that conservation and management measures shall not discriminate between residents of different states. If it becomes necessary to allocate or assign fishing privileges among various United States fishers, such allocation shall be (A) fair and equitable to all such fishers; (B) reasonably calculated to promote conservation; and (c) carried out in such manner that no particular individual, corporation, or other entity acquires an excessive share of such privileges’ ”** be adhered to.

However, if the Council is determined to move forward on the Alternatives as presented by the Committee, we would request the Council accept the following options in this order of importance:

1. That Alternative 6 to move the management line to the CA/Ore border is implemented.
2. That Alternative 2 (restrict days of the week) remain in consideration.

Additionally, we believe the current allocation is unfair, lacks parity and the Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) is based on outdated population estimates. Our area has historically had a long history of halibut landing and is being only allocated 0.62%. Perhaps that formula was deemed appropriate in 1988 when these allocations were first instituted, but conditions have changed and the CSP should be re-examined in the near future. Halibut is an economically valuable fishery for our community and should be addressed as such. We respectfully request the Council address this concern in the coming year to correct this inequity. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Garth Sundberg, Tribal Chairman
Trinidad Rancheria



Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria



CHER-AE HEIGHTS INDIAN COMMUNITY OF THE TRINIDAD RANCHERIA RESOLUTION OF THE TRIBAL COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO: TC-13-13

**SUBJECT: NORTH COAST CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT PACIFIC HALIBUT
MANAGEMENT**

WHEREAS: The Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria (Trinidad Rancheria) is a federally recognized Indian Tribe located in California and has a government-to-government relationship with the United States of America; and

WHEREAS: The Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria Tribal Council (hereinafter "Tribal Council") is the governing body of the Trinidad Rancheria under the authority of the Tribe's Constitution; and

WHEREAS: The Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria (Trinidad Rancheria) owns and operates the Seascape Harbor Properties, including the Trinidad Pier, Launch, Seascape Restaurant and Tackle Shop which promotes domestic commercial and recreational fishing under sound conservation and management principles; and

WHEREAS: The governments of coastal cities, counties, harbor districts and community services districts of Northwestern California have come together as the North Coast Local Agency Coordinating Committee, which is organized by the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District; and

WHEREAS: The group works together to protect fisheries resources, but also to maintain fishing access to healthy stock of marine fish species, including Pacific halibut; and



- WHEREAS:** The commercial trawl fleet once harvest tens of millions of pounds annually of species, such as Petrale, Dover and English Sole, but these fisheries have been greatly reduced. This trawl fishery reduction has caused a huge decrease in catch and landings in all North Coast ports and a sharp decline in this sector of our economy. The reduction in fishing effort has greatly reduced the by-catch of Pacific halibut, and there is minimal directed commercial fishing effort on the species in the waters of California and the North Coast; and
- WHEREAS:** The historic Pacific halibut landings on the North Coast averaged 400,000 pounds and reached levels as high as 1 million pounds historically. The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) and Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) have created a South of Humbug Mountain Management Zone within Zone 2A that extends from southern Oregon to the Mexican border and includes the entire coast of California, and this management zone spans two states with different management methods and is cumbersome and impractical; and
- WHEREAS:** A catch-shared of 0.62% was allocated to management area South of Humbug Mountain, as a target based on old data that has now changed into a not-to-exceed quota; and
- WHEREAS:** South of Humbug Mountain fishermen began to exceed this quota in years since 2008 and fishing restriction in 2014 are being considered based on exceeding a non-scientific quota; and
- WHEREAS:** The Humboldt Area Salt Water Anglers, the UC Cooperative Extension and Humboldt State University are working cooperatively to collect size and age data on Pacific halibut in northern California and providing it to the IPHC in 2013; and
- WHEREAS:** The IPHC collected data on the North Coast in 2013 using standard long line methods used throughout the Pacific Northwest to gauge the health and abundance of Pacific halibut stocks, but decisions made regarding the 2014 season for South of Humbug Mountain will be set before IPHC North Coast data are available for use; and
- WHEREAS:** North Coast governments strongly favor conserving and protecting marine fisheries resources, which allows continued access for sport fishers and charter boat enterprises that constitute important contributions to the North Coast economy and quality of life.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

The Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria Tribal Council hereby request that the IPHC and PFMC 1) give California an exclusive management zone that does not include parts of southern Oregon, 2) that any 2014 restrictions on access to North Coast Pacific halibut stocks be deferred until newly collected data are available, and 3) the IPHC expeditiously calculate and implement a science-based Pacific halibut quota.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that **Resolution TC-13-13** was approved through the standard Trinidad Rancheria Tribal Council Polling Procedure, through which a quorum was established, and that this Resolution was adopted by a vote of 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 and abstaining.

Dated this 8th day of October, 2013:


Garth Sundberg, Chairperson

ATTEST:


Amy Atkins, Recording Secretary