

2015 PACIFIC HALIBUT REGULATIONS

Each September meeting, the Council considers proposed changes to the Pacific halibut regulations. The purpose of this consideration is for adjustments in the annual regulations (primarily in the recreational fishery) or the Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for Area 2A (Agenda Item K.1.a, Attachment 1) and can include minor changes in catch allocation among areas or gear groups. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) prepared a report on the progress to date of the 2014 Pacific halibut fisheries in Area 2A (Agenda Item K.1.b, NMFS Report).

Public meetings were held to solicit proposed changes to the CSP and to present agency staff proposals for public comment. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) held a public meeting on August 8 in Montesano. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) held public meetings on August 5 in Brookings, August 6 in North Bend, and August 11 in Newport. Recommendations resulting from the meetings are included in the reference materials (Agenda Items K.1.b, WDFW Report and K.1.b, ODFW Report).

Starting in 2014, in response to recent high harvests of Pacific halibut off Southern Oregon and Northern California, the Council established a new management line at the Oregon/California border. The new management line resulted in separate Oregon and California subareas with area-specific CSP allocations and management measures (Agenda Item K.1.a, Attachment 1). Under Agenda Item K.1, the Council should consider whether additional changes to the 2A CSP allocations are necessary and whether adjustments to management measures are necessary to comply with allocation provisions of the CSP. A tri-state report was submitted that provides a range of alternatives for increasing the California sport allocation while reducing the commercial fishery allocation (Agenda Item K.1.b, Tri-State Report).

The Council is scheduled to take final action on proposed changes for the 2015 Area 2A halibut fisheries at the November 2014 Council meeting.

Council Action:

1. Adopt for public review proposed changes for the 2015 Pacific halibut CSP, as necessary.
2. Adopt for public review proposed changes for the 2015 annual fishery regulations, as necessary.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item K.1.a, Attachment 1: 2014 Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan for Area 2A.
2. Agenda Item K.1.b, NMFS Report: Report on the 2014 Pacific Halibut Fisheries in Area 2A.
3. Agenda Item K.1.b, NMFS Report 2: NMFS Proposed Changes to Federal Regulations and 2015 Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan for Area 2A.
4. Agenda Item K.1.b, WDFW Report: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Report on Proposed Changes to the Catch Sharing Plan and 2015 Annual Regulations.
5. Agenda Item K.1.b, ODFW Report: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Report on Proposed Changes to the Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan for the 2015 Fishery.

6. Agenda Item K.1.b, Tri-State Report: California, Oregon, and Washington Report on Changes to the Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan for 2015.
7. Agenda Item K.1.c, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview Kelly Ames
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Adopt for Public Review Proposed Changes for the 2015 Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Fishing Regulations

PFMC
08/18/14