

THE ENFORCEMENT CONSULTANTS REPORT ON
THE 2015 PACIFIC HALIBUT CATCH SHARING PLAN AND REGULATIONS

The Enforcement Consultants (EC) has reviewed the documents associated with Agenda Item K.1.b, Pacific Halibut Regulations and have the following comments.

Washington and Oregon share the Columbia River Subarea with recreational anglers fishing both sides of the state line and landing at ports in both states. Many of the regulations are aligned between states allowing for consistent enforcement.

Currently, Oregon and Washington allow retention of Pacific halibut during recreational nearshore bottomfish fisheries during days open to the nearshore fishery. Both states also have all depth-directed Pacific halibut fisheries four days a week, during which only sablefish, Pacific cod, and most other offshore pelagic species are allowed to be retained while Pacific halibut are onboard. This management scheme has been suitable for enforcement of regulations both at sea and dockside.

Presently, nearshore regulations allow for retention of Pacific halibut from Monday through Wednesday. A proposed change in the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife report would expand retention of Pacific halibut during the nearshore fishery to Monday through Friday, creating two days of overlap between nearshore and all depth fisheries.

Recommendation:

It is the opinion of the EC that overlapping days adds complexity to the regulations, which would cause confusion for some anglers and would be difficult to enforce. The EC recommends maintaining separation of the nearshore and all depth Pacific halibut fisheries.

Regardless, the EC believes Washington and Oregon regulations, specific to the Columbia River Subarea, should remain consistent.

PFMC
09/16/14