

September 19, 2000

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Pacific Fishery Management Council
2130 SW 5th Avenue Suite 224
Portland, OR 97201

SEP 22 2000

PFMC

RE: SPORT HALIBUT CATCH ALLOCATION

My wife and I attended a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Halibut Advisory meeting on September 8 in Olympia. We went there in support of a proposition to allocate half the sport halibut quota for Area 4 on May 1, the other half on July 1. This year the May 1 quota went to June 16 and the July opener lasted 2 days. For the following reasons we feel a 50-50 split would be more fair.

Small boaters could fish the more dependable weather in July.

Family groups could more easily fish for halibut. As it is now almost all of the season is closed before the kids are out of school.

It would be better for the state because people are fishing Canada or buying Canadian licenses if they want to fish in July or August.

Area 4 is no longer divided into A and B so you can't fish the inside after the outside closes as has been done in the past.

With just a few days to fish in July people are more tempted to go out to Swiftsure Bank in marginal weather.

Small boat fishers are solidly behind this proposal. Many petitions of 21 signers each have been gathered at Snow Creek Resort near Neah Bay, and sport shops in western Washington. Many more will be coming. They were sent to Phil Anderson with Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

At that September meeting our wishes were ignored. The Fish and Wildlife people present said they will recommend a similar division for 2001. They give a few Neah Bay charter boat and resort operators what they want instead of dividing it fairly with small boaters. We feel that they have had their own way long enough. We think it is time that small boaters and family groups have equal opportunity. We hope the Council will make this change for 2001

Sincerely,



Ken Crane
5405 160th St. SW
Edmonds, WA 98026
(425) 743-6787