

PROPOSED 2001 INCIDENTAL CATCH REGULATIONS FOR THE TROLL SALMON FISHERY
 AND SABLEFISH LONGLINE FISHERY NORTH OF POINT CHEHALIS

Situation: Regulations governing the incidental harvest of halibut in the salmon troll fishery and the commercial sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis require the Council to adopt recommended halibut landing restrictions to allow incidental harvest while assuring the quotas are not exceeded.

Salmon Troll Fishery

The halibut regulations allocate 15% of the non-Indian commercial halibut allocation in Area 2A to the salmon troll fishery as an incidental catch during May and June (with provision for additional harvest from July through September if sufficient quota remains). A change in the regulations this year directs that the primary management objective is to harvest the incidental quota in the May/June salmon troll fishery and a secondary objective is to harvest any remaining quota during July through September.

The table below provides the number of licenses, allocation, harvest, and landing restrictions for the incidental halibut fishery since the initial season in 1995. The Council has successfully used landing ratios and a total trip limit to assure a manageable progression of the fishery in past years.

Year	Licenses Issued ^{a/}					Pounds of Halibut			Restriction	
	WA	OR	CA	AK-2A	Total	Allocation	May-June Harvest	Total Harvest	Halibut per Chinook	Trip Limit
1995	-	-	-	-	124	16,068	2,125	2,125	1 per each 20	none
1996	22	74	4	14	114	16,068	9,521	9,521	1 + 1 per each 15	20
1997	57	184	10	20	271	21,635	17,570	17,570	1 + 1 per each 10	20
1998	42	188	15	18	263	25,344	9,123	13,124	1 + 1 per each 8	25
1999	54	197	12	25	288	23,490	9,955	9,955	1 + 1 per each 5	35
2000	49	154	8	24	235	24,464	20,925	22,350	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2001	-	-	-	-	-	34,046	-	-	-	-

a/ Licenses are issued by vessel number in the following order: AK, WA, OR, CA (i.e., if a vessel has both Alaska and Washington vessel numbers, the licensed would be issued to the Alaska vessel number.

Commercial Sablefish Fishery North of Point Chehalis

For the first time, the total Area 2A halibut quota is large enough this year (over 900,000 pounds) to provide for an incidental halibut harvest in the commercial sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis. This incidental fishery is allocated that portion of the Washington sport allocation in excess of 214,110 pounds, provided a minimum of 10,000 pounds is available. For 2001, the available incidental harvest amounts to 47,946 pounds. The Council will need to begin consideration of landing or other restrictions necessary to manage this fishery within its quota. The restrictions could take several forms, including 1) equal incidental poundage of halibut distributed among all the vessels with appropriate licenses operating north of Point Chehalis, 2) equal incidental poundage of halibut distributed among all the permits attached to vessels with appropriate licenses operating north of Point Chehalis (there could be more than one permit per vessel under permit stacking, or 3) incidental halibut poundage distributed on the basis of vessel length as in the directed halibut fishery.

Council Action:

1. Adopt a range of landing restrictions for halibut caught incidentally in the May/June troll season to match with the troll salmon management options and assure a reasonable utilization of the incidental catch while not exceeding the quota.
2. Identify options for landing limits or other restrictions for incidental halibut harvest in the commercial sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis.

Reference Materials: ~~None.~~

Groundfish Fishery Strategic Plan Consistency Analysis

The groundfish strategic plan calls for minimizing discarded bycatch. The sablefish fishery has heretofore discarded halibut, alive or dead, due to low halibut quota levels. Retaining halibut is consistent with minimizing discarded dead halibut bycatch.

PFMC
02/20/01

1. Exhibit F.2, Supplemental ODFW Report.
2. Exhibit F.2, Supplemental Joint Staff Proposal.
3. Exhibit F.2.e, Supplemental SAS Report.