

**Subject: Fwd: Recreational Halibut Season Costs Too Many Angler Lives**

**Date:** Tue, 21 May 2002 18:10:51 -0700

**From:** "PFMC Comments" <pfmc.comments@noaa.gov>

**To:** chuck.tracy@noaa.gov

Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200  
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384  
Phone: 503-820-2280  
Fax: 503-820-2299  
Toll-Free: 1-866-806-7204  
On the web at: <http://www.pcouncil.org>

---

**Subject: Recreational Halibut Season Costs Too Many Angler Lives**

**Date:** Tue, 21 May 2002 17:05:06 EDT

**From:** <MarkFPowers@cs.com>

**To:** pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Gentlemen:

Another halibut season is here, but I have not had time to get my boat out onto the water to enjoy it! We just came home from a month in Scandinavia where we spent more time dining on fish than on fishing! We found some interesting fishing tackle that we want to try out. We just called a friend to give him a gift of some fishing tackle from Finland when we heard the bad news about the halibut fishing disasters off of the Oregon coast.

We never seem to be available when your halibut meetings are scheduled, but I have tried to give some input by e-mail. I have always been opposed to having the start of halibut season so early in the spring. My reason has always been that the ocean is generally too rough for recreational boats before June. This year, the well-known guide, "Tuna Ted," was involved in an accident at the entrance to Tillamook bay on the way back from a halibut trip. Two of his customers died in the mishap. I have already heard that 4 boats have been lost while halibut fishing this year, and I have only been back from Scandinavia for a few days.

May 1 is just too early for halibut season to open. June 1 is a much more reasonable date, since the water is generally calmer. Perhaps there even need to be some rules limiting the fishery to boats over 25' in length to reduce the chance of boating mishaps. The active fishing season has been pushed to earlier and earlier dates by the charter interests as to not interfere with their own ocean salmon fishing. I really think that more consideration has to be given to the safety of the charter customers and of the private participants in the recreational halibut fishery. With the relatively small number of vessels that are involved in the halibut fishery, the loss of life and property this year was just unacceptable. The accident rate this year was so high that you almost wonder if there should be a fishery at all! The odds were not good for halibut fishermen at all this year. I think that the most reasonable thing to do is to start next year's seasons on June 1. You won't find me going out for halibut under the rough conditions that people have been fishing under at times this month. Charter and guide customers should also feel that they are safe when going fishing. The emphasis has shifted too far in the interest of the profitability of the charter operators. This is supposed to be the public's fishery -- not the private fishery of the charter operators.

Sincerely,  
Mark F. Powers  
Portland, Oregon

---

PFMC Comments <[pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov)>