

PUBLIC REVIEW OPTIONS FOR THE 2003 INCIDENTAL CATCH REGULATIONS
 IN THE SALMON TROLL AND FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

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 in 2001 directs 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.

Incidental Halibut Management in Area 2A Salmon Troll Fishery

Year	Licenses Issued ^{1/}				Total	Pounds of Halibut			Restriction	
	WA	OR	CA	AK-2A		Allocation	May-June Harvest	Total Harvest	Halibut per Chinook	Trip Limit
1995	14	104	2	5	125	16,068	2,125	2,125	1 per each 20	none
1996	22	82	5	14	123	16,068	9,521	9,521	1 + 1 per each 15	20
1997	59	187	10	19	275	21,635	17,570	17,570	1 + 1 per each 10	20
1998	44	188	15	18	265	25,344	9,123	13,124	1 + 1 per each 8	25
1999	54	193	12	25	284	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	63	232	13	37	347	34,046	-	34,324	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2002	60	223	7	41	331	39,300	-	37,967	1 + 1 per each 3	35
2003	-	-	-	-	-	39,300	-	-	-	-

Commercial Sablefish Fishery North of Point Chehalis

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, up to a maximum of 70,000 pounds. The maximum allocation of 70,000 pounds is a new regulation for 2003. For 2003, the available incidental harvest is the maximum of 70,000 pounds. The Council will need to consider landing or other restrictions necessary to manage this fishery within its quota.

In 2002, the allocation was 88,389 pounds of halibut. The season opened on April 1, but retention of halibut was prohibited until May 1; the season continued through October 31. Regulations restricted incidental halibut landings to 150 pounds (dressed weight) of halibut for every 1,000 pounds (dressed weight) of sablefish landed and up to two additional halibut in excess of the 150 pounds per 1,000 pound ratio per landing. Final landings for this fishery were 66,599 pounds.

Council Action:

Adopt for public review, 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.

Adopt for public review, a range of landing restrictions for incidental halibut harvest in the commercial sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis.

Reference Materials:

1. None.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agendum Overview Chuck Tracy
- b. State Proposals for the Salmon Troll Fishery
- c. State Proposals for the Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery
- d. Tribal Comments Jim Harp
- e. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- f. Public Comment
- g. **Council Action:** Adopt Public Review Options for 2003 Incidental Halibut Catch Regulations

i/ 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 license would be issued to the Alaska vessel number).