

## REPORT ON THE 2004 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES IN AREA 2A

The 2004 Area 2A total allowable catch (TAC) of 1,480,000 lb set by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) was allocated as sub-TACs as follows:

Treaty Indian	543,000 lb (35.0% + 25,000 lb)
Non-Treaty Total	937,000 lb (65.0% - 25,000 lb)
Non-Treaty Commercial	322,475 lb (includes incidental sablefish)
Washington Sport	272,942 lb
Oregon/California Sport	297,029 lb

The structure of each fishery and the resulting harvests are described below.

### **NON-TREATY COMMERCIAL FISHERIES**

A sub-TAC of 297,029 lb (31.7% of the non-treaty share) was allocated to two fishery components: 1) a directed longline fishery targeting on halibut south of Point Chehalis, WA; and 2) an incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fisheries off Washington, Oregon, and California. An additional 70,000 lb was allocated to an incidental catch fishery for limited entry, sablefish-endorsed vessels operating with longline gear north of Pt. Chehalis, WA. This allowance for the tiered sablefish fishery is only available in years when the overall Area 2A TAC exceeds 900,000 lb.

**Incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery** A quota of 44,554 lb (15% of the non-Indian commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as an incidental catch during chinook fisheries. According to the Catch Sharing Plan, the primary management objective for this fishery is to harvest the troll quota as an incidental catch during the May/June salmon troll fishery. If any of the allocation for this fishery remains after June 30, the fishery may continue to retain incidentally caught halibut in the July through September salmon troll fisheries until the quota is taken, or until the overall non-treaty commercial catch limit is taken. The final catch ratio established pre-season by the Council at the April meeting was one halibut (minimum 32") per three chinook landed by a salmon troller, except that one halibut could be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 35 halibut could be landed per trip.

- Halibut retention was permitted in the salmon troll fisheries from May 1 through July 28/29, 2004. Of the halibut taken in the salmon troll fisheries, 18,200 lb were landed in Oregon and 24,598 lb were landed in Washington for a total of 42,798 lb (4% under quota.) Of the halibut taken in the salmon troll fisheries, 14,125 lb were landed in May, 15,049 lb were landed in June, and 13,624 lb were landed in July.

**Directed fishery targeting on halibut** A quota of 252,475 lb (85% of the non-treaty commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the directed longline fishery targeting on halibut in southern Washington, Oregon, and California. The fishery was confined to the area south of Subarea 2A-1 (south of Point Chehalis, WA; 46° 53'18" N. lat.). One-day fishing periods of 10 hours in duration were scheduled by the IPHC for June 23, July 14, July 28, August 11, August 25, September 15, and

September 29. A 32" minimum size limit was in effect for all openings. Vessel landing limits per fishing period based on vessel length were imposed by IPHC during all openings as shown in the following table. Vessels choosing to operate in this fishery could not land halibut in the incidental catch salmon troll fishery, nor operate in the recreational fishery.

**Fishing period limits (dressed weight, head-off in pounds) by vessel size.**

Vessel Class/Size	6/23/04 Opening	7/14/04 Opening	7/28/04 Opening	8/11/04 Opening
A 0 - 25 ft.	590 lb	590 lb	210 lb	200 lb
B 26 - 30 ft.	735 lb	735 lb	265 lb	210 lb
C 31 - 35 ft.	1,175 lb	1,175 lb	420 lb	335 lb
D 36 - 40 ft.	3,240 lb	3,240 lb	1,160 lb	925 lb
E 41 - 45 ft.	3,485 lb	3,485 lb	1,245 lb	995 lb
F 46 - 50 ft.	4,170 lb	4,170 lb	1,490 lb	1,190 lb
G 51 - 55 ft.	4,655 lb	4,655 lb	1,665 lb	1,330 lb
H 56+ ft.	7,000 lb	7,000 lb	2,500 lb	2,000 lb

- The June 23 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 110,000 lb, leaving 142,475 lb for later openings.
- The July 14 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 95,000 lb, leaving 47,475 lb for later openings.
- The July 28 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 27,000 lb, leaving 20,475 lb for later openings.
- The August 11 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 14,000 lb, leaving 6,475 lb in the quota, which was not enough fish for an additional opening.

**Incidental halibut catch in the primary sablefish longline fishery north of Point Chehalis.** A quota of 70,000 lb was allocated to the limited entry primary sablefish fishery in Area 2A as an incidental catch during longline sablefish operations north of Point Chehalis, WA. The primary sablefish season began on April 1, 2004, and closes October 31, 2004, although incidental halibut retention was not available until May 1. Properly licensed vessels could retain up to 100 lb of dressed weight (headed-and gutted) halibut per 1,000 lb of dressed weight sablefish, plus up to two additional

halibut per fishing trip. Each vessel was allowed to retain up to a total cumulative limit of halibut that was based on the amount of primary season sablefish available to that vessel when the vessel applied for a 2004 IPHC license. Incidental halibut landings in the primary sablefish fishery through October 6, 2004 were 58,752 lb.

**SPORT FISHERIES (Non-treaty).**

A sub-TAC of 569,971 lb (68.3% of non-treaty share) was allocated between sport fisheries in the Washington area (48.5%) and Oregon/California (51.5%). The allocations were further subdivided as quotas among seven geographic subareas as described below.

**Washington Inside Waters Subarea** (Puget Sound and Straits of Juan de Fuca). This area was allocated 76,220 lb (27.2% of the Washington sport allocation). Due to inability to monitor the catch in this area inseason, a fixed season was established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achieve the sub-quota. The Eastern Region (East of Low Point) opened on May 6 and continued through July 14, 5 days per week (closed Tuesday and Wednesday). The Western Region opened on May 27 and continued through August 14, 5 days per week. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person. Catch totals from this sub-area are not yet available.

**Northern Washington Coastal Waters Subarea** (landings in Neah Bay and La Push). The coastal area off Cape Flattery to Queets River was allocated 126,857 lb (49.0% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was divided into two seasons with 35,520 lb set aside for the second season. The fishery was to open May 11 and continue 5 days per week (closed Sunday and Monday) until 91,337 lb were estimated to have been taken. The second season was to open on June 15 and continue 5 days per week (closed Sunday and Monday) until the entire quota for this subarea was estimated to be taken. The Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area is located within this subarea, southwest of Cape Flattery, and was closed to halibut fishing. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The fishery opened May 11 and continued 5 days a week, until May 20, when 74,081 lb were estimated to have been taken. The remaining quota for the May season, 17,256 lb, was not enough to continue the 5 day per week fishery, but did allow another opening on Saturday, May 29<sup>th</sup>. The total halibut taken from these openings was 80,567 lb.
- The season re-opened June 15-19, during which 43,662 lb were taken, for a total of 124,229 lb, leaving approximately 2,628 lb in the subarea quota.

**Washington South Coast Subarea** (landings in Westport). The area from the Queets River to Leadbetter Point was allocated 61,565 lb (21% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was to open on May 2 and continue 5 days per week (closed Friday and Saturday) offshore, until the quota was taken. An inshore fishery was also to open May 2 and continue 7 days per week in waters between the Queets River and 47° 00'00" N. lat., and east of 124°40'00" W. long. through the closure of the offshore fishery until either the subarea quota were estimated to have been taken, or until September 30, whichever occurred first. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The 5 day per week offshore fishery and the 7 day per week inshore fishery opened on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and remained open until July 3<sup>rd</sup>. The total catch for this subarea was 62,823 lb, exceeding the quota by 1,258 lb (2% overage.)

**Columbia River Subarea** (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 14,241 lb, consisting of 2.7% of the Washington sport allocation plus 2.0% of the Oregon/California sport allocation. The fishery was to open May 1 and continue 7 days per week until September 30 or until the quota has been taken. The daily bag limit is the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- This 7 day per week fishery began on May 1<sup>st</sup> and closed on July 25<sup>th</sup> with a total catch of 14,761 lb (3.7% over quota).

**Oregon Central Coast Subarea** (Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 282,178 lb (95% of the Oregon/California sport allocation).

Three seasons were set for this subarea: 1) a restricted depth (inside 40 fathoms) fishery to commence on May 1 and continue every day until the nearshore sub-quota of 22,574 lb were estimated to have been taken; 2) a fixed Spring season in all depths that was to open on May 13-15, 20-22, and 27-29, and June 10-12 with a catch allocation of 194,703 lb, and; 3) a Summer season in all depths that began on August 6-7 and which continues every other weekend until the total Spring-Summer quotas of 259,603 lb have been taken or until October 31, whichever is earlier. The daily bag limit was the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- The inside 40-fathom fishery opened on May 1 and is scheduled to close October 31. As of October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2,022 lb of halibut had been taken in the inside 40-fathom fishery.
- The first fixed all-depth season in May-June, held May 13-15, 20-22, and 27-29, and June 10-12, had a total catch of 131,842 lb, which left enough halibut in the quota to allow openings on June 25-26 and July 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. During these four additional all-depth fishery days, an additional 54,367 lb were taken, leaving 8,494 lb in the Spring quota. This remaining poundage was made available to the Summer all-depth fishery .
- The initial Summer all-depth season quota of 64,901 lb was supplemented by the 8,494 lb remaining from the Spring fishery. As a result of this additional poundage, 73,395 lb was available to the Summer all-depth fishery. The Summer all-depth fishery opened on August 6-7 as a two-day (Friday-Saturday) per week fishery with openings on alternate weekends, in accordance with the CSP. NMFS, ODFW, and IPHC conferred inseason and took action to provide more fishing opportunity in this sub-area beginning September 22<sup>nd</sup>, when the fishery became a three-day (Friday-Sunday) per week fishery, open each week, with a two-fish bag limit. Through October 3<sup>rd</sup>, the fishery has taken 37,355 lb.

**South of Humbug Mountain, Oregon and off the California Coast Subarea** This sport fishery was allocated 8,911 lb (3.0% of the Oregon/California quota). This area had a pre-set season of 7 days per week from May 1 to October 31 and a bag limit of the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- This season is scheduled to remain open through October 31. No catch estimates are available for this fishery, but it is very unlikely that this subarea quota will be taken.

**TRIBAL FISHERIES**

A sub-TAC of 543,000 lb (35% + 25,000 lb of the Area 2A TAC) was allocated to Tribal fisheries. The tribes estimated that 19,400 lb would be used for ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) fisheries and the remaining 523,600 lb was allocated to the commercial fishery. The tribes agreed on a new management plan for the 2004 fisheries. The new plan divided the fisheries into “separately managed” fisheries and restricted fisheries.

For the separately managed fisheries, a tribe or group of tribes was allocated a certain percentage of the TAC that could be harvested any time between noon on February 29 and noon on July 30. Collectively, the separately managed fisheries accounted for 75% of the Tribal Commercial TAC. The separately managed fisheries landed 376,421 lbs in 427 landings (out of 392,700 lbs expected).

The remaining 25% of the TAC was open to all parties in the “joint restricted” fishery that was managed to last at least 40 days. The joint restricted fishery opened at noon March 21 with a 500-lb/vessel/day limit. The limit was reduced to 250 lbs/vessel/day from noon on April 9 to 11:59 pm on April 19 when the limit returned to 500 lbs/vessel/day. The joint restricted fishery ended at noon on April 30 with a total catch of 127,304 lbs in 417 landings (out of 130,900 lbs expected).

The remainder of the TAC was targeted in series of short mop-up fisheries with 500-lbs/vessel/day limits. There were four mop-up fisheries in 2004: (1) noon on August 11 – noon on August 12, (2) noon on August 17 – noon on August 20, (3) noon on August 30 – noon on September 1, and (4) noon on September 6 to noon September 8. The total catch for all mop-up fisheries combined was 16,403 lbs in 58 landings. There were 3,473 lbs left in the TAC after the close of the 2004 treaty commercial fishery.

Fishery	Dates Held	Pounds Landed	# of Landings
Separately Managed	February 29 - July 30	376,421 lb	427 landings
Restricted, 250-500 lb/vessel/day	March 21 - April 30	127,304 lb	417 landings
Mop-Up (4 fisheries)	Between August 11 and September 8	16,403	58 landings
Total		520,128 lb	902 landings

The C&S fishery will continue through December 31 and tribal estimates of catch will be reported by the tribes in January 2005.

2004 Area 2A TAC and Catch (in pounds)				
	Quota	Inseason Revised Quota	Catch	Over/Under
TREATY INDIAN	543,000		539,528	-0.6%
Commercial	523,600		520,128	-0.7%
Ceremonial & Subsistence	19,400		19,400 *	
NON-TREATY	937,000		853,880	-8.9%
COMMERCIAL	367,029		347,550	-5.3%
Troll	44,554		42,798	-4.0%
Directed	252,475		246,000	-2.6%
Sablefish Incidental	70,000		58,752 ♦	-16%
SPORT	569,971		506,330	-11.2%
WA Sport	272,942		271,833	-0.4%
OR/CA Sport	297,029		234,497	
WA Inside Waters	76,220		76,220 ♦	
WA North Coast	126,857		124,229	-2.1%
WA South Coast	61,565		62,823	2.0%
Col River Area	14,241		14,761	3.7%
OR Central Coast	282,178		225,586	-20.0%
Inside 40 fathoms	22,574		2,022 ♦	
Spring (May-July)	194,703		186,209	-4.4%
Summer (August-October)	64,901	73,395 ★	37,355 ♦	
OR S. of Humbug/CA	8,911		8,911	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,480,000</b>		<b>1,393,408</b>	<b>-5.9%</b>

- \* Assumed. Estimate of amount of halibut taken in ceremonial and subsistence fisheries is not available until after December 31.
- ★ Although the initial allocation to the August all-depth fisheries was 64,901, the quota was augmented by the underage from the May all-depth fisheries, resulting in 8,494 lb being added to the August all-depth.
- ♦ Data from these fisheries not complete at the time of the briefing book deadline. Updates will be provided at the Council meeting, if available.