

REPORT ON THE 2007 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES IN AREA 2A

(10/17/07)

The 2007 Area 2A total allowable catch (TAC) of 1,340,000 lb set by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) was allocated as sub-TACs as follows:

Treaty Tribes	494,000 lb (35% + 25,000 lb)
Non-Tribal Total	846,000 lb (65% - 25,000 lb)
Non-Tribal Commercial	338,182 lb (includes incidental sablefish)
Washington Sport	239,636 lb
Oregon/California Sport	268,182 lb

All weights in this report are net weight (gutted, head-off, and without ice and slime.) The structure of each fishery and the resulting harvests are described below.

NON-TRIBAL COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

A sub-TAC of 338,182 lb (31.7% of the non-tribal share + 70,000 lb for the incidental sablefish fishery) 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 40,227 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 salmon troll fisheries until the quota is taken. The final catch ratio established preseason 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. Fishing with salmon troll gear is prohibited within the Salmon Troll Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (YRCA) off the northern Washington Coast. Additionally, the "C-shaped" North Coast Recreational YRCA off Washington is designated as an area to be avoided (a voluntary closure) by salmon trollers.

- Halibut retention was permitted in the salmon troll fisheries beginning May 1. The quota for this fishery was revised to add the 3,440 lb remaining after the closure of the directed commercial fishery in August, for a revised quota of 43,667 lb. Of the halibut taken in the salmon troll fisheries through October 9, 8,588 lb were landed in Oregon and 15,538 lb were landed in Washington for a total of 24,126 lb.

Directed fishery targeting on halibut A quota of 227,955 lb (85% of the non-tribal 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°53.30' N. lat.). In addition, between 46°53.30' N. lat. and 46°16' N. lat., the fishery was confined to an area seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour and, between 46°16' N. lat. and 40°10' N. lat., to an area shoreward of a boundary line approximating the 30-fm depth contour and seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour. One-day fishing periods of 10 hours in duration were scheduled by the IPHC for June 27, July 11, July 25, August 8, August 22, September 5, and September 19. A 32" minimum size limit with the head on 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	6/27 & 7/11 Opening	7/25 Opening	8/08 Opening
A 0 - 25 ft.	755 lb	380 lb	250 lb
B 26 - 30 ft.	945 lb	475 lb	315 lb
C 31 - 35 ft.	1,510 lb	755 lb	505 lb
D 36 - 40 ft.	4,165 lb	2,085 lb	1,390 lb
E 41 - 45 ft.	4,480 lb	2,240 lb	1,495 lb
F 46 - 50 ft.	5,365 lb	2,680 lb	1,790 lb
G 51 - 55 ft.	5,985 lb	2,995 lb	1,995 lb
H 56+ ft.	9,000 lb	4,500 lb	3,000 lb

- The June 27 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 99,000 lb, leaving 128,918 lb for later openings.
- The July 11 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of 65,235 lb, leaving 63,608 lb for later openings.
- The July 25 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of 21,230 lb, leaving 42,378 lb for later openings.
- The August 8 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of about 38,938 lb, leaving 3,440 lb. The directed fishery closed and the remaining 3,440 lb was made available to the incidental halibut fishery during the salmon troll season.

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 is from April 1 to October 31, although incidental halibut retention was not available until May 1. Properly licensed vessels were permitted to 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. The fishery is confined to an area seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour. Fishing is also prohibited in the North Coast Commercial YRCA, an area off the northern Washington coast. In addition, the "C-shaped" North Coast Recreational YRCA off Washington is designated as an area to be avoided (a voluntary closure) by commercial longline sablefish fishermen.

- Through October 12, this fishery is estimated to have taken 39,367 lb.

SPORT FISHERIES (Non-tribal).

A sub-TAC of 507,818 lb (68.3% of non-tribal share – 70,000 lb for the incidental sablefish fishery) was allocated between sport fisheries in the Washington area (47.2%) and Oregon/California (52.8%). The allocations were further subdivided as quotas among six geographic subareas as described below.

Washington Inside Waters Subarea (Puget Sound and Straits of Juan de Fuca). This area was allocated 65,562 lb (27.4% 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 April 9 and continued through June 16, 5 days per week (Thursday-Monday). The Western Region opened on May 24 and continued through August 3, 5 days per week (Thursday-Monday). The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- Landings data from this fishery 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 116,199 lb (48.5% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was divided into two seasons with 32,536 lb set aside for the second season. The fishery was to open May 15 and continue 3 days per week (Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday) until 83,663 lb were estimated to have been taken. The second season was to open on June 19 and 21 in the nearshore area only and on June 23 in all waters. If insufficient quota remains to reopen the entire north coast subarea on June 28, then the nearshore area would reopen on June 28, up to four days per week (Thursday-Sunday), until the overall quota of 116,199 lb are estimated to have been taken, or until September 30, whichever is earlier. The "C-shaped" North Coast Recreational YRCA, southwest of Cape Flattery, was closed to sport halibut fishing. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The fishery opened May 15 and continued 3 days a week, through May 31, when 66,430 lb were estimated to have been taken. The remaining quota for the May season, 17,233 lb, was not enough to continue the 3 day per week fishery; this remaining quota was

transferred to the June season.

- The initial June season quota of 32,536 lb was revised to 49,769 lb. The season reopened on June 19 and 21 in nearshore waters and June 23 in the entire subarea, during which days 20,977 lb were taken. Because there was enough quota remaining to reopen the entire subarea, the season has continued to be open for one day at a time on various days of the week in the entire subarea (June 28, July 7, July 22, and August 4). After the August 4 opener in the entire subarea, 9,672 lb remained in the subarea quota. The subarea reopened for 3 additional days in nearshore waters only (August 18, 19 and September 1). Through September 1, Washington North Coast sport fishery's June season is estimated to have taken 48,059 lb, leaving approximately 1,710 lb in the subarea quota.

Washington South Coast Subarea (landings in Westport). The area from the Queets River to Leadbetter Point was allocated 50,907 lb (21.2% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was to open on May 1 and continue 5 days per week (Sunday through Thursday) in all waters (primary fishery) and continue 7 days per week in waters between the Queets River and 47°25.00' N. lat. south to 46°58.00' N. lat., and east of 124°30.00' W. long. (northern nearshore fishery). The south coast subarea quota will be allocated as follows: 48,362 lb, 95 percent, for the primary fishery, and 2,545 lb, 5 percent, for the northern nearshore fishery, once the primary fishery has closed. The primary fishery will continue from May 1 until 48,362 lb are estimated to have been taken, or until September 30, whichever is earlier. Subsequent to this closure, if there is insufficient quota remaining to reopen the primary fishery for another fishing day, then any remaining quota may be used to accommodate incidental catch in the northern nearshore area on Fridays and Saturdays, until the entire subarea quota is projected to be taken. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The 5 day per week primary fishery and the 7 day per week northern nearshore fishery opened on May 1 and remained open until May 8. The total catch for this subarea was 51,166 lb, exceeding the quota by 259 lb.

Columbia River Subarea (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 20,378 lb, consisting of 2.0 percent of the first 130,845 lb allocated to the Washington sport fishery, 4.0 percent of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 lb and 224,110 lb (minus the pounds needed for the incidental sablefish fishery), and 5.0 percent of the Oregon/California sport allocation or an amount equal to the contribution from the Washington sport allocation, whichever is greater. The fishery was to open May 1 and continue 7 days per week until 14,264 lb is estimated to have been taken or until July 15, whichever is earlier. The fishery was to reopen on August 3 and continue 3 days per week (Friday through Sunday) until the entire subarea quota has been taken or September 30, whichever is earlier. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- This 7 day per week fishery began on May 1 and closed on May 26 with a total catch of 14,071 lb.
- The fishery reopened August 3 and continued 3 days a week, through August 12, when 4,561 lb were estimated to have been taken, for a total of 18,632 lb. With 1,746 lb

remaining in the quota, this fishery reopened for 3 days on August 24, 25, and 26 and for one day on September 1. The total catch for the late season was 6,213 lb. Added to the early season catch of 14,071 lb, the subarea total catch was 20,284 lb, 94 lbs under quota.

Oregon Central Coast Subarea (Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 246,727 lb (92% of the Oregon/California sport allocation less any amount needed to contribute to the Oregon portion of the Columbia River subarea quota).

Three seasons were set for this subarea: 1) a restricted depth (inside 40-fm) fishery to commence on May 1 and continue 7 days a week until October 31 or until the nearshore sub-quota of 19,738 lb were estimated to have been taken; 2) a fixed Spring season in all depths that was to open on May 10-12, 17-19, 24-26, May 31 – June 2, and June 7-9 with a catch allocation of 170,242 lb (the Spring season was to reopen for additional days if quota remains), and; 3) a Summer season in all depths that was to open on August 3-5, and which was to continue on as many weekends as possible until the total Spring-Summer quotas of 226,989 lb have been taken or until October 31, whichever is earlier. Additional fishing days may be opened if a certain amount of quota remained after August 5 and September 2, and/or an increase in the bag limit may be considered after September 2. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person, unless otherwise specified.

- The inside 40-fathom fishery opened May 1 and is estimated to have taken 7,056 lb through August 12.
- The fixed Spring all-depth season in May-June, held May 10-12, 17-19, 24-26, May 31 – June 2, June 7-9, and, had a total catch of 104,385 lb, which left enough halibut in the quota to allow openings on June 21-23, July 5-7 and 19-21. During these nine additional spring all-depth fishery days, an additional 28,705 lb were taken. A total of 133,090 lb was taken in the Spring all-depth fishery, 37,152 lb under the Spring quota. The remaining Spring quota was added to the pounds available to the Summer all-depth fishery.
- The initial Summer all-depth season quota of 56,747 lb was revised by the 37,152 lb remaining from the Spring fishery. As a result, 93,899 lb was initially available to the Summer all-depth fishery. The Summer all-depth fishery opened on August 3-5 (Friday-Sunday). On August 8, NMFS, ODFW, and IPHC conferred inseason and took action to provide more fishing opportunity for the Summer all-depth fishery. The agencies agreed that because the remaining quota for the combined all-depth and inside 40-fm fishery was 94,707 lb (i.e., greater than 60,000 lb after August 5, as stated in the CSP and regulations), beginning August 10, the Summer all-depth fishery opened every Friday-Sunday. On September 6, NMFS, ODFW, and IPHC conferred inseason and took action to increase the daily bag limit from 1-fish to 2-fish beginning September 14 with the intent that the subarea quota be taken by September 30, in accordance with the CSP and regulations. The summer all-depth fishery closed September 16 with a total catch of 122,636 lb. The inside 40-fm fishery closed September 20 with a total catch of 8,600 lb. The inside 40-fm fishery closed early due to the overage in the all-depth fishery. A total of 264,326 lb was taken in the Oregon Central Coast fishery, 17,599 lb over quota.

South of Humbug Mountain, Oregon and off the California Coast Subarea This sport fishery was allocated 8,045 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 daily bag limit of one halibut of any size per person.

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

TRIBAL FISHERIES

A sub-TAC of 494,000 lb (35% + 25,000 lb of the Area 2A TAC) was allocated to tribal fisheries. The tribes estimated that 33,000 lb would be used for ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) fisheries and the remaining 461,000 lb were allocated to the commercial fishery. The 2007 management plan was essentially identical to the management plan that the tribes have had in place since 2004. This plan divides the fisheries into “separately managed” fisheries and “joint 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 March 10 and noon on July 30. Collectively, the separately managed fisheries were allocated 75% of the Tribal Commercial TAC. The separately managed fisheries landed 350,394 lbs in 377 landings (out of 345,750 lbs expected).

The remaining 25% of the TAC was open to all parties in the “joint restricted” fishery. The joint restricted fishery opened at noon March 19 with a 500-lb/vessel/day limit and closed by mutual agreement at 11:59 pm on April 13 to assess total catch in that fishery. In order to try to achieve a 40-day opportunity, some tribes reopened their restricted fishery with the limit reduced to 200 lbs/vessel/day on April 18. Likewise, in order to provide greater opportunity to other participants, the Lummi Tribe’s restricted fishery was closed during weekends and was only opened from March 19 to April 12. The restricted fishery was closed by all parties on May 3. The joint restricted fishery had a total catch of 118,042 lbs in 453 landings (out of 115,250 lbs expected).

Fishery	Dates Held	Pounds Landed	# of Landings
Separately Managed	March 10 - July 30	350,394 lb	377 landings
Restricted, 200-500 lb/vessel/day	March 19 – May 3	118,042 lb	453 landings
Total		468,436 lb	830 landings

The C&S fishery will continue through December 31 and tribal estimates of catch will be reported by the tribes in January 2008.

2007 Area 2A TAC and Catch (in pounds)					
	Quota	Inseason Revised Quota		Catch	Over/Under
TRIBAL INDIAN	494,000			501,436 *	1.5%
Commercial	461,000			468,436	1.6%
Ceremonial & Subsistence	33,000			33,000 *	--
NON-TRIBAL	846,000			811,880 ♠	-4.0%
COMMERCIAL	338,182			288,008 ♠	-14.8%
Troll	40,227	43,667 ♥		24,126 ♠	-44.8% of revised quota
Directed	227,955			224,515	-1.5%
Sablefish Incidental	70,000			39,367 ♠	-43.8%
SPORT	507,818			523,872	3.2%
WA Sport	239,636			240,167	0.2%
OR/CA Sport	268,182			283,705	5.8%
WA Inside Waters	65,562			65,562 *	--
WA North Coast	116,199			114,489	-1.5%
<i>May season</i>	83,663			66,430	-20.6%
<i>June season</i>	32,536	49,769 ♣		48,059	-3.4% of revised quota
WA South Coast	50,907			51,166	0.5%
Col River Area	20,378			20,284 ♦	-0.5%
<i>Early season</i>	14,264			14,071	-1.4%
<i>Late season</i>	6,114	6,307 ■		6,213	-1.5% of revised quota
OR Central Coast	246,727			264,326	7.1%
<i>Inside 40 fathoms</i>	19,738			8,600	-56.4%
<i>Spring (May-July)</i>	170,242			133,090	-21.8%
<i>Summer (August-October)</i>	56,747	93,899 ★		122,636	30.6% of revised quota
OR S. of Humbug/CA	8,045			8,045 *	--
TOTAL	1,340,000			1,313,316 ♠	-2.0%

* Assumed.

♥ The remaining 3,440 lb after the directed commercial fishery closed was rolled over to the halibut fishery that is incidental to the salmon troll fishery, increasing their quota to 43,667 lb.

♣ Washington's North Coast May season fishery had 17,233 lb remaining after it was closed which was transferred to the June season, increasing the June quota to 49,769 lb.

■ The Columbia River Early season had 193 lb remaining after it was closed which was transferred to the Late season, increasing the Late season quota to 6,307 lb.

★ Oregon's Central Coast spring all-depth fishery had 37,152 lb remaining. This amount was transferred to the summer all-depth fishery, increasing that quota to 93,899 lb.

♠ Data from these fisheries not complete at the time of the briefing book deadline. Updates will be provided at the Council meeting, if available.

♦ Columbia River catch= 8,950 lb from WA + 11,334 lb from OR.