

ESTIMATE OF HALIBUT BYCATCH IN 1999

Situation: Ms. Cyreis Schmitt, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), will review the final bycatch estimates for Pacific halibut in the Council-area groundfish and shrimp trawl fisheries. NMFS and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) staff have completed a revised bycatch estimation method using data collected from the Oregon Enhanced Data Collection Program. This recent sampling information may be used by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) to update estimates from earlier studies. The bycatch estimates are important inputs in the process of establishing the final harvest allocations for the 2001 halibut fisheries in Area 2A waters. The actual bycatch estimates will be provided in a supplemental report at the Council meeting.

Council Action: Provide guidance for further use or development of halibut bycatch estimates.

Reference Materials:

1. Estimates of Pacific halibut bycatch in IPHC Area 2A (Exhibit D.1, Supplemental NMFS/ODFW Bycatch Report).

PFMC
10/16/00

Estimates of Pacific Halibut Bycatch and Mortality in IPHC Area 2A in 1998, 1999 and early 2000

October 31, 2000

A series of analyses have been conducted with the objective of estimating halibut bycatch in the bottom trawl fishery for groundfish and shrimp off the west coast. Halibut bycatch and mortality were estimated for 1987, 1992, and 1995 by Williams, et al. (Jan. 23, 1998 document¹). New estimates of halibut bycatch and mortality for the Oregon and Washington bottom trawl fisheries for groundfish are calculated for 1998, 1999, and January-May 2000, based on more recent observer information from the Enhanced Data Collection Program (EDCP). New estimates for the Oregon bottom trawl fishery for shrimp are also calculated for 1998.

For a historical perspective, estimates of bycatch mortality of Pacific halibut by fisheries operating in Area 2A since 1977 are presented in Table 7 and comparable estimates for legal-sized halibut are given in Table 8.

Bottom Trawl Fishery for Groundfish

Estimated bycatch and mortality of halibut in 1987, 1992, and 1995 are summarized in Table 1. As described by Williams, et al. (1998), these halibut bycatch and mortality estimates were based upon catch rates observed during a voluntary fisheries observer program conducted during the late 1980s. Approximately 1062 tows by bottom trawl fisheries off Oregon and Washington were observed during 1985-1987. An additional 65 tows were observed off California during 1988-1990. Catch rates were stratified by fishing strategy, depth, season, and area as described by Pikitch, et al. (1998)².

Estimated bycatch and mortality of halibut during 1998, 1999, and January-May 2000 are summarized for Oregon and Washington bottom trawl fisheries in Table 2. For seasonal comparison, halibut bycatch and mortality estimates for January-May during 1998, 1999, and 2000 are given in Table 3.

Analysis of Enhanced Data Collection Program

During November 1995 through December 1998, halibut catches by bottom trawl fisheries on the west coast were observed during the Enhanced Data Collection Program (EDCP). In 1728 observed tows, 9739 halibut were measured. These data on halibut catch rates and size were stratified by season, depth, area and catch of arrowtooth flounder. Numbers of tows, halibut catches, halibut catch rates, and proportion of legal-sized halibut (>81 cm) are given for each of these strata in Table 4. John Wallace, NWFS, used similar methods to those in Pikitch (1998) to analyze the EDCP data and identify appropriate strata for bycatch estimation. These methods and preliminary results were reviewed and approved by the Pacific Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee during the June and September 2000 meetings.

Fleet Expansion of EDCP Results Using Logbooks

The observed encounter rates and size of halibut were expanded to the entire fleet, based on bottom trawl effort obtained from groundfish trawl logbooks for 1998, 1999, and January through May of 2000. These logbook data were available from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Washington Department of Fisheries (WDFW). ODFW staff developed a program to bin the known trawl effort from logbooks into each of the strata identified in the EDCP analyses. Port and Month were added as factors for Oregon logbooks to avoid any potential bias created by unequal collection of

1 Pacific halibut bycatch in IPHC Area 2A: Bycatch rates and current estimates of bycatch mortality. By Gregg Williams, Gary Stauffer, Hal Weeks, Mark Saelens, Joe Scordino, Don Bodenmiller, and Tom Northup, dated Jan. 23, 1998, 14 p.

2 Pikitch, E.K., Wallace, J.R., Babcock, E.A., Erickson, D.L., Saelens, M., and Oddsson, Geir. 1998. Pacific halibut bycatch in the Washington, Oregon, and California groundfish and shrimp trawl fisheries. North American Journal of Fisheries Management. Volume 18, pp. 569-586.

logbooks in the three major ports (Astoria, Newport, and Coos Bay). ODFW collects logbook data for 70-80% of the trawl deliveries during a typical year, thus the need to avoid collection bias. Total trawl effort (hours) for the entire Oregon fleet was based on expanding the groundfish catch rates in logbook data by the total groundfish catch reported on fish tickets, as follows. The average groundfish CPUE (catch per hour) was estimated from logbooks for each stratum in the EDCP analysis. The remaining "unknown" groundfish catch from deliveries for which representative logbooks were not available was divided by this average CPUE to estimate non-logbook effort. Total fleet effort is the combined logbook effort plus the estimated non-logbook effort in each stratum. Such an effort expansion was not conducted for the Washington fleet because WDFW provides essentially 100% logbook coverage, so total fleet effort is equal to reported logbook effort.

Halibut bycatch for each stratum is estimated by multiplying total effort and the appropriate halibut bycatch rate for that stratum. Bycatch by the bottom trawl fleet is estimated by summing across strata. As in earlier years, about half of released halibut are assumed to survive capture, and therefore, bycatch mortality of halibut is assumed to be 50% of total bycatch. The bycatch mortality of legal-sized halibut (> 81cm) is estimated from the length frequencies of halibut measured in the EDCP study. Measurements of fish lengths were converted to fish weight based on a length-weight relationship for Pacific halibut (IPHC, personal communication), and the proportion of legal-sized fish (by weight) was computed for each stratum in the EDCP analysis.

Groundfish Trawl Management During 2000

Reductions in fishing opportunity during 2000 may result in reduced halibut bycatch. For 2000 the trip limits for rockfish inhabiting the shelf area were severely reduced, by 80-90% from 1999 limits. Further, to land rockfish from nearshore or shelf areas, trawlers were allowed to use only small footrope gear (rollers of 8" or less). The intent of this gear requirement is to reduce rockfish catches to incidental levels. In contrast, some additional trawl effort is likely to move nearshore to harvest flatfish. Relatively minor reductions in fishing opportunity occurred on the continental slope.

The combined effect of these changes on halibut bycatch is not known. However, for the first 5 months (January through May) of 2000, estimated bycatch of legal-sized halibut decreased by 17% from 1999 and 18% from 1998 levels. Restricted fishing opportunity is likely to continue or become even more restrictive during 2001. During 1998 and 1999, the estimated bycatch of legal-sized halibut taken during January-May accounted for 35% and 36% of the annual totals, respectively.

Bottom Trawl Fishery for Shrimp

Halibut bycatch in shrimp trawls in 1987, 1992, and 1995 reported by Williams, et al (1998), are shown in Table 5.

Bob Hannah (ODFW, personal communication) produced three estimates of the 1998 halibut bycatch for PSFMC Areas 2B-3C and these are given in Table 6. Given the range of estimates and the data limitations, Hannah suggests that the 1998 bycatch mortality of legal-sized halibut (>81 cm) from Oregon is about 16,000 lbs, net weight. The three bycatch estimates were based on three different data sources: 1) bycatch rates observed during 128 tows by Pikitch, et al., during 1985-87; 2) control net catch rates from 166 tows observed by Hannah, et al. (1996); and 3) data compiled from shrimp fishing trips observed during 1996-99 by the EDCP, combined with control net catches from ODFW research charters during the same time period (for a total of 203 observed tows).

The approximate number of tows in the 1998 Oregon shrimp fishery was over 10,000. The halibut bycatch estimates for this fishery are based on expanding the encounter rates (pounds of halibut per single-rig equivalent hour (sreh)) by the effort expended by vessels landing shrimp in Oregon ports only. Bycatch from vessels landing shrimp into Washington ports is not included.

The estimates are not stratified by depth because the depth range of the shrimp fishery is very restricted and the amount of data is very limited.

Table 1. Halibut bycatch and mortality in the bottom trawl fisheries for groundfish off the west coast, estimated from Pikitch, et al., 1998 and reported by Williams, et al., Jan. 23, 1998 document.

Year	Trawl Effort (hours)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (numbers)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (kg., round)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (lbs, net)	Estimated Total Halibut Mortality (lbs, net)	Estimated Legal-Sized Halibut Mortality (lbs, net)
1987	135,075	78,765	372,911	616,702	308,351	191,178
1992	182,155	89,756	465,595	769,979	384,989	238,693
1995	72,295	113,702	663,262	1,096,870	548,435	340,030

Note: For 1995, bycatch estimates for Areas 1B-2A off California are not included. Mortality estimated at 50% of bycatch. Legal-sized mortality (>81 cm) estimated at 62%, by weight, of total mortality. 1 kg, round = 1.65375 lbs, net weight.

Table 2. Halibut bycatch and mortality in the Oregon and Washington bottom trawl fisheries for groundfish off the west coast, estimated from the Enhanced Data Collection Program (EDCP).

Year	Trawl Effort (hours)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (numbers)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (kg., round)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (lbs, net)	Estimated Total Halibut Mortality (lbs, net)	Estimated Legal-Sized Halibut Mortality (lbs, net)
1998	92,294	160,826	1,227,225	2,029,523	1,014,762	322,928
1999	83,051	159,097	1,220,533	2,018,456	1,009,228	315,163
2000(Jan-May)	28,117	58,482	442,032	731,010	365,505	93,801

Note: Halibut bycatches by California bottom trawl fisheries are not included. Mortality estimated at 50% of bycatch. Proportion of legal-sized mortality (>81 cm) estimated from length frequencies of fish measured in EDCP. 1 kg, round = 1.65375 pounds, net weight.

Table 3. Halibut bycatch and mortality during January – May in the Oregon and Washington bottom trawl fisheries for groundfish off the west coast, estimated from the Enhanced Data Collection Program (EDCP).

January – May Year	Trawl Effort (hours)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (numbers)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (kg., round)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (lbs, net)	Estimated Total Halibut Mortality (lbs, net)	Estimated Legal-Sized Halibut Mortality (lbs, net)
1998 OREGON	26,933	30,737	245,064	405,275	202,637	78,646
1998 WASHINGTON	5,727	37,602	261,937	433,178	216,589	34,641
1998 TOTAL	32,660	68,339	507,001	838,453	419,226	113,287
1999 OREGON	25,693	38,635	307,062	507,804	253,902	80,810
1999 WASHINGTON	4,721	32,594	226,486	374,551	187,276	33,245
1999 TOTAL	30,414	71,229	533,548	882,355	441,178	114,055
2000 OREGON	23,389	36,352	285,914	472,830	236,415	66,170
2000 WASHINGTON	4,728	22,130	156,118	258,180	129,090	27,631
2000 TOTAL	28,117	58,482	442,032	731,010	365,505	93,801

Note: Halibut bycatches by California bottom trawl fisheries are not included. Mortality estimated at 50% of bycatch. Proportion of legal-sized mortality (>81 cm) estimated from length frequencies of fish measured in EDCP. 1 kg, round = 1.65375 pounds, net weight.

Table 4. Numbers of tows, halibut catches, and halibut catch rates, by strata, observed during the Enhanced Data Collection Program of the bottom trawl fishery for groundfish.

SEASON: JANUARY - AUGUST

Arrowtooth Catch (lbs)	Latitude	Depth (Fathoms)	Number of Observed Tows	Number of Tows with No Halibut	Number of Tows with >1 Halibut	Total Number of Halibut	Number of Halibut per Hour	Wgt. (kg., rnd) Halibut per Hour	Proportion Legal by Weight	Proportion Legal by Number
< 20	40.667 - 41.667	0 - 100	0							
		100 - 300	0							
		300 - 700	2	2	0	0	0.0000	0.0000		
	41.667 - 42.667	0 - 100	2	1	1	7	1.9905	16.6102	0.837	0.714
		100 - 300	9	9	0	0	0.0000	0.0000		
		300 - 700	14	13	1	1	0.0103	0.1381	1.000	1.000
	42.667 - 46.667	0 - 100	147	83	64	236	0.5475	5.2473	0.800	0.614
		100 - 300	164	83	81	590	0.7960	8.1169	0.542	0.458
		300 - 700	137	134	3	5	0.0038	0.0258	0.670	0.600
	46.667 - 47.667	0 - 100	68	28	40	238	3.8056	32.6529	0.627	0.475
		100 - 300	24	10	14	83	0.8077	6.4739	0.630	0.470
		300 - 700	37	35	2	2	0.0179	0.1087	0.618	0.500
	47.667 - 48.667	0 - 100	98	41	57	571	2.4763	16.4137	0.207	0.145
		100 - 300	76	24	52	1196	4.2873	26.7102	0.233	0.144
		300 - 700	57	43	14	312	0.6363	4.0503	0.282	0.170
> 20	40.667 - 41.667	0 - 100	0							
		100 - 300	0							
		300 - 700	0							
	41.667 - 42.667	0 - 100	0							
		100 - 300	1	0	1	1	1.3333	8.8284	1.000	1.000
		300 - 700	0							
	42.667 - 46.667	0 - 100	58	26	32	295	1.5494	14.1539	0.709	0.539
		100 - 300	89	35	54	658	1.4499	13.0713	0.463	0.356
		300 - 700	8	5	3	5	0.1022	1.0992	1.000	1.000
	46.667 - 47.667	0 - 100	10	1	9	161	2.9772	21.2403	0.333	0.211
		100 - 300	17	1	16	486	8.0128	70.7112	0.369	0.292
		300 - 700	2	1	1	12	1.0909	7.0047	0.266	0.167
	47.667 - 48.667	0 - 100	36	1	35	1179	10.6296	68.5951	0.195	0.123
		100 - 300	50	7	43	2157	16.3740	114.6754	0.094	0.056
		300 - 700	0							

Table 4. Continued.

SEASON: SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER

Arrowtooth Catch (lbs)	Latitude	Depth (Fathoms)	Number of Observed Tows	Number of Tows with No Halibut	Number of Tows with ≥ 1 Halibut	Total Number of Halibut	Number of Halibut per Hour	Wgt. (kg, rnd) Halibut per Hour	Proportion Legal by Weight	Proportion Legal by Number
≤ 20	40.667 - 41.667	0 - 100	1	1	0		0.0000	0.0000		
		100 - 300	5	5	0		0.0000	0.0000		
		300 - 700	9	9	0		0.0000	0.0000		
	41.667 - 42.667	0 - 100	19	10	9	32	0.5270	9.3711	0.981	0.937
		100 - 300	6	3	3	5	0.1996	2.0303	0.745	0.600
		300 - 700	19	19	0		0.0000	0.0000		
	42.667 - 46.667	0 - 100	198	148	50	145	0.2921	2.4819	0.720	0.517
		100 - 300	124	72	52	518	1.1362	12.4821	0.412	0.363
		300 - 700	65	62	3	4	0.0061	0.0361	0.392	0.250
	46.667 - 47.667	0 - 100	37	15	22	83	0.6356	7.0247	0.800	0.578
		100 - 300	11	7	4	25	0.4208	3.0317	0.392	0.240
		300 - 700	12	11	1	5	0.0395	0.4615	0.795	0.600
	47.667 - 48.667	0 - 100	31	18	13	133	2.5174	18.6845	0.257	0.195
		100 - 300	26	6	20	444	5.8691	36.8507	0.093	0.068
		300 - 700	6	5	1	23	0.3844	3.7322	0.335	0.261
> 20	40.667 - 41.667	0 - 100	0							
		100 - 300	0							
		300 - 700	0							
	41.667 - 42.667	0 - 100	0							
		100 - 300	0							
		300 - 700	0							
	42.667 - 46.667	0 - 100	16	12	4	6	0.1230	1.8872	0.872	0.667
		100 - 300	19	10	9	57	0.8510	7.9960	0.781	0.632
		300 - 700	0							
	46.667 - 47.667	0 - 100	0							
		100 - 300	7	1	6	11	0.2688	2.9705	0.857	0.727
		300 - 700	0							
	47.667 - 48.667	0 - 100	0							
		100 - 300	11	3	8	53	1.4133	14.7495	0.568	0.472
		300 - 700	0							

OBSERVED TOTAL

1728

1000

728

9739

Table 5. Halibut bycatch and mortality in the bottom trawl fishery for pink shrimp off the west coast, reported by Williams, et al., Jan. 23, 1998 document.

Year	Trawl Effort (hours)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (numbers)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (kg., round)	Estimated Halibut Bycatch (lbs, net)	Estimated Total Halibut Mortality (lbs, net)	Legal-sized Bycatch Mortality (lbs, net)
1987	193,694	20,536	98,983	163,693	81,847	50,745
1992	107,015	10,244	51,671	85,450	42,725	26,490
1995	----	----	----	100,000	50,000	31,000

Note: For 1995, bycatch estimates for Areas 1B-2A off California are not included. Mortality estimated at 50% of bycatch. Proportion of legal-sized mortality (>81 cm) is assumed to be 62% by weight. 1 kg, round = 1.65375 lbs, net weight.

Table 6. Estimated 1998 halibut bycatch and mortality in the bottom trawl fishery for pink shrimp (landings into Oregon ports only). (Bob Hannah, personal communication, October 8, 1999 memo).

Data Source	Single-rig Equivalent Hours (sreh) Observed	Bycatch Rate (lbs/sreh)	Fishing Effort (sreh) in Oregon Landings	Bycatch Estimate (kg., round)	Bycatch Mortality (lbs, net)	Legal-sized Bycatch Mortality (lbs, net)
Pikitch (1)	---	1.22	34,543	19,155	15,839	9,820
Hannah (2)	236.5	2.60	34,543	40,824	33,756	20,929
EDCP (3)	551.1	2.12	34,543	33,287	27,524	17,065

Note: Mortality estimated at 50% of bycatch. Proportion of legal-sized mortality (>81 cm) is assumed to be 62% by weight. 1 kg, round = 1.65375 pounds, net weight.

Table 7. Summary of total estimated bycatch mortality of Pacific halibut, in thousands of pounds, net weight, by fishery in 2A. Bycatch mortality estimates for 1977-1997 are reported from Table 6 in Williams, et al. 1998. Bycatch mortality estimates for 1998 and 1999 are from this report.

Year	Foreign, JV & Catcher-Proc.	Groundfish Trawls	Shrimp Trawls	Hook & Line	TOTAL
1977	3	308	82	16	409
1978	2	308	82	16	408
1979	1	308	82	16	407
1980	1	308	82	16	407
1981	Trace	308	82	16	406
1982	Trace	308	82	16	406
1983	1	308	82	16	407
1984	Trace	308	82	16	406
1985	Trace	308	82	16	406
1986	1	308	82	16	407
1987	1	308	82	16	407
1988	1	308	82	16	407
1989	2	308	82	16	408
1990	2	308	82	16	408
1991	2	308	82	16	408
1992	0	385	43	16	444
1993	0	385	43	16	444
1994	0	385	43	16	444
1995	0	548	50	16	614
1996	0	548	50	16	614
1997	0	548	50	16	614
1998	---	1,015	25	---	---
1999	---	1,009	---	---	---

Note: Bycatch mortality by groundfish trawls in 1998 and 1999 does not include fisheries off California. Bycatch mortality by shrimp trawls in 1998 does not include fisheries off California and Washington.

Table 8. Summary of total estimated bycatch mortality of legal-sized Pacific halibut, in thousands of pounds, net weight, by fishery in 2A. Legal-sized mortality for 1977-1997 is estimated as 62% of total mortality for these years (as given in Table 7). Bycatch mortality estimates for legal-sized halibut for 1998 and 1999 are from this report. (Sums across fisheries may not always equal Total due to rounding.)

Year	Foreign, JV & Catcher-Proc.	Groundfish Trawls	Shrimp Trawls	Hook & Line	TOTAL
1977	2	191	51	10	254
1978	1	191	51	10	253
1979	0.6	191	51	10	252
1980	0.6	191	51	10	252
1981	Trace	191	51	10	252
1982	Trace	191	51	10	252
1983	0.6	191	51	10	252
1984	Trace	191	51	10	252
1985	Trace	191	51	10	252
1986	0.6	191	51	10	252
1987	0.6	191	51	10	252
1988	0.6	191	51	10	252
1989	1	191	51	10	253
1990	1	191	51	10	253
1991	1	191	51	10	253
1992	0	239	27	10	275
1993	0	239	27	10	275
1994	0	239	27	10	275
1995	0	340	31	10	381
1996	0	340	31	10	381
1997	0	340	31	10	381
1998	---	323	16	---	---
1999	---	315	---	---	---

Note: Bycatch mortality by groundfish trawls in 1998 and 1999 does not include fisheries off California. Bycatch mortality by shrimp trawls in 1998 does not include fisheries off California and Washington.

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE 2000 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES IN AREA 2A

The 2000 Area 2A total allowable catch (TAC) of 830,000 lb set by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) was allocated as sub-TACs as follows:

Treaty Indian	315,500 lb (35.0% + 25,000 lb)
Non-Treaty Total	514,500 lb (65.0% - 25,000 lb)
Non-Treaty Commercial	163,097 lb
Washington Sport	188,307 lb
Oregon/California Sport	<u>163,097 lb</u>
Total	830,000 lb

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

NON-TREATY COMMERCIAL FISHERY

A sub-TAC of 163,097 lb (31.7% of the non-treaty share) was allocated to this fishery. The commercial fishery was divided into two 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.

Incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery A quota of 24,464 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, if this quota is not harvested during the May/June salmon troll fishery, the remaining quota is rolled over to the directed halibut fishery on July 1. However, if the directed fishery were unable to harvest the full commercial quota (including the roll-over) by July 31, then the incidental catch of halibut during the salmon troll fisheries would re-open on August 1, and would continue until the quota for the troll fishery were taken or the overall non-Indian commercial quota were estimated to have been achieved. The final catch ratio established pre-season by the Council at the April meeting was one halibut (minimum 32") per 3 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.

- A total of 20,925 lb of halibut was landed during the May/June salmon troll fishery. Of the total, 12,425 lb were landed in Oregon during the salmon fishery that extended to June 30, and 8,500 lb were landed in Washington through June 15. The remaining 3,539 lb were rolled over to the directed halibut fishery on July 1.
- Because the directed halibut fishery did not take the entire commercial allocation in July, incidental halibut landings in the salmon troll fishery were again allowed for August 1-4, concurrent with the August 2 directed commercial fishery. After August 4, the IPHC calculated landings from both commercial halibut fisheries and estimated that there would be enough halibut available to re-open the halibut opportunity in the salmon troll fisheries for August 11-21. Commercial halibut opportunities were closed after August 21. In the month of August, 1,425 lb of halibut landed in Oregon by salmon troll fishers and no halibut was landed in Washington by salmon troll fishers.

Directed fishery targeting on halibut A quota of 138,632 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 July 5, July 19, August 2, August 23, September 6, and September 20. 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	7/5/00 Opening	7/19/00 Opening	8/2/00 Opening
A 0 - 25 ft.	310 lb	200 lb	200 lb
B 26 - 30 ft.	390 lb	200 lb	200 lb
C 31 - 35 ft.	620 lb	200 lb	200 lb
D 36 - 40 ft.	1,715 lb	325 lb	230 lb
E 41 - 45 ft.	1,845 lb	350 lb	250 lb
F 46 - 50 ft.	2,205 lb	415 lb	300 lb
G 51 - 55 ft.	2,460 lb	465 lb	335 lb
H 56+ ft.	3,700 lb	700 lb	500 lb

- The July 5 directed commercial fishery resulted in a catch of 120,000 lb, leaving approximately 18,632 lb for later openings, plus 3,539 lb available from the incidental fishery.
- The July 21 directed commercial fishery resulted in an estimated catch of about 13,000 lb, which left approximately 9,471 lb in the commercial allocation, including the amount rolled over from the incidental salmon troll fishery.
- On August 2, the directed commercial fishery resulted in an estimated catch of about 3,000 lb, plus an initially estimated 1,500 lb taken in the incidental salmon troll fishery August 1-4, leaving approximately 4,971 lb in the commercial allocation, an amount too small to hold another directed commercial fishery. The incidental catch allowance in the commercial salmon troll fishery was re-opened for August 11-21. Following these fisheries, the August salmon troll fisheries were estimated to have taken 1,425 lb of halibut between both open periods.

SPORT FISHERIES (Non-treaty).

A sub-TAC of 351,404 lb (68.3% of non-treaty share) was allocated between sport fisheries in the Washington area (53.6%) and Oregon/California (46.4%). 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 49,136 lb (26.1% 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 season was open 5 days per week (closed Tuesday and Wednesday) from May 25 through July 27. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- There is no catch estimate for this fishery at this time.

Northern Washington Coastal Waters Subarea (landings in Neah Bay and La Push). The coastal area off Cape Flattery to Queets River was allocated 99,773 lb (53.0% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was divided into two seasons with 7,000 lb set aside for the second season. The fishery was to open May 2 and continue 5 days per week (closed Sunday and Monday) until 92,773 lb were estimated to have been taken. The second season was to open July 1 and continue 5 days per week (closed Sunday and Monday) until the subarea quota of 99,773 lb was estimated to have been taken. A portion of this subarea, located about 19 miles southwest of Cape Flattery, was closed to halibut fishing. The daily bag limit was one halibut of any size per person.

- The fishery opened May 2 and continued 5 days a week, until June 16, when the initial quota of 92,773 lb was estimated to have been reached. Later calculations showed that 88,457 lb had been taken, making 11,316 lb available to the July re-opening.
- The season re-opened for July 1 and 4, as the fishery was expected to take approximately 5,000 lb per day on those days. A total of 101,114 lb (1,341 lb over quota) was actually taken.

Washington South Coast Subarea (landings in Westport). The area from the Queets River to Leadbetter Point was allocated 34,482 lb (18.3% of the Washington sport allocation). The fishery was to open on May 1 and continue 5 days per week (closed Friday and Saturday) offshore, until 1,000 lb were projected to remain in the subarea quota. An inshore fishery was 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 7 day per week fishery continued until June 2, with the closed hot spot remaining closed from May 2-6, and opening on May 7. The offshore fishery closed on May 29, at which time 35,734 lb had been taken. At the time the offshore fishery was closed, 1,000 lb were estimated to remain in the quota; however, subsequent calculations showed that the entire quota had been taken and the inshore fishery was closed on June 2. No

fish were taken in the inshore fishery between May 30 and June 2, and total of 35,734 lb (1,252 lb over quota) was actually taken for this area.

Columbia River Subarea (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 8,177 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 and continued through to July 29, with a total of 7,728 lb landed, 449 lb under quota.

Oregon North Central Coast Subarea (Cape Falcon to the Siuslaw River). This sport fishery subarea was allocated 143,574 (88.03% of the Oregon/California sport allocation). Three seasons were set: 1) a restricted depth (inside 30 fathoms) fishery to commence on May 1 and continue every day until the combined North Central and South Central nearshore sub-quota of 12,324 lb was estimated to have been taken; 2) a fixed May season in all depths that was to open on May 11, 12, 13, 18, and 19, with a projected catch of 97,630 lb and; 3) a fixed August season in all depths from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain on August 4 or until the combined all-depth subquotas for Oregon south of Cape Falcon totaling 142,617 lb were estimated to have been taken. The daily bag limit was the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- The restricted 30-fathom fishery opened on May 1 and remains open. The initial sub-quota of 12,324 lb was reduced to 7,324 lb in September, when 5,000 lb were moved from the inside 30-fathom fishery to the all-depth fishery. By the end of September, this fishery had landed 5,362 lb, which is 45.7% below the initial sub-quota.
- The first fixed season in May with 5 fishing days ending May 19 had a total catch of 112,953 lb, exceeding the 97,630 lb quota. As a result, the 35,893 lb available for the August all-depth fishery was reduced by 15,323 lb.
- The August all-depth season draws on the combined quotas of the Oregon north central and south central fisheries. The initial 35,893 lb available to this fishery was reduced by a 15,323 lb overage in the May north central coast all-depth fishery, and by a 6,526 lb overage in the May south central coast all-depth fishery, leaving 14,044 available to the August all-depth fishery. Pre-season, ODFW had estimated that 30,500 lb would be needed for a single day of all-depth fishing in August; therefore, the August all-depth opportunity was cancelled. Halibut managers met to consider whether a day of all-depth fishing could be held in September, and agreed that the 14,044 lb remaining in the all-depth quota, plus 5,000 lb available to be moved from the nearshore quota, would be enough to hold a single day of all-depth fishing in late September. An all-depth fishing opportunity was set for Friday, September 22. The weather on September 22 was particularly unpleasant and the fishery landed only 7,203 lb. The north and south May all-depth seasons combined with the September 22 fishery landed 135,776 lb, 4.8% under the 142,617 lb combined quota for these seasons.

Oregon South Central Coast Subarea This sport fishery subarea was allocated 11,368 lb (6.97% of the Oregon/California sport allocation). Three seasons were set: 1) a restricted depth (inside 30 fathoms) fishery to commence on May 1 and continue every day until 2,274 lb was estimated to have been taken; 2) a fixed May season in all depths that was to open on May 11, 12, 13, 18, and 19, with a projected catch of 9,094 lb and; 3) a fixed August season in all depths from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain, described above. The daily bag limit was the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- The restricted 30-fathom fishery opened on May 1 and continues. The initial combined sub-quota of 12,324 lb was reduced to 7,324 lb in August, when 5,000 lb were moved from the inside 30-fathom fishery to the all-depth fishery. By the end of September, this fishery had landed 5,362 lb, which is 45.7% below the initial sub-quota.
- The first fixed season in May with 5 fishing days ending May 19 had a total catch of 15,620 lb exceeding the 9,094 lb quota. As a result, the 35,893 lb available for the August all-depth fishery was reduced by 6,526 lb.
- The final combined fixed season (Oregon central and south coast subareas) opened on September 22, as described above.

South of Humbug Mountain, Oregon and off the California Coast Subarea This sport fishery was allocated 4,893 lb (3.0% of the Oregon/California quota). This area had a pre-set season of 7 days per week from May 1 to September 30 and a bag limit of the first halibut taken of 32 inches or greater in length.

- This season closed September 30, in accordance with the Catch Sharing Plan. Through August 13, 65 lb had been landed in Oregon from this area. No catch estimates are yet available for California, but it is very unlikely that this subarea quota will be taken.

TRIBAL FISHERIES

A sub-TAC of 315,500 lb (35% + 25,000 lb of the Area 2A TAC) was allocated to Tribal fisheries. The tribes estimated that 10,500 lb would be used for ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) fisheries and the remaining 305,000 lb was allocated to the commercial fishery. The tribal commercial fishery was scheduled to open on March 15, 2000 pursuant to regulations adopted by the IPHC and continue until the tribal commercial subquota was reached. The tribal C&S fishery was scheduled to run throughout the year.

Commercial fisheries began on March 15 and closed on May 11. The tribes landed a total of 300,130 lb in the commercial fishery (1.6% under commercial quota). The fishery was open for two unrestricted periods with no landings limits on March 15 (48 hours) and March 30 (24 hours). It was also opened on a restricted basis of 500 lb per day trip limits from March 15 through April 15. After April 15, there were several longer open periods governed by 500 lb trip limits. Reserving a portion of the commercial quota for the restricted fishery facilitated close monitoring of quota-attainment and allowed a longer commercial landings period.

The C&S fishery will continue through December 31 and tribal estimates of catch will be reported by the tribes in January 2000.

2000 Area 2A TAC and Catch (in pounds)			
	<u>TAC</u>	<u>Catch</u>	<u>Over/Under</u>
TREATY INDIAN	315,500	310,630	***
Commercial	305,000	300,130	-1.6%
Ceremonial & Subsistence	10,500	10,500 †	***
NON-INDIAN	514,500	***	***
COMMERCIAL	163,097	159,350	-2.3%
Troll	24,464	22,350	-8.6%
Directed	138,632	137,000	-1.2%
SPORT	351,404	***	---
WA Sport	188,307	***	***
OR/CA Sport	163,097	148,458	-9.9%
WA Inside Waters	49,136	***	***
WA North Coast	99,773	101,114	1.3%
WA South Coast	34,482	35,734	3.6%
Col River Area	8,177	7,728	-5.5%
OR Central Coast	154,942	141,408	-8.7%
Inside 30 fathoms (all areas)	12,324 ‡	5,632	-45.7%
May (North Central Coast)	97,630	112,953 ‡	15.7%
May (South Central Coast)	9,094	15,620 ‡	71.8%
August (all areas)	35,893	7,203 ‡	-33.0%
OR S. of Humbug/CA	4,893	4,237	-13.4%
TOTAL	830,000	809,337 ★	-2.5%★

*** = Total catch not yet determined

† = Assumed for purposes of calculating overall catch amounts.

‡ = May all-depth catch exceeded May quota by 21,849 lb, which was then deducted from the 35,893 lb that was initially available to the August all-depth fishery, leaving 14,044 lb. ODFW, NMFS, and IPHC agreed that this amount was not sufficient for a day of all-depth fishing in August. This amount was combined with 5,000 lb moved from the inside-30-fathom fisheries, to make 19,044 lb available to a September 22 all-depth fishery.

★ = Assumes for demonstration purposes that Tribal Ceremonial and Subsistence fisheries and Non-Tribal Washington State Puget Sound sport fisheries achieve, but do not exceed their quotas. These numbers should be finalized in January 2001.

CHANGES TO HALIBUT CATCH SHARING PLAN AND REGULATIONS FOR 2001

Situation: Under its standard process, the Council solicits proposed changes to the annual halibut regulations at its September meeting and adopts any changes in November after reviewing public and agency comments. Generally, changes are limited to adjustments in the annual regulations and minor modifications to the catch sharing plan.

For the 2001 season, the Council has proposed minor changes to the commercial, non-Indian, incidental halibut allocation for the salmon troll fishery and a minor adjustment in the management of the recreational fisheries in the Washington North and South Coast subareas. The proposed changes resulted from recommendations provided by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife after holding a state public meeting on September 8, 2000 (see Attachment 1 for details).

Based on the input received since the September Council meeting, the states will present their final proposals for regulatory changes in the halibut fishery at this meeting. One public comment letter has been received at the Council office in time to be mailed with the briefing book (Exhibit D.2, Public Comment). The letter expresses a desire to split the Washington North Coast recreational halibut allocation equally between the May 1 and July 1 openings to provide better fishing access to small boat fishermen. In past years, the May opener takes most of the quota and greatly shortens the fishing season after June when weather is better.

Council Action: Within the scope of the September proposals (Attachment 1) and public input, adopt Council recommendations for implementation of proposed changes to the Pacific halibut fishery regulations for 2001.

Reference Materials:

1. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Recommended Changes to the Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan for Area 2A for 2001 (Exhibit D.2, Attachment 1).
2. Preliminary Report on the 2000 Pacific Halibut Fisheries in Area 2A (Attachment 2).
3. Letter from Mr. Ken Crane (Exhibit D.2, Public Comment).

PPMC
10/16/00

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
AND
REGULATORY IMPACT REVIEW
OF
CHANGES TO THE CATCH SHARING
PLAN FOR PACIFIC HALIBUT
IN AREA 2A

Prepared by
National Marine Fisheries Service

October 2000

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982 at 16 U.S.C. 773c provides that the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) shall have general responsibility to carry out the Halibut Convention between the United States and Canada and that the Secretary shall adopt such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and objectives of the Convention and the Halibut Act. Section 773c(c) also authorizes the regional fishery management council having authority for the geographic area concerned to develop regulations governing the Pacific halibut catch in U.S. Convention waters that are in addition to, but not in conflict with, regulations of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC). Accordingly, catch sharing plans to allocate the total allowable catch (TAC) of Pacific halibut between treaty Indian and non-Indian harvesters, and among non-Indian commercial and sport fisheries in IPHC statistical Area 2A (off Washington, Oregon, and California) have been developed each year since 1988 by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) in accordance with the Halibut Act. In 1995, NMFS implemented a Council-recommended long-term Plan (60 FR 14651, March 20, 1995). In each of the intervening years between 1995 and the present, minor revisions to the Plan have been made to adjust for the changing needs of the fisheries. The Plan allocates 35 percent of the Area 2A TAC to Washington treaty Indian tribes in Subarea 2A-1 and 65 percent to non-Indian fisheries in Area 2A. The allocation to non-treaty fisheries is divided into three shares, with the Washington sport fishery (north of the Columbia River) receiving 36.6 percent, the Oregon/California sport fishery receiving 31.7 percent, and the commercial fishery receiving 31.7 percent. The commercial fishery is further divided into two sectors: a directed (traditional longline) commercial fishery that is allocated 85 percent of the 31.7 percent (26.95 percent of the non-treaty harvest), and an incidental (troll salmon) commercial fishery that is allocated 15 percent of the 31.7 percent (4.75 percent of the non-treaty harvest). The directed commercial fishery in Area 2A is confined to southern Washington (south of 46°53'18" N. lat.), Oregon, and California. The Plan also divides the sport fisheries into seven geographic areas, each with separate allocations, seasons, and bag limits.

At its September 2000 meeting, the Council adopted, for public comment, proposed changes to the plan on: (1) Separating the directed commercial fishery sub-quota from the incidental salmon fishery allowance and permitting the salmon troll fishery to retain incidentally caught halibut from May 1 until its sub-quota is estimated to have been achieved; (2) Allowing the setting of sport fishery season start dates in the Washington North Coast and South Coast sub-areas following the IPHC annual meeting, rather than before; (3) Removing the 1,000 lb nearshore set-aside in the Washington South Coast sub-area; (4) Eliminating the Washington South Coast closed "hot spot." The Council will take final action at its November 2000 meeting.

This document combines the environmental assessment (EA) and the regulatory impact review (RIR) and provides background information, analysis and assessments necessary for the Council and subsequently the Secretary of Commerce to determine that the proposed changes to the Plan are consistent with the Northern Pacific Halibut Act, and other applicable federal law, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Regulatory Flexibility Act. The specific purpose of the EA is to analyze the potential effects of the proposed action and reasonable alternatives on the quality of the human environment. If the action is determined not to be significant, then the EA will result in a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) and the EA will be the final environmental document required by NEPA. If, however, a FONSI cannot be made, then a more detailed environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared. The purpose of a RIR is to analyze socioeconomic aspects of proposed actions to assure that such actions enhance the public welfare in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The RIR also serves as a basis for determining whether the proposed action will have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

The Council is considering modifications to the Pacific halibut commercial and sport fisheries in Area 2A in 2001 and beyond pursuant to recommendations from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Neither the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) nor tribal treaty fishery managers recommended changes to the Plan in 2001.

For the non-treaty commercial fisheries, the Council is considering separating the directed commercial fishery quota from the set-aside for incidental halibut retention in the salmon troll fishery so that unharvested halibut from the troll fishery set-aside would no longer be available to the July directed halibut fishery. Under this proposal, incidental halibut retention in the salmon troll fishery would begin each year in May and end when it is estimated that the quota will be achieved. Just as the directed halibut fishery would not have access to unharvested halibut from the May/June salmon troll fisheries, unharvested halibut from the directed fishery quota would no longer be made available to the salmon troll fisheries in August and September. This proposal would not change the basic allocation formula that divides the non-treaty commercial allocation between the directed commercial fishery (85%) and incidental salmon troll fishery (15%).

For the Washington sport fisheries, the Council is considering changes to the management of the South Coast sub-area fishery that would eliminate the 1,000 lb nearshore fishery set-aside but allow a set-aside of any amount that cannot be used by the all-depth fishery without exceeding the sub-area quota. Additionally, the Council is considering eliminating the Washington South Coast closed "hot spot." In the Washington South Coast sub-area, there is an area closed to sport fishing that has been used to slow the rate of halibut landings during the sport season. During the 1999 and 2000 fishing seasons, NMFS took inseason action at the request of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to open the hot spot to fishing, because fishing in the South Coast subarea had been so slow as to make the closed hot spot more of a hindrance to the season than a help.

For the Washington sport fisheries, the Council is also considering allowing the setting of sport fishery season start dates in the North Coast and South Coast sub-areas following the IPHC annual meeting, rather than before that meeting. This proposed change to the process for setting season start dates is inconsequential in terms of effects on the environment, so will not be considered in the EA/RIR analysis.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES

3.1 Issue 1 – Separating the Non-Treaty Directed Commercial Halibut Quota from the Non-Treaty Incidental Halibut Catch Allowance for the Salmon Troll Fishery

Alternative 1 - Status Quo

Under the status quo alternative, the Plan allows incidental halibut landings in the salmon troll fishery during May and June, but then shifts any unharvested halibut from the incidental fishery to the directed fishery on July 1. In July, the directed commercial fishery has access to its own quota, plus any unharvested quota from the May/June incidental fishery set-aside. If the directed commercial fishery takes the entire non-treaty commercial allocation (directed + incidental) in July, the salmon troll fisheries do not have an opportunity to land incidentally-caught halibut in August and September. If, however, the directed commercial fishery does not harvest the entire commercial allocation in July, incidental halibut landings opportunities open up again for the salmon troll fishery on August 1.

Alternative 2 – Separate the non-treaty directed and incidental fisheries quotas to allow each fishery access only to its own quota

- Under this alternative, the salmon troll fishery would be allowed to land incidentally-caught halibut beginning with the May salmon season, and continuing until it is estimated that the quota will be achieved. This change would not represent a major shift in quota, but rather, a change to priorities in managing non-treaty commercial landings. For salmon trollers, there would be less incentive to try to land as much halibut as possible during the May/June fisheries so as to not "lose" that halibut to the directed commercial fishery in July. Directed commercial fisheries would no longer have access to halibut unharvested in the May/June troll fisheries. Salmon troll fisheries would no longer have access to halibut unharvested in the July directed commercial fisheries.

3.2 Issue 2 – Revising Sport Fishery Management in the Washington State South Coast Sub-Area to Increase Quota Available to the All-Depth Fishery

Alternative 1 – Status Quo

Under the current Plan, the sport fishery in this sub-area is managed to open for all depths at the beginning of May for a five-day-per-week fishery. Seven days per week, halibut may be landed from nearshore waters. All-depth fishing opportunities end when 1,000 lb is estimated to remain in the quota for this sub-area. That remaining 1,000 lb is then available to the nearshore fishery following the closure of the all-depth fishery. Nearshore halibut fishing opportunities are available to allow fishers to land incidentally-caught halibut when they are targeting other species in the nearshore area.

Alternative 2 – Increase Quota Available to the All-Depth Fishery by Removing the 1,000 lb Set-Aside for the Nearshore Fishery

With this alternative, the entire sub-area quota would be available to the all-depth fishery, although the nearshore fishery would also have access to the quota when the all-depth fishery is open. The all-depth fishery would close when it is estimated that the quota will be achieved. If, after the all-depth fishery has closed, there is any remaining halibut that cannot be harvested by the all-depth fishery without exceeding the quota, that remaining halibut would be made available to the nearshore fishery. Under this alternative, the all-depth fishery would continue to be open five days per week, with the nearshore fishery open every day.

3.3 Issue 3 – Removing the Closed "Hot Spot" in the Washington State Sport Fishery South Coast Sub-Area

Alternative 1 – Status Quo

Under status quo, the South Coast subarea would retain its "hot spot" as closed to sport fishing for halibut. According to the Plan, this closed area may be opened inseason upon agreement of WDFW, NMFS and IPHC. The purpose of the closed area is to slow the rate of quota attainment and lengthen the duration of the season. The closed area has the following dimensions:

NW Corner	47°19'00" N. lat.	124°53'00" W. long.
NE Corner	47°19'00" N. lat.	124°48'00" W. long.
SW Corner	47°16'00" N. lat.	124°53'00" W. long.
SE Corner	47°16'00" N. lat.	124°48'00" W. long.

Alternative 2 – Eliminate Closed Area Within Washington State South Coast Sub-Area

This alternative would eliminate the closed area and references to inseason closed are changes from the Plan.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT - THE AREA 2A HALIBUT FISHERIES

The Area 2A halibut fisheries occur in marine waters off Washington, Oregon and California. The biology, fishery and overall management of Pacific halibut is described in IPHC (1998). A detailed description of the Area 2A fisheries as influenced by past Catch Sharing Plans is presented in the 1994 EA/RIR on the Catch Sharing Plan (NMFS 1995). The Area 2A fisheries also have been described by IPHC in Trumble et al. (1991) and Hoag et al. (1983 and 1993). Additional information on recent harvests and the status of the stocks in Area 2A can be found in the stock assessment documents prepared by IPHC staff in preparation for each annual meeting and in IPHC Annual Reports (available from IPHC).

4.1 Area 2A Fisheries

The allocations to the four fishery groups (tribal fishery, non-Indian commercial fishery, Washington sport fishery, and Oregon/California sport fishery) since 1988 (first year of annual Catch Sharing Plans) are shown in Table 1. Catches by group are shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Area 2A quotas and allocations (dressed weight in pounds).

	Total	Treaty	Tribal	Non-Indian	Non-Indian	Washington	Oregon
1988	750,000	100,000	50,000	330,000	270,000	--	--
1989	650,000	130,000	22,000	274,000	224,000	167,000	57,000
1990	520,000	130,000	--	195,000	195,000	118,950	76,050
1991	450,000	112,500	--	168,750	168,750	102,938	65,812
1992	650,000	162,500	--	243,750	243,750	148,687	95,063
1993	600,000	150,000	--	225,000	225,000	137,250	87,750
1994	550,000	192,500	--	178,750	178,750	109,037	69,713
1995	520,000	182,000	--	107,120	230,880	123,760	107,120
1996	520,000	182,000	--	107,120	230,880	123,760	107,120
1997	700,000	245,000	--	144,235	310,765	166,530	144,235
1998	820,000	287,000	--	168,961	364,039	195,078	168,961
1999	760,000	266,000	--	156,598	337,402	180,804	156,598
2000	830,00	315,500	--	163,097	351,403	188,307	163,097

Table 2. Total catches of halibut in Area 2A (dressed weight in pounds).

	TOTAL CATCH	TRIBAL TOTAL	COMMERCIAL TOTAL	SPORT TOTAL
1988	746,676	105,800	392,000	248,876
1989	809,429	152,400	330,000	327,029
1990	542,866	131,400	203,000	208,466 ^{1/}
1991	518,962	127,500	233,000	158,462 ^{1/}
1992	700,077	168,400	282,000	249,677 ^{1/}
1993	764,484	152,031	366,000	246,453 ^{1/}
1994	566,978	198,639	182,000	186,339 ^{1/}
1995	547,892	190,569	121,125	236,198 ^{1/}
1996	537,562	181,184	127,521	228,857 ^{1/}
1997	750,700	243,258	152,570	354,872 ^{1/}
1998	856,560	307,145	166,424	382,991 ^{1/}
1999	769,812	272,018	160,955	337,339 ^{1/}
2000	^{2/}	^{2/}	^{2/}	^{2/}

^{1/} Sport catch estimates from California are not available; this estimate assumes that the CA allocation was harvested.

^{2/} 2000 catch estimates not yet available

4.2 Tribal Fishery

Twelve western Washington tribes possess and exercise treaty fishing rights to halibut. Specific allocations for the treaty Indian tribes commenced in 1986. The tribes did not harvest their full allocation until 1989 when the tribal fleet had developed to the point that it could harvest the entire Area 2A TAC. In 1993, judicial confirmation of treaty halibut rights occurred and treaty entitlement was established at 50 percent of the harvestable surplus of halibut in the tribes' combined U&A fishing grounds. In 2000, the courts ordered an adjustment to the halibut allocation for 2000-2007, to account for reductions in the tribal halibut allocation from 1989-1993. For 2000 through 2007, the non-tribal fisheries will be transferring at least 25,000 lb per year to the tribal fisheries, for a total of 200,000 lb to be transferred. Tribal allocations are divided into a tribal commercial component and the year-round ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) component. Tribal allocations and catches are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Tribal Catch Statistics (dressed weight in thousands of pounds)

Year	Commercial		C&S	
	Allocation	Catch	Allocation	Catch
1992	152.5	154.2	10.0	14.2
1993	136.0	136.2	14.0	15.8
1994	176.5	187.7	16.0	10.9
1995	171.0	176.4	11.0	14.2
1996	168.0	166.2	14.0	15.0
1997	230.0	228.5	15.0	14.8
1998	272.0	296.6	15.0	10.5
1999	266.0	271.5	10.0	10.5
2000	305.0	300.1	10.5	^{1/}

^{1/} 2000 catch estimates not yet available

4.3 Non-Indian Commercial Fishery

The commercial fishery has been divided into two components since 1995: a directed commercial fishery (e.g., the traditional longline fishery) and an incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery. The directed commercial fishery is restricted to the area south of Pont Chehalis, WA. Table 4 shows the quotas (allocations after 1987) and catches.

Table 4. Commercial fishery catch statistics.

Year	Quota	Catch	Days Open
1981	200,000	202,000	56
1982	200,000	211,000	49
1983	200,000	265,000	26
1984	300,000	431,000	35
1985	500,000	493,000	31
1986	550,000	564,000	19
1987	550,000	548,000	12
1988	330,000	392,000	5
1989	274,000	330,000	2
1990	195,000	203,000	2
1991	168,750	233,000	1 ^{1/}
1992	243,750	282,000	2 ^{1/}
1993	225,000	366,000	1 ^{1/}
1994	178,750	182,000	3 ^{1/}
1995 Directed	91,052	119,000	7 ^{1/}
1995 Incidental	16,068	2,125	60
1996 Directed	91,052	118,000	2 ^{1/}
1996 Incidental	16,068	9,521	60
1997 Directed	122,600	135,000	1 ^{1/}
1997 Incidental	21,635	17,570	60
1998 Directed	143,617	166,424	4 ^{1/}
1998 Incidental	25,344	13,416	153
1999 Directed	133,108	151,000	2 ^{1/}
1999 Incidental	23,490	9,955	60
2000 Directed	138,632	137,000	3
2000 Incidental	24,464	22,350	76

1/ Since 1991, directed commercial halibut fishing has been restricted to 10-hour per day openings

4.4 Sport Fishery in Washington

Sport fishing for halibut in Washington is divided into four subareas for management and catch allocation purposes: WA Inside Waters (Puget Sound) subarea, WA North Coast subarea, WA South Coast subarea, and Columbia River subarea (which is shared with Oregon). The WA Inside Waters Subarea includes all waters east of the Sekiu River mouth and includes Puget Sound, most of the Strait of Juan De Fuca, the San Juan Islands area, Hood Canal and Admiralty Inlet. The WA North Coast Subarea is the area west of the Sekiu River mouth and north of the Queets River. The WA South Coast Subarea lies to the south of Queets River and north of Cape Falcon. The Columbia River subarea lies between Leadbetter Point and Cape Falcon, Oregon, and is shared with Oregon. The allocations for this subarea are derived from both the Washington and Oregon sport allocations.

4.4.1 WA Inside Waters (Puget Sound) Subarea

A free halibut catch record card is required to catch halibut in Washington inside waters. The number of catch record cards issued is used as the estimate of the number of individuals who fish for halibut in this area. Most halibut fishing is done in conjunction with fishing for other species such as salmon or lingcod. The estimated catch of halibut in this area is shown in Table 5. The vast majority of the halibut catch in inside waters is taken by private boat anglers. Most of the Washington inside waters sport catch of halibut is taken in the Strait of Juan de Fuca. In 2000, the western boundary of this sub-area was moved from the Bonilla-Tatoosh line eastward to the mouth of the Sekiu River, with a corresponding quota transfer from this sub-area to the North Coast sub-area.

Table 5. Seasons, restrictions and catches of halibut in Washington Inside waters.

YEAR	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	DAYS OPEN	QUOTA	ACTUAL CATCH
1987	2/1 - 9/30	2	30"	242	none	184,259
1988	3/1 - 6/15	2	none	107	207,000 ^{1/}	37,083
1989	4/8 - 6/15 6/16 - 8/11 (Fri only)	2	none	78	78,000	37,809
1990	4/16 - 6/15	2	none	61	39,355	57,698
1991	5/4 - 6/16 (closed Tues) 6/22 - 6/30 (Sat, Sun)	2	none	42	34,021	33,789
1992	5/9 - 7/15	2	none	68	48,323	51,068
1993	5/13 - 7/18 (closed Wed)	2	none	58	44,606	34,753
1994	5/2 - 7/5 (closed Wed)	1	none	56	35,328	37,260
1995	5/25 - 7/29 (Thur - Mon)	1	none	48	34,653	38,500
1996	5/23 - 7/27 (Thur - Mon)	1	none	48	34,653	40,489
1997	5/22 - 8/10 (Thur-Mon)	1	none	59	46,628	86,733
1998	5/22 - 8/3 (Thur - Mon)	1	none	54	57,191	73,279
1999	5/27 - 7/12 (Thur - Mon)	1	none	35	52,623	56,375
2000	5/27 - 7/27 (Thur - Mon)	1	none	46	49,136	^{2/}

^{1/} Quota was for north coast and inside waters.

^{2/} Season estimate not yet available

4.4.2. WA North Coast Subarea

Sport fishing for halibut along the north coast was at a low level until the mid-1980s when catches increased. Prior to 1983, annual catches were less than 10,000 lb (4.5 mt). In 1983, catches began to increase and peaked in 1987 at approximately 190,000 lb (86.2 mt). Subsequent annual catches have changed as a result of the catch sharing plan. In 2000, the eastern boundary of this sub-area was moved from the Bonilla-Tatoosh line eastward to the mouth of the Sekiu River, with a corresponding quota transfer from the Puget Sound sub-area to this sub-area. Most of the anglers operating in this subarea are out of Neah Bay.

Table 6. Seasons, restrictions and catches of halibut in the Washington North Coast area.

YEAR	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	TOTAL DAYS OPEN	QUOTA	ACTUAL CATCH
1987	2/1 - 9/30	2	30"	242	none	181,195
1988	5/1 - 6/30	2	none	61	207,000 ^{1/}	134,316
1989	5/6 - 6/27 (Tue-Sat) 6/30 - 7/29 (Fri-Sat) 9/1 - 9/10 (7 days/week)	2	none	58	87,000	148,986
1990	5/1 to quota (Tue-Sat) 7/6 to quota (Fri-Sat) 8/31-quota (Tue-Sat)	1	none	74	74,595	73,588
1991	5/1 - 6/25 (7 days/week) 7/5 - 8/29 (Fri-Sat) 8/30 - 9/22 (7 days/week)	1	none	96	64,590	62,748
1992	5/1 - 5/25 (7 days/week) 7/3 - 9/30 (Fri only)	2	1 fish of any size plus 1 fish 40" or greater.	38	92,664	91,373
1993	5/1 - 6/25 (7 days/week) 7/2 - 7/17 (Fri-Sat)	1	none	68	85,507	104,860
1994	5/3 - 5/28 (Tue-Sat) 6/9 - 6/11	1	none	28	68,039	65,298
1995	5/2 - 5/27 (Tue-Sat) 7/1, 7/29, 9/3, 9/4	1	none	24	71,410	69,374
1996	5/1 - 7/20 (Tue-Sat)	1	none	59	71,410	71,803
1997	5/1 - 8/1 (Tue-Sat)	1	none	67	96,088	98,330
1998	5/1 - 7/25 (Tues-Sat)	1	none	62	96,052	97,176
1999	5/1 - 7/9 (Tues - Sat)	1	none	50	91,484	88,298
2000	5/2 - 6/16 (Tues - Sat) 7/1 & 7/4 (Sat & Tues)	1	none	36	99,773	101,114

^{1/} Quota was for WA North Coast and WA Inside Waters (Puget Sound) subareas.

4.4.3. WA South Coast Subarea

Traditionally, the catch of halibut out of the south coast has been an incidental event, with halibut being caught while fishing for other species. However, that changed when charterboats out of Westport began to target halibut with good success. In 1996, two seasons were established for this area: a May opening that accounted for all but 1,000 lb of the subarea quota with fishing open in the entire area; and a subsequent restricted nearshore fishery for the last 1,000 lb to allow for incidental catch in other sport fisheries. During the offshore fishery period, fishers operating in the nearshore area were allowed to land halibut only in the five open days per week (Sunday through Thursday). From 1999 onward, the nearshore fishery was open 7 days per week to allow incidental landings of halibut for as long as possible, with the larger directed fishery keeping the 5 day per week season.

Table 7. Seasons, restrictions and catches of halibut in the Washington South Coast subarea.

YEAR	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	DAYS OPEN	QUOTA	ACTUAL CATCH
1987	2/1 - 9/30	2	30"	242	none	2,102
1988	4/1 - 9/30	2	none	183	3,000	3,150
1989	4/1 - 9/30	2	none	183	2,000	4,821
1990	5/1 - 9/30	1	none	153	5,000	5,096
1991	5/1 - 9/30	1	none	153	4,327	5,759
1992	5/1 - 9/30	1	none	153	7,700	23,143
1993	5/20 - 6/3 (Thurs-Fri)	1	none	5	7,137	10,072
1994	6/2 and 6/9	1	none	2	5,670	14,149
1995	5/1 - 7/4	1	none	65	15,222	15,610
1996	5/1 - 5/26	1	none	26	14,222	12,989
	5/27 - 9/30 (inshore)			<u>127</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,949</u>
	Total			153	15,222	14,983
1997	5/1 - 5/17	1	none	17	19,483	20,324
	5/18 - 5/20 (inshore)			<u>3</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>236</u>
	Total			20	20,483	20,560
1998	5/3 - 7/9 (Sun-Thurs)	1	none	50	35,648	**
	6/26 - 7/9 (inshore)			<u>14</u>	<u>1,000</u>	
	Total			50	36,648	37,030
1999	5/2 - 5/31 (Sun-Thurs)	1	none	22	31,081	29,729
	5/2 - 9/30 (inshore)			<u>152</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,850</u>
	Total			152	32,081	31,579
2000	5/2 - 5/29 (Sun-Thurs)	1	none	20	33,482	35,734
	5/2 - 6/2 (inshore)			<u>32</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>0</u>
	Total			32	34,482	35,734

4.5 Sport Fishery in Columbia River Subarea

In 1995, a new subarea was established for the area from Leadbetter Point, WA to Cape Falcon, OR. This subarea had previously been part of the southern Washington subarea. Table 8 shows the catches in this subarea. To date, most of the sport catch in this subarea has been landed in Ilwaco, WA. Oregon sport fishers also land a small but undetermined amount of halibut into ports on the Oregon side of the Columbia River. In 1999, the fishery in this sub-area closed before September 30 for the first time.

Table 8. Seasons, restrictions and catches of halibut in the Columbia River subarea.

YEAR	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT	DAYS OPEN	QUOTA	ACTUAL CATCH
1995	5/1 - 9/30	1	none	153	4,617	1,426
1996	5/1 - 9/30	1	none	153	4,617	1,190
1997	5/1 - 9/30	1	none	153	6,215	1,326
1998	5/1 - 9/30	1	none	153	8,565	5,185
1999	5/1 - 8/29	1	none	121	7,474	7,423
2000	5/1 - 7/29	1	none	90	8,177	7,728

4.6 Sport Fishery in Oregon

ODFW has been monitoring the sport halibut fishery since 1987. The data from the ODFW sampling program and history of regulations are shown in Table 9. Up until 1989, the entire Oregon coast was managed as a single unit. Beginning in 1989 (and continuing to date), the area north of Cape Falcon was included in the Washington coast subarea south of the Queets River. In 1991, the Council established a subarea extending from Cape Falcon south to the Nestucca River and managed it with a separate sub-quota. This area was created principally at the request of anglers from Pacific City who wanted the opportunity to pursue their historical small-boat fishery for a longer time period each summer. Also in 1991, the Council created a mid-summer season that was open only inside 30 fathoms which was designed to favor small-boat anglers. The 1994 long-term revisions of the Plan removed the Nestucca River division and defined the major Oregon sport fishery management areas as the Oregon central coast area from Cape Falcon south to the Siuslaw River, and the south coast area from the Siuslaw River to the California border.

Table 9. Oregon sport seasons, days open, and catch.

YEAR	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT (inches)	TOTAL DAYS OPEN	QUOTA ^{2/}	ACTUAL CATCH
1987 ^{2/}	2/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	2	30	242	none	78,195
1988 ^{2/}	4/1 - 7/6 (7 days/wk)	2	3 ^{1/2}	97	60,000	74,327
1989	4/1 - 6/28 (Wed-Sat)	2	32	50	57,000 ^{2/}	135,413
	8/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	2	32+50 ^{4/}	61		
	Total			111		

Table 9. Oregon sport seasons, days open, and catch.

YEAR	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT (inches)	TOTAL DAYS OPEN	QUOTA ^{1/}	ACTUAL CATCH
1990	4/4 - 6/21 (Wed-Sat)	2	32+50 ^{4/}	46	51,800	
	8/18 - 8/22 (7 days/wk)	2	32+50 ^{4/}	<u>5</u>	<u>22,250</u>	
	Total			51	74,050	70,084
1991	5/1 - 7/7 (7 days/wk) ^{6/}	1	32	68	1,000	1,267
	4/3 - 6/1 (Wed-Sat) ^{2/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	36	40,000	38,787
	7/15 - 8/26 (7 days/wk) ^{8/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	43	8,100	834
	8/27 - 9/30 (7 days/wk) ^{9/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	<u>35</u>	<u>15,012</u>	<u>13,578</u>
	Total			146 ^{10/}	64,112	54,466
1992 ^{11/}	5/1 - 7/10 (7 days/wk) ^{6/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	71	2,911	1,738
	5/1 - 7/10 (Wed-Sat) ^{2/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	41	60,131	57,164
	7/11 - 8/4 (7 days/wk) ^{8/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	25	8,333	706
	8/5 - 9/30 (Wed-Sun) ^{9/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	<u>41</u>	<u>21,215</u>	<u>22,012</u>
	Total			137 ^{10/}	92,590	81,620
1993 ^{11/}	5/1 - 7/2 (7 days/wk) ^{6/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	63	2,564	5,191
	5/1 - 6/18 (Wed-Sat) ^{2/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	35	65,811	66,429
	7/12 - 8/3 (7 days/wk) ^{8/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	23	2,564	569
	8/4 - 8/8 (Wed-Sun) ^{9/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	<u>5</u>	<u>14,530</u>	<u>22,298</u>
	Total			91 ^{10/}	85,469	94,487
1994 ^{11/}	5/4 - 5/20 (Wed-Sun) ^{9/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	13	53,641	63,013
	5/21 - 9/30 (7 days/wk) ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	133	2,716	4,806
	8/6 - ^{12/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	<u>0^{12/}</u>	<u>11,543</u>	<u>0^{12/}</u>
	Total			146	67,900	67,819
1995	5/4 - 5/27 (Thur-Sat)	2	32+50 ^{4/}	12	67,706	76,177
	5/28-7/4 (7 days/wk) ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	38	3,314	4,953
	8/3, 8/4 ^{9/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	2	23,674	21,835
	South Coast					
	5/4-6/2 (Thur-Sat)	2	32+50 ^{4/}	14	5,999	5,526
1996	6/3-8/2 (7 days/wk) ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	60	1,500	12
	Total				104,335	108,503
1996	5/16-5/25(Thur-Sat)	2	32+50 ^{4/}	6	64,392	49,920
	5/26-8/1 (7 days/wk) ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	67	6,629	3,491
	8/2, 8/3, 8/9 ^{2/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	3	23,673	35,267
	South Coast					
	5/16-6/1 (Thur-Sat)	2	32+50 ^{4/}	9	5,999	8,522
1997	6/2-8/1 (7 days/wk) ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	60	1,500	407
	Total				104,335	97,607
1997	5/8-10, 5/15-17, 5/23-24	2	32+50 ^{4/}	8	86,703	110,806
	5/25-7/31 (7 days/wk) ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	68	8,925	4,428
	8/1 ^{2/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	1	31,876	20,968
	8/2-8/8 ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	7		
	South Coast					
1997	5/8-5/17(Thur-Sat)	2	32+50 ^{4/}	6	8,077	7,295
	5/18-7/31 (7 days/wk) ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	74	2,019	676
	Total				140,475	144,173

Table 9. Oregon sport seasons, days open, and catch.

YEAR	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT (inches)	TOTAL DAYS OPEN	QUOTA ^{1/}	ACTUAL CATCH
1998	Central Coast 5/14-16, 5/21-23 5/24 - 8/23 (7 days/wk) ^{13/} 8/7, 8/8, 8/14 ^{2/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	6	101,566	82,311
		2	32+50 ^{4/}	92	10,455	1,852
		2	32+50 ^{4/}	3	37,341	72,599
	South Coast 5/14-16, 5/21-23 5/24 - 8/23 (7 days/wk) ^{13/}	2	32+50 ^{4/}	6	9,462	8,773
		2	32+50 ^{4/}	92	2,365	393
	Total				161,189	165,928
1999	Central Coast 5/1 - 9/30 (7days/wk) ^{13/} 5/13-15, 5/20-22 8/6	1	32 ^{14/}	153	9,650	2,353
		1	32 ^{14/}	6	93,746	106,560
		1	32 ^{14/}	1	34,463	28,329
	South Coast 5/1 - 8/15 (7 days/wk) ^{13/} 5/13-15, 5/20-22	1	32 ^{14/}	107	2,183	1,069
		1	32 ^{14/}	6	8,732	11,277
	Total				148,774	149,588
2000	Central Coast 5/1 - 9/30 (7days/wk) ^{13/} 5/11-13, 5/18-19 9/22	1	32 ^{14/}	153	12,324	**
		1	32 ^{14/}	5	97,630	112,953
		1	32 ^{14/}	1	35,893	7,203
	South Coast 5/11-13, 5/18-19 ^{15/}	1	32 ^{14/}	153	9,094	15,620
	Total				154,941	135,776

*** 2000 Catch levels not yet available

^{1/} Quotas in 1988 and 1989 applied to both CA and OR; CA had a separate sub-quota in subsequent years.^{2/} Season applies to entire state; there were no subareas.^{3/} In 1988, there were no size limits from 4/1 to 6/15. From 6/16 to 7/6, a 32 inch minimum size was in effect.^{4/} The size limit was minimum 32" for the first fish and minimum 50" for the second fish.^{5/} There was not a specific quota in 1989, instead there were fixed seasons designed to harvest 57,000 lbs.^{6/} This season applies to the subarea from Cape Falcon to the Nestucca River.^{7/} This season applies to the subarea from the Nestucca River to the OR/CA border.^{8/} This season applies to the area inside 30 fathoms from Cape Falcon to the OR/CA border.^{9/} This season applies to the area from Cape Falcon to the OR/CA border (all depths).^{10/} The fishing days are not additive since some represent concurrent seasons. The total is the number of separate days.^{11/} Oregon halibut tag required; annual limit of six halibut.^{12/} This season was canceled inseason (in May) due to insufficient quota remaining to allow for one-day of fishing.^{13/} This season applies to the area inside 30 fathoms.^{14/} First fish taken of 32" or greater in length^{15/} Beginning in 2000, the inside-30-fathom fishery was combined for the Central and South Coast sub-areas.

4.7 Sport Fishery Southern Oregon (south of Humbug Mountain) in California

The sport fishery for Pacific halibut in the area south of Humbug Mountain, Oregon and in California is a non-target fishery with incidental catches of Pacific halibut primarily occurring in the Shelter Cove area. Because of the incidental nature of this sport fishery and small catch of halibut, the catch has not been monitored and no estimates of catch are available. IPHC catch statistics have assumed that the allocation was caught.

Table 10. California sport seasons, days open, and catch.

YEAR	SEASON	BAG LIMIT	SIZE LIMIT (inches)	TOTAL DAYS OPEN	QUOTA	ACTUAL CATCH
1986	2/1 - 12/31 (7 days/wk)	2	none	334	none	?
1987	2/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	2	30	242	none	?
1988	4/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	2	none	183	^{1/}	?
1989	4/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	183	^{1/}	?
1990	4/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	183	2,000	?
1991	5/15 - 9/15 (7 days/wk)	1	32	123	1,700	?
1992	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	2,473	?
1993	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	2,281	?
1994	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	1,813	?
1995	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	2,785	?
1996	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	2,785	?
1997	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	3,750	?
1998	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	4,393	?
1999	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	4,698	?
2000	5/1 - 9/30 (7 days/wk)	1	32	153	4,893	?

^{1/} Included with Oregon quota

4.8 Area 2A Licenses

Effective in 1995, three types of IPHC licenses were issued for Area 2A fisheries: a directed commercial license, a license to land halibut caught incidentally in the salmon troll fishery, and a charter license. No vessel may participate in more than one of these three fisheries per year. The numbers of IPHC licenses issued for Area 2A in recent years are shown in Table 11.

Commercial fishers must obtain an IPHC license to harvest halibut commercially in Area 2A. Since 1994, commercial fishers have had to choose between a license for the directed fishery or a license for retaining halibut incidentally in the salmon troll fishery. Fishers licensed to fish for halibut in the commercial halibut fishery could not obtain an IPHC charterboat (sport) license nor operate the vessel in the sport fisheries in Area 2A. Conversely, fishers participating in the Area 2A sport fisheries could not participate in either of the commercial fisheries for halibut. In the sport fishery, only charterboat owners/operators must obtain an IPHC license; IPHC licenses are not required for individual anglers nor private boats.

Table 11 . IPHC Licenses issued for Area 2A.

Year	Directed Fishery	Incidental Catch in Salmon Troll	Charterboat
1995	350	124	132
1996	403	123	135
1997	428	275	139
1998	363	264	141
1999	286	284	126
2000	268	235	130

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE

This analysis compares the proposed action with status quo management for non-treaty commercial and recreational halibut fisheries. Treaty halibut fishery managers have proposed no changes to the Plan for 2001.

5.1 Separating the Non-Treaty Directed Commercial Halibut Quota from the Non-Treaty Incidental Halibut Catch Allowance for the Salmon Troll Fishery

The Plan underwent major revisions in 1995 that set the base structure for the current catch allocation scheme, including a division of the non-treaty commercial fisheries quota into an allocation of 85% of that quota for a directed commercial fishery and 15% of the quota for the incidental harvest of halibut during the salmon troll fisheries. Salmon troll fisheries had traditionally harvested halibut during the salmon seasons, but had little access to halibut in the late 1980s through early 1990s, when commercial halibut harvest opportunities were limited to a few days per year (See Table 4). To recognize this history of incidental halibut harvest in the salmon troll fisheries without having to restructure the directed halibut fisheries, the Council recommended

separating these two types of fisheries in the Plan and providing allocations to each sector. To ensure that future halibut landings in the salmon troll fishery would reflect the traditionally incidental character of its past halibut landings, the Council adopted a ratio fishery, allowing salmon trollers to retain halibut only when a specified number of chinook salmon had been caught. This ratio has changed significantly since 1995 (See Table 12).

Table 12. Incidental halibut retention ratio in the salmon troll fishery	
1995	20 chinook : 1 halibut
1996	15 chinook : 1 halibut
1997	10 chinook : 1 halibut
1998	8 chinook : 1 halibut
1999	5 chinook : 1 halibut
2000	3 chinook : 1 halibut

Under the current Plan, incidental halibut landings are allowed in the salmon troll fishery during May and June, but then any unharvested halibut from the incidental fishery is shifted to the directed fishery on July 1. In July, the directed commercial fishery has access to its own quota, plus any unharvested quota from the May/June salmon fishery set-aside. If the directed commercial fishery takes the entire non-treaty commercial allocation (directed + incidental) in July, the salmon troll fisheries do not have an opportunity to land incidentally-caught halibut in August and September. If, however, the directed commercial fishery does not harvest the entire commercial allocation in July, incidental halibut landings opportunities open up again for the salmon troll fishery on August 1.

In the earlier years of separating the directed and incidental fisheries, the higher chinook-to-halibut ratio kept the salmon troll fishery from harvesting its entire halibut allowance in the May-June period, with the remainder of that allowance then becoming available to the directed fishery in July (See Table 4). Salmon trollers have had an incentive to push for a lower chinook-to-halibut ratio over time, to ensure that their halibut allowance would not be taken by the directed fishery. The proposed changes for 2001 would separate the directed and incidental harvest allowances, so that trollers would not have to worry about their fishery's access to halibut quota, and future chinook-to-halibut ratios might be set to better reflect incidental catch rates.

By separating directed and incidental fishery halibut quotas, the salmon troll fishery would still begin halibut landings in May, with those landings continuing until the quota is achieved. This change would not represent a major shift in quota, but rather, a change to priorities in managing non-treaty commercial landings. For salmon trollers, there would be less incentive to try to land as much halibut as possible during the May/June fisheries so as to not "lose" that halibut to the directed commercial fishery in July. Directed commercial fisheries would no longer have access to halibut unharvested in the May/June troll fisheries. Salmon troll fisheries would no longer have access to halibut unharvested in the July directed commercial fisheries. Because these fisheries have historically traded access to halibut quota, the ability of each fishery to achieve its quota has changed from year to year. The proposed changes to the Plan would reduce some of the between year shifts in quota attainment, without radically changing fleet access to halibut.

5.2 Revising Sport Fishery Management in the Washington State South Coast Sub-Area to Increase Quota Available to the All-Depth Fishery

Since 1996, the sport fishery in this sub-area has been managed with a 1,000 lb set-aside to allow fisheries targeting other species to retain halibut taken incidentally in nearshore waters. This nearshore fishery set-aside was initially reserved for use after the closure of the all-depth, directed fishery. Table 7, above, shows that in years when the all-depth fishery has been closed either on or below quota, the nearshore fishery has extended through the end of September (1996, 1999). Conversely, in years when the all-depth fishery exceeds its quota, nearshore fishery access to halibut is usually confined to the same open period as the all-depth fishery (1997, 1998, 2000).

Before 1999, the all-depth fishery would begin in May and continue until it was estimated that 1,000 lb remained in the quota. The nearshore fishery would not open for halibut retention until after the closure of the all-depth fishery. This arrangement frustrated nearshore fishers in 1998, who had to wait for over a month while the all-depth fishery slowly attained its quota. To address nearshore fisher concerns, the Council amended the Plan for 1999 to allow the nearshore fishery to open at the same time as the all-depth fishery. Halibut landings from nearshore waters are permitted seven days per week until the entire quota is taken, while landings from all-depths are permitted five days per week until it is estimated that 1,000 lb remains in the quota.

Under the WDFW proposal for 2001, the two fisheries would still open simultaneously, but the entire sub-area quota would be available to the all-depth fishery, although the nearshore fishery would also have access to the quota when the all-depth fishery is open. The all-depth fishery has a much higher daily catch rate than the nearshore fishery and would be closed when it is estimated that the quota remaining would not support another day of fishing. If there is any remaining quota after the closure of the all-depth fishery, the nearshore fishery would re-open until the quota is achieved.

This proposal would primarily affect anglers who fish in nearshore waters and who may catch halibut incidentally while targeting other species. Under the current Plan, if the all-depth fishery is closed with 1,000 lb remaining in the quota, the nearshore fishery is able to continue fishing through the summer. However, if the all-depth fishery is closed and has exceeded its quota, the nearshore fishery is cut short. Under the WDFW proposal for 2001, the nearshore fishery would continue after the close of the all-depth fishery only if too little quota remained for a single day of all-depth fishing. As shown in Table 13, single all-depth fishing days at the end of the season may require as much as 2,000 lb of halibut. Thus, nearshore fishery opportunities to land halibut after the end of the all-depth season will likely not change under the 2001 proposed revisions to the Plan. As in past years, whether nearshore landings are allowed after the end of the all-depth fishery will depend upon how close the all-depth fishery comes to quota attainment.

Table 13. Washington South Coast Sub-Area Halibut Fishery, 1999-2000				
1999 open days	Average # halibut landed per weekday	Average total poundage of halibut landed per weekday	Average # of halibut landed per weekend day	Average total poundage of halibut landed per weekend day
May 2	n/a	n/a	30.0	531.0
May 3-9	10.7	188.8	75.5	1336.4
May 10-16	29.3	519.2	128.5	2774.5
May 17-24	36.3	641.6	121.0	2141.7
May 24-30	45.3	800.9	94.0	1663.8
May 31	155.0	2743.5	n/a	n/a
2000 open days				
May 1-7	48.3	873.3	126	2280.6
May 8-14	38.4	695.0	100	1810.0
May 15-21	64.3	7162.9	109	1972.9
May 22-28	42.8	774.7	93	1683.3
May 29	118.0	2135.8	n/a	n/a

5.3 Eliminating the closed area hot spot in the Washington State south coast sub-area

In 1995, changes to the Plan included more structured fishing seasons for the West Coast sport fisheries. Management measures for the Washington South Coast sub-area included a "control zone" closed to sport fishing for halibut. The intent of the control zone was to close waters of higher halibut concentration to fishing, thereby slowing the rate of quota attainment in that sub-area. From 1995 through 1998, the control zone was located in waters south of Queets River (47°31'42" N. lat) and southward to 47°10'00" N. lat., west of 124°40'00" W. long.

By 1998, fishers in this sub-area were looking at this sub-area and wondering if it had the effect of slowing the rate of fishing so much that the south coast sub-area was becoming undesirable to anglers chartering halibut trips. The large closed area also seemed to include waters that were not necessarily areas of high halibut abundance. These two factors led WDFW to propose for the 1999 Plan a reduction in the size of the control zone to a smaller "hot spot," an area of high halibut abundance. In the 1999 and 2000 Plans, the closed area was a halibut hot spot with the following dimensions:

NW Corner	47°19'00" N. lat.	124°53'00" W. long.
NE Corner	47°19'00" N. lat.	124°48'00" W. long.
SW Corner	47°16'00" N. lat.	124°53'00" W. long.
SE Corner	47°16'00" N. lat.	124°48'00" W. long.

Shortly after the beginning of the 1999 season in this sub-area, managers realized that fishing rates were still relatively slow in the sub-area, and arranged to open up the hot spot to fishing. Opening the hot spot did accelerate the rate of fishing in the south coast sub-area, but not so much so that the rate of quota attainment could not be monitored and controlled. The season structuring objective for this sub-area is to "maximize the season length, while maintaining a quality fishing experience." Fishers in this sub-area felt that while the slow rate of fishing maximized the season length, it was so slow that it did not "maintain a quality fishing experience." During the 2000 fishing season, the hot spot was again opened to fishing shortly after the start of the fishing season.

The closed area was not designed for conservation purposes and has no conservation benefits. As can be seen above in Table 7, opening the hot spot to fishing in 1999 and 2000 did have the effect of hastening quota attainment and shortening the season over the 1998 season. However, the 1996 and 1997 seasons, with the much larger closed control zone, were of even shorter duration than the 2000 season. Given these variations in season length, it seems that maintaining a closed area may have less effect on the duration of the fishery than uncontrollable factors such as severity of weather, seasonal halibut migrations, and ocean conditions. Removing the closed area from the Plan would not be a significant change for fishery participants from the 1999 and 2000 seasons, in which the closed area was opened inseason.

Summary: The proposed action will not have significant effects on the halibut resource, the fishers involved in the halibut fishery, other fisheries, or other marine resources that interact with the halibut resource. The proposed action will not affect any threatened or endangered species or their habitats within the meaning of the regulations implementing Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. It also will not affect other marine mammals or marine birds as these species do not interact directly or indirectly with the halibut fishery. The proposed action would not redistribute halibut quota to an extent greater than annual variations in quota attainment. The proposed action will have no effect on the Area 2A TAC, which is set by IPHC, so the proposed action will not affect the Pacific halibut resource in Area 2A.

6.0 EFFECTS ON ENDANGERED SPECIES AND THE COASTAL ZONE

The proposed changes to the Plan do not constitute an action that may affect endangered/threatened species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) or their habitat within the meaning of the regulations implementing Section 7 of the ESA. The proposed changes also are unlikely to affect non-listed marine mammals or marine birds as these species do not interact directly or indirectly with the halibut fishery in Area 2A.

The proposed action is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with applicable State coastal zone management programs. NMFS has corresponded with the responsible state agencies under Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act to obtain their concurrence in this finding.

7.0 EXECUTIVE ORDER 12866

The proposed changes to the Plan are not a significant action according to E.O. 12866. This action will not have a cumulative effect on the economy of \$100 million or more nor will it result in a major increase in costs to consumers, industries, government agencies, or geographical regions. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated on competition, employment, investments, productivity, innovation, or competitiveness of U.S.-based enterprises. The gross revenues generated from halibut fisheries coastwide are not expected to differ substantially as a result of the proposed changes to the Plan.

8.0 REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT

**** This portion of the EA/RIR would be completed after Council decision on these issues. ****

9.0 PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT

There is no collection of information requirement subject at the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.

10.0 EXECUTIVE ORDER 12612

The proposed changes to the Plan do not contain policies with federalism implications sufficient to warrant preparation of a federalism assessment under Executive Order 12612.

11.0 FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**** This portion of the EA/RIR would be completed after Council decision on these issues. ****

12.0 COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

This EA/RIR was prepared in coordination and consultation with the Pacific Fishery Management Council, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, and the International Pacific Halibut Commission.

13.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

14.0 REFERENCES

APPENDIX

2000 PACIFIC HALIBUT CATCH SHARING PLAN FOR AREA 2A

(a) FRAMEWORK

This Plan constitutes a framework that shall be applied to the annual Area 2A total allowable catch (TAC) approved by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) each January. The framework shall be implemented in both IPHC regulations and domestic regulations (implemented by NMFS) as published in the *Federal Register*.

(b) ALLOCATIONS

(1) Except as provided below under (b)(2), this Plan allocates 35 percent of the Area 2A TAC to U.S. treaty Indian tribes in the State of Washington in subarea 2A-1, and 65 percent to non-Indian fisheries in Area 2A. The allocation to non-Indian fisheries is divided into three shares, with the Washington sport fishery (north of the Columbia River) receiving 36.6 percent, the Oregon/California sport fishery receiving 31.7 percent, and the commercial fishery receiving 31.7 percent. Allocations within the non-Indian commercial and sport fisheries are described in sections (e) and (f) of this Plan. These allocations may be changed if new information becomes available that indicates a change is necessary and/or the Pacific Fishery Management Council takes action to reconsider its allocation recommendations. Such changes will be made after appropriate rulemaking is completed and published in the *Federal Register*.

(2) To meet the requirements of U.S. District Court Stipulation and Order (*U.S., et al. v. State of Washington, et al.* Case No. 9213 Phase I, Subproceeding No. 92-1, Stipulation and Order, July 7, 1999), 25,000 lb (11.3 mt) dressed weight of halibut will be transferred from the non-treaty Area 2A halibut allocation to the treaty allocation in Area 2A-1 each year for eight years commencing in the year 2000 and ending in the year 2007, for a total transfer of 200,000 lb (90.7 mt). To accelerate the total transfer, more than 25,000 lb (11.3 mt) may be transferred in any year upon prior written agreement of the parties to the stipulation.

(c) SUBQUOTAS

The allocations in this Plan are distributed as subquotas to ensure that any overage or underage by any one group will not affect achievement of an allocation set aside for another group. The specific allocative measures in the treaty Indian, non-Indian commercial, and non-Indian sport fisheries in Area 2A are described in paragraphs (d) through (f) of this Plan.

(d) TREATY INDIAN FISHERIES

Except as provided above in (b)(2), thirty-five percent of the Area 2A TAC is allocated to 12 treaty Indian tribes in subarea 2A-1, which includes that portion of Area 2A north of Point Chehalis, WA

(46°53'18" N. lat.) and east of 125°44'00" W. long. The treaty Indian allocation is to provide for a tribal commercial fishery and a ceremonial and subsistence fishery. These two fisheries are managed separately; any overages in the commercial fishery do not affect the ceremonial and subsistence fishery. The commercial fishery is managed to achieve an established subquota, while the ceremonial and subsistence fishery is managed for a year-round season. The tribes will estimate the ceremonial and subsistence harvest expectations in January of each year, and the remainder of the allocation will be for the tribal commercial fishery.

- (1) The tribal ceremonial and subsistence fishery begins on January 1 and continues through December 31. No size or bag limits will apply to the ceremonial and subsistence fishery, except that when the tribal commercial fishery is closed, treaty Indians may take and retain not more than two halibut per day per person for subsistence purposes. Ceremonial fisheries shall be managed by tribal regulations promulgated inseason to meet the needs of specific ceremonial events. Halibut taken for ceremonial and subsistence purposes may not be offered for sale or sold.
- (2) The tribal commercial fishery begins between March 1 and April 1 and continues through November 15 or until the tribal commercial subquota is taken, whichever is earlier. Any halibut sold by treaty Indians during the commercial fishing season must comply with IPHC regulations on size limits for the non-Indian fishery.

(e) NON-INDIAN COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

The non-Indian commercial fishery is allocated 31.7 percent of the non-Indian share of the Area 2A TAC for a directed halibut fishery and an incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fishery. The non-Indian commercial allocation is approximately 20.6 percent of the Area 2A TAC. Incidental catch of halibut in the primary directed sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, WA will be authorized if the Washington sport allocation exceeds 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) as described in section (e)(3) of this Plan. The structuring and management of these three fisheries is as follows.

(1) Incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery.

Fifteen percent of the non-Indian commercial fishery allocation is allocated to the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as an incidental catch during salmon fisheries. The quota for this incidental catch fishery is approximately 3.1 percent of the Area 2A TAC.

- (i) The Council will recommend landing restrictions at its spring public meeting each year to control the amount of halibut caught incidentally in the troll fishery. The landing restrictions will be based on the number of incidental harvest license applications submitted to the IPHC, halibut catch rates, the amount of allocation, and other pertinent factors, and may include catch or landing ratios, landing limits, or other means to control the rate of halibut harvest. NMFS will publish the landing restrictions annually in the *Federal Register*, along with the salmon management measures.

(ii) Inseason adjustments to the incidental halibut catch fishery.

(A) NMFS may make inseason adjustments to the landing restrictions, if requested by the Council Chairman, as necessary to assure that the incidental harvest rate is appropriate for salmon and halibut availability, does not encourage target fishing on halibut, and does not increase the likelihood of exceeding the quota for this fishery. In determining whether to make such inseason adjustments, NMFS will consult with the applicable state representative(s) on the Halibut Managers Group, a representative of the Council's Salmon Advisory Sub-Panel, and Council staff.

(B) Notice and effectiveness of inseason adjustments will be made by NMFS in accordance with paragraph (f)(5) of this Plan.

(iii) If the quota for this fishery is not harvested during the May/June salmon troll fishery, the IPHC will move any remaining quota from this fishery to the directed halibut fishery on July 1.

(iv) If the overall quota for the non-Indian commercial fishery has not been harvested by July 31 and the quota for the salmon troll fishery was not harvested during the May/June fishery, landings of halibut caught incidentally during salmon troll fisheries will be allowed effective August 1 and will continue (while additional directed fishery openings are set to harvest all of the remaining commercial allocation) until the amount of halibut that was initially available as quota for the troll fishery is taken or the overall non-Indian commercial quota is estimated to have been achieved by the IPHC. Landing restrictions implemented for the May/June salmon troll fishery will apply to this reopening of the fishery. Notice of the August opening of this fishery will be announced on the NMFS hotline (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825. No halibut retention in the salmon troll fishery will be allowed in August unless the August opening has been announced on the NMFS hotline.

(v) A salmon troller may participate in this fishery or in the directed commercial fishery targeting halibut, but not in both.

(2) Directed fishery targeting halibut.

Eighty-five percent of the non-Indian commercial fishery allocation is allocated to the directed fishery targeting halibut (e.g., longline fishery) in southern Washington, Oregon, and California. The allocation for this directed catch fishery is approximately 17.5 percent of the Area 2A TAC. This fishery is confined to the area south of Subarea 2A-1 (south of Point Chehalis, WA; 46°53'18" N. lat.). After June 30, the overall quota for the non-Indian commercial fishery will be available to the directed commercial fishery in accordance with the specifications provided in §(e)(1)(iii) and (iv) above. The commercial fishery opening date(s), duration, and vessel trip limits, as necessary to ensure that the quota for the non-Indian commercial fisheries is not exceeded, will be determined by the IPHC and implemented in

IPHC regulations. If the IPHC determines that poundage remaining in the quota for the non-Indian commercial fisheries is insufficient to allow an additional day of directed halibut fishing, the remaining halibut will be made available for incidental catch of halibut in the fall salmon troll fisheries (independent of the incidental harvest allocation).

(3) Incidental catch in the sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis.

If the Area 2A TAC is greater than 900,000 lb (408.2 mt), the primary directed sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis will be allocated the Washington sport allocation that is in excess of 214,110 lb (97.1 mt), provided a minimum of 10,000 lb (4.5 mt) is available (i.e., the Washington sport allocation is 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) or greater). If the amount above 214,110 lb (97.1 mt) is less than 10,000 lb (4.5 mt), then the excess will be allocated to the Washington sport subareas according to section (f) of this Plan.

The Council will recommend landing restrictions at its spring public meeting each year to control the amount of halibut caught incidentally in this fishery. The landing restrictions will be based on the amount of the allocation and other pertinent factors, and may include catch or landing ratios, landing limits, or other means to control the rate of halibut landings. NMFS will publish the landing restrictions annually in the Federal Register.

(4) Commercial license restrictions/declarations.

Commercial fishers must choose either (1) to operate in the directed commercial fishery in Area 2A and/or retain halibut caught incidentally in the primary directed sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, WA or (2) to retain halibut caught incidentally during the salmon troll fishery. Commercial fishers operating in the directed halibut fishery and/or retaining halibut incidentally caught in the primary directed sablefish fishery must send their license application to the IPHC postmarked no later than April 30, or the first weekday in May, if April 30 falls on a weekend, in order to obtain a license to fish for halibut in Area 2A. Commercial fishers operating in the salmon troll fishery who seek to retain incidentally caught halibut must send their application for a license to the IPHC for the incidental catch of halibut in Area 2A postmarked no later than March 31, or the first weekday in April, if March 31 falls on a weekend. Fishing vessels licensed by IPHC to fish commercially in Area 2A are prohibited from operating in the sport fisheries in Area 2A.

(f) SPORT FISHERIES

The non-Indian sport fisheries are allocated 68.3 percent of the non-Indian share, which is approximately 44.4 percent of the Area 2A TAC. The allocation is further divided as subquotas among seven geographic subareas.

- (1) Subarea management. The sport fishery is divided into seven sport fishery subareas, each having separate allocations and management measures as follows.

(i) Washington inside waters (Puget Sound) subarea.

This sport fishery subarea is allocated 23.5 percent of the first 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 32 percent of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) and 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) (except as provided in section (e)(3) of this Plan). This subarea is defined as all U.S. waters east of the mouth of the Sekiu River, as defined by a line extending from 48°17'30" N. lat., 124°23'70" W. long. north to 48°24'10" N. lat., 124°23'70" W. long., including Puget Sound. The structuring objective for this subarea is to provide a stable sport fishing opportunity and maximize the season length. Due to inability to monitor the catch in this area inseason, a fixed season will be established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achievement of the quota. No inseason adjustments will be made, and estimates of actual catch will be made postseason. The fishery will open in May and continue at least through July 4, or until a date established preseason (and published in the sport fishery regulations) when the quota is predicted to be taken, or until September 30, whichever is earlier. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will sponsor a public workshop shortly after the IPHC annual meeting to develop recommendations to NMFS on the opening date and weekly structure of the fishery each year. The daily bag limit is one fish per person, with no size limit.

(ii) Washington north coast subarea.

This sport fishery subarea is allocated 62.2 percent of the first 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 32 percent of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) and 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) (except as provided in section (e)(3) of this Plan). This subarea is defined as all U.S. waters west of the mouth of the Sekiu River, as defined above in paragraph (f)(1)(i), and north of the Queets River (47°31'42" N. lat.). The structuring objective for this subarea is to maximize the season length for viable fishing opportunity and, if possible, stagger the seasons to spread out this opportunity to anglers who utilize these remote grounds. The fishery opens on May 1, and continues 5 days per week (Tuesday through Saturday). If May 1 falls on a Sunday or Monday, the fishery will open on the following Tuesday. The highest priority is for the season to last through the month of May. If sufficient quota remains, the second priority is to establish a fishery that will be open July 1, through at least July 4. If the preseason prediction indicates that these two goals can be met without using the quota for this subarea, then the next priority is to extend the fishery into June and continue for 5 days per week (Tuesday through Saturday) for as long a period as possible. No sport fishing for halibut is allowed after September 30. The daily bag limit in all fisheries is one halibut per person with no size limit. A closure to sport fishing for halibut will be established in an area that is approximately 19.5 nm (36.1 km) southwest of Cape Flattery. The size of this closed area may be modified preseason by NMFS to maximize the season length. The closed area is defined as the area within a rectangle defined by these four corners: 48°18'00" N. lat., 125°11'00" W. long.; 48°18'00" N. lat., 124°59'00" W. long.; 48°04'00" N. lat., 125°11'00" W. long.; 48°04'00" N. lat., 124°59'00" W. long.

(iii) Washington south coast subarea.

This sport fishery is allocated 12.3 percent of the first 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 32 percent of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) and 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) (except as provided in section (e)(3) of this Plan). This subarea is defined as waters south of the Queets River (47°31'42" N. lat.) and north of Leadbetter Point (46°38'10" N. lat.). The structuring objective for this subarea is to maximize the season length, while maintaining a quality fishing experience. The fishery will open on May 1. If May 1 falls on a Friday or Saturday, the fishery will open on the following Sunday. The fishery will be open Sunday through Thursday in all areas, except where prohibited, and the fishery will be open 7 days per week in the area from Queets River south to 47°00'00" N. lat. and east of 124°40'00". The fishery will continue until September 30, or until 1,000 lb (454 kg) are projected to remain in the subarea quota, whichever occurs first. Immediately following this closure, the area from the Queets River south to 47°00'00" N. lat. and east of 124°40'00" W. long. will reopen for 7 days per week until either the subarea quota is estimated to have been taken and the season is closed by the IPHC, or until September 30, whichever occurs first. The daily bag limit is one halibut per person, with no size limit. Sport fishing for halibut is prohibited in the area within a rectangle defined by these four corners: 47°19'00" N. lat., 124°53'00" W. long.; 47°19'00" N. lat., 124°48'00" W. long.; 47°16'00" N. lat., 124°53'00" W. long.; 47°16'00" N. lat., 124°48'00" W. long. If a decision is made inseason to open this closed area to sport fishing for halibut, that decision will become effective upon announcement on the NMFS halibut hotline, at (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825.

(iv) Columbia River subarea.

This sport fishery subarea is allocated 2.0 percent of the first 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 4 percent of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 lb (59.4 mt) and 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) (except as provided in section (e)(3) of this Plan). This subarea also is allocated 2.0 percent of the Oregon/California sport allocation. This subarea is defined as waters south of Leadbetter Point, WA (46°38'10" N. lat.) and north of Cape Falcon, OR (45°46'00" N. lat.). The fishery will open on May 1, and continue 7 days per week until the subquota is estimated to have been taken, or September 30, whichever is earlier. The daily bag limit is the first halibut taken, per person, of 32 inches (81.3 cm) or greater in length.

(v) Oregon north central coast subarea.

If the Area 2A TAC is 388,350 lb (176.2 mt) and greater, this subarea extends from Cape Falcon to the Siuslaw River at the Florence north jetty (44°01'08" N. lat.) and is allocated 88.03 percent of the Oregon/California sport allocation, which is approximately 18.13 percent of the Area 2A TAC. If the Area 2A TAC is less than 388,350 lb (176.2 mt), this subarea extends from Cape Falcon to the Humbug Mountain, Oregon (42°40'30" N. lat.) and is allocated 95.0 percent of the Oregon/California sport allocation. The structuring objectives for this subarea are to provide two periods of fishing opportunity in May and in August in

productive deeper water areas along the coast, principally for charterboat and larger private boat anglers, and provide a period of fishing opportunity in the summer for nearshore waters for small boat anglers. Fixed season dates will be established preseason for the May and August openings and will not be modified inseason except that the August openings may be modified inseason if the combined Oregon all-depth quotas are estimated to be achieved. Recent year catch rates will be used as a guideline for estimating the catch rate for the May and August fishery each year. The number of fixed season days established will be based on the projected catch per day with the intent of not exceeding the subarea season subquotas. ODFW will monitor landings and provide a post-season estimate of catch within 2 weeks of the end of the fixed season. If sufficient catch remains for an additional day of fishing after the May season or the August season, openings will be provided if possible in May and August respectively. Potential additional open dates for both the May and August seasons will be announced preseason. If a decision is made inseason to allow fishing on one or more additional days, notice of the opening will be announced on the NMFS hotline (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825. No all-depth halibut fishing will be allowed on the additional dates unless the opening date has been announced on the NMFS hotline. Any poundage remaining unharvested in the May all-depth subquota will be added to the August all-depth sub-quota. Any poundage that is not needed to extend the inside 30-fathom fishery through to September 30 will be added to the August all-depth season if it can be utilized, and any poundage remaining unharvested from the August all-depth fishery will be added to the inside 30-fathom fishery subquotas. The daily bag limit for all seasons is the first halibut taken, per person, of 32 inches (81.3 cm) or greater in length. ODFW will sponsor a public workshop shortly after the IPHC annual meeting to develop recommendations to NMFS on the open dates for each season each year. The three seasons for this subarea are as follows.

A. The first season opens on May 1, only in waters inside the 30-fathom (55 m) curve, and continues daily until the combined subquotas for the north central and south central inside 30-fathom fisheries (7 percent of the north central subarea quota plus 20 percent of the south central subarea quota) are taken, or until September 30, whichever is earlier. Poundage that is estimated to be above the amount needed to keep this season open through September 30 will be transferred to the August all-depth fishery if it can be utilized. Any overage in the all-depth fisheries would not affect achievement of allocation set aside for the inside 30-fathom curve fishery.

B. The second season is an all-depth fishery that begins on the second Thursday in May and is allocated 68 percent of the subarea quota. Fixed season dates will be established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achievement of the subquota for this season. No inseason adjustments will be made, except that additional opening days (established preseason) may be allowed if any quota for this season remains unharvested. The fishery will be structured for 2 days per week (Friday and Saturday) if the season is for 4 or fewer fishing days. The fishery will be structured for 3 days per week (Thursday through Saturday) if the season is for 5 or more fishing days.

C. The last season is a coastwide (Cape Falcon, Oregon to Humbug Mountain, Oregon) all-depth fishery that begins on the first Friday in August and is allocated 25 percent of the subarea quota. Fixed season dates will be established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achievement of the combined Oregon all-depth quotas for the Central and South Oregon Coast subareas. The fishery will be structured for 2 days per week (Friday and Saturday). No inseason adjustments will be made (unless the combined Oregon all-depth quotas are estimated to be achieved), except that additional opening days may be allowed if quota remains unharvested. If quota remains unharvested, but is insufficient for one day of an all-depth fishery, that additional quota will be transferred to the fisheries inside the 30-fathom (55 m) curve.

(vi) Oregon south central coast subarea.

If the Area 2A TAC is 388,350 lb (176.2 mt) and greater, this subarea extends from the Siuslaw River at the Florence north jetty (44°01'08" N. lat.) to Humbug Mountain, Oregon (42°40'30" N. lat.) and is allocated 6.97 percent of the Oregon/California sport allocation, which is approximately 1.43 percent of the Area 2A TAC. If the Area 2A TAC is less than 388,350 lb (176.2 mt), this subarea will be included in the Oregon Central Coast subarea. The structuring objective for this subarea is to create a south coast management zone that has the same objectives as the Oregon central coast subarea and is designed to accommodate the needs of both charterboat and private boat anglers in the south coast subarea where weather and bar crossing conditions very often do not allow scheduled fishing trips. Fixed season dates will be established preseason for the May and August openings and will not be modified inseason except that the August openings may be modified inseason if the combined Oregon all-depth quotas are estimated to be achieved. Recent year catch rates will be used as a guideline for estimating the catch rate for the May and August fishery each year. The number of fixed season days established will be based on the projected catch per day with the intent of not exceeding the subarea season subquotas. ODFW will monitor landings and provide a post-season estimate of catch within 2 weeks of the end of the fixed season. If sufficient quota remains for an additional day of fishing after the May season or the August season, openings will be provided if possible in May and August respectively. Potential additional open dates for both the May and August seasons will be announced preseason. If a decision is made inseason to allow fishing on one or more additional days, notice of the opening will be announced on the NMFS hotline (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825. No all-depth halibut fishing will be allowed on the additional dates unless the opening date has been announced on the NMFS hotline. Any poundage remaining unharvested in the May all-depth subquota will be added to the August all-depth sub-quota. Any poundage that is not needed to extend the inside 30-fathom fishery through to September 30 will be added to the August all-depth season if it can be utilized, and any poundage remaining unharvested from the August all-depth fishery will be added to the inside 30-fathom fishery subquotas. The daily bag limit for all seasons is the first halibut taken, per person, of 32 inches (81.3 cm) or greater in length. ODFW will sponsor a public workshop shortly after the IPHC annual

meeting to develop recommendations to NMFS on the open dates for each season each year. The three seasons for this subarea are as follows.

A. The first season opens on May 1, only in waters inside the 30-fathom (55 m) curve, and continues daily until the combined subquotas for the north central and south central inside 30-fathom fisheries (7 percent of the north central subarea quota plus 20 percent of the south central subarea quota) are taken, or until September 30, whichever is earlier. Poundage that is estimated to be above the amount needed to keep this season open through September 30 will be transferred to the August all-depth fishery if it can be utilized. Any overage in the all-depth fisheries would not affect achievement of allocation set aside for the inside 30-fathom curve fishery.

B. The second season is an all-depth fishery that begins on the second Thursday in May and is allocated 80 percent of the subarea quota. Fixed season dates will be established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achievement of the subquota for this season. No inseason adjustments will be made, except that additional opening days (established preseason) may be allowed if any quota for this season remains unharvested. The fishery will be structured for 2 days per week (Friday and Saturday) if the season is for 4 or fewer fishing days. The fishery will be structured for 3 days per week (Thursday through Saturday) if the season is for 5 or more fishing days.

C. The last season is a coastwide (Cape Falcon, OR to Humbug Mountain, OR) all-depth fishery that begins on the first Friday in August. Fixed season dates will be established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achievement of the combined Oregon all-depth quotas for the Central and South Oregon Coast subareas. The fishery will be structured for 2 days per week (Friday and Saturday). No inseason adjustments will be made (unless the combined Oregon all-depth quotas are estimated to be achieved), except that additional opening days may be allowed if quota remains unharvested. If quota remains unharvested, but is insufficient for one day of an all-depth fishery, that additional quota will be transferred to the fisheries inside the 30 fathom (55 m) curve.

(vii) South of Humbug Mountain subarea.

This sport fishery subarea is allocated 3.0 percent of the Oregon/California subquota, which is approximately 0.62 percent of the Area 2A TAC. This area is defined as the area south of Humbug Mountain, OR (42°40'30" N. lat.), including California waters. The structuring objective for this subarea is to provide anglers the opportunity to fish in a continuous, fixed season that is open from May 1 through September 30. The daily bag limit is the first halibut taken, per person, of 32 inches (81.3 cm) or greater in length. Due to inability to monitor the catch in this area inseason, a fixed season will be established preseason by NMFS based on projected catch per day and number of days to achievement of the subquota; no inseason adjustments will be made, and estimates of actual catch will be made post season.

- (2) Port of landing management. All sport fishing in Area 2A will be managed on a "port of landing" basis, whereby any halibut landed into a port will count toward the quota for the subarea in which that port is located, and the regulations governing the subarea of landing apply, regardless of the specific area of catch.
- (3) Possession limits. The sport possession limit on land north of Leadbetter Point, WA is two daily bag limits, regardless of condition, but only one daily bag limit may be possessed on the vessel. The possession limit on land south of Leadbetter Point, WA is the same as the bag limit.
- (4) Ban on sport vessels in the commercial fishery. Vessels operating in the sport fishery for halibut in Area 2A are prohibited from operating in the commercial halibut fishery in Area 2A. Sport fishers and charterboat operators must determine, prior to May 1 of each year, whether they will operate in the commercial halibut fisheries in Area 2A which requires a commercial fishing license from the IPHC. Sport fishing for halibut in Area 2A is prohibited from a vessel licensed to fish commercially for halibut in Area 2A.
- (5) Flexible inseason management provisions.
 - (i) The Regional Administrator, NMFS Northwest Region, after consultation with the Chairman of the Pacific Fishery Management Council, the IPHC Executive Director, and the Fisheries Director(s) of the affected state(s), or their designees, is authorized to modify regulations during the season after making the following determinations.
 - (A) The action is necessary to allow allocation objectives to be met.
 - (B) The action will not result in exceeding the catch limit for the area.
 - (C) If any of the sport fishery subareas north of Cape Falcon, OR are not projected to utilize their respective quotas by September 30, NMFS may take inseason action to transfer any projected unused quota to a Washington sport subarea projected to have the fewest number of sport fishing days in the calendar year.
 - (ii) Flexible inseason management provisions include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (A) Modification of sport fishing periods;
 - (B) Modification of sport fishing bag limits;
 - (C) Modification of sport fishing size limits;
 - (D) Modification of sport fishing days per calendar week; and

- (E) Modification of subarea quotas north of Cape Falcon, OR consistent with the standards in section (f)(5)(i)(C) of this Plan
- (iii) Notice procedures.
 - (A) Inseason actions taken by NMFS will be published in the *Federal Register*.
 - (B) Actual notice of inseason management actions will be provided by a telephone hotline administered by the Northwest Region, NMFS, at 800-662-9825 (May through September) and by U.S. Coast Guard broadcasts. These broadcasts are announced on Channel 16 VHF-FM and 2182 kHz at frequent intervals. The announcements designate the channel or frequency over which the notice to mariners will be immediately broadcast. Since provisions of these regulations may be altered by inseason actions, sport fishermen should monitor either the telephone hotline or U.S. Coast Guard broadcasts for current information for the area in which they are fishing.
- (iv) Effective dates.
 - (A) Inseason actions will be effective on the date specified in the Federal Register notice or at the time that the action is filed for public inspection with the Office of the Federal Register, whichever is later, except that any partial or complete inseason opening of the Washington South Coast sport fishery closed area may (designated above at (f)(1)(iii)) may be made effective upon announcement on the NMFS halibut hotline.
 - (B) If time allows, NMFS will invite public comment prior to the effective date of any inseason action filed with the *Federal Register*. If the Regional Administrator determines, for good cause, that an inseason action must be filed without affording a prior opportunity for public comment, public comments will be received for a period of 15 days after of the action in the *Federal Register*.
 - (C) Inseason actions will remain in effect until the stated expiration date or until rescinded, modified, or superseded. However, no inseason action has any effect beyond the end of the calendar year in which it is issued.
- (v) Availability of data. The Regional Administrator will compile, in aggregate form, all data and other information relevant to the action being taken and will make them available for public review during normal office hours at the Northwest Regional Office, NMFS, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA.

(6) Sport fishery closure provisions.

The IPHC shall determine and announce closing dates to the public for any subarea in which a subquota is estimated to have been taken. When the IPHC has determined that a subquota has been taken, and has announced a date on which the season will close, no person shall sport fish for halibut in that area after that date for the rest of the year, unless a reopening of that area for sport halibut fishing is scheduled by NMFS as an inseason action, or announced by the IPHC.

(g) PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Each year, NMFS will publish a proposed rule with any regulatory modifications necessary to implement the Plan for the following year, with a request for public comments. The comment period will extend until after the IPHC annual meeting, so that the public will have the opportunity to consider the final Area 2A TAC before submitting comments. After the Area 2A TAC is known, and after NMFS reviews public comments, NMFS will implement final rules governing the sport fisheries. The final ratio of halibut to chinook to be allowed as incidental catch in the salmon troll fishery will be published with the annual salmon management measures.

Sources: 65 FR 14909 (March 20, 2000)
64 FR 13519 (March 19, 1999)
63 FR 13000 (March 17, 1998)
62 FR 12759 (March 18, 1997)
61 FR 11337 (March 20, 1996)
60 FR 14651 (March 20, 1995)
59 FR 22522 (May 2, 1994)
58 FR 17791 (April 6, 1993)

Sources: 63 FR 13000 (March 17, 1998)
62 FR 12759 (March 18, 1997)
61 FR 11337 (March 20, 1996)
60 FR 14651 (March 20, 1995)
59 FR 22522 (May 2, 1994)

REVISED
WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
CHANGES TO THE PACIFIC HALIBUT CATCH SHARING PLAN

* * *

(e) NON-INDIAN COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

The non-Indian commercial fishery is allocated 31.7 percent of the non-Indian share of the Area 2A TAC for a directed halibut fishery and an incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fishery. The non-Indian commercial allocation is approximately 20.6 percent of the Area 2A TAC. Incidental catch of halibut in the primary directed sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, WA will be authorized if the Washington sport allocation exceeds 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) as described in section (e)(3) of this Plan. The structuring and management of these three fisheries is as follows.

(1) Incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery.

Fifteen percent of the non-Indian commercial fishery allocation is allocated to the salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as an incidental catch during salmon fisheries. The quota for this incidental catch fishery is approximately 3.1 percent of the Area 2A TAC. The primary management objective for this fishery is to harvest the troll quota as an incidental catch during the May/June salmon troll fishery. The secondary management objective is to harvest any remaining troll quota as incidental catch during the July, August, and September salmon troll fishery.

- (i) The Council will recommend landing restrictions at its spring public meeting each year to control the amount of halibut caught incidentally in the troll fishery. The landing restrictions will be based on the number of incidental harvest license applications submitted to the IPHC, halibut catch rates, the amount of allocation, and other pertinent factors, and may include catch or landing ratios, landing limits, or other means to control the rate of halibut harvest. NMFS will publish the landing restrictions annually in the *Federal Register*, along with the salmon management measures.

(ii) Inseason adjustments to the incidental halibut catch fishery.

(A) NMFS may make inseason adjustments to the landing restrictions, if requested by the Council Chairman, as necessary to assure that the incidental harvest rate is appropriate for salmon and halibut availability, does not encourage target fishing on halibut, and does not increase the likelihood of exceeding the quota for this fishery. In determining whether to make such inseason adjustments, NMFS will consult with the applicable state representative(s), ~~on the Halibut Managers Group, a representative of the applicable commercial troll representative(s) on the Council's Salmon Advisory Sub-Panel, and Council staff.~~

(B) Notice and effectiveness of inseason adjustments will be made by NMFS in accordance with paragraph (f)(5) of this Plan.

- (iii) ~~If the quota for this fishery is not harvested during the May/June salmon troll fishery, the IPHC will move any remaining quota from this fishery to the directed halibut fishery on July 1.~~

- ~~(iv)~~ If the overall quota for the non-Indian, incidental commercial troll fishery has not been harvested by July 31 and the quota for the salmon troll fishery was not harvested salmon trollers during the May/June fishery, additional landings of halibut caught incidentally during salmon troll fisheries will be allowed effective August/July 1 and will continue ~~(while additional directed fishery openings are set to harvest all of the remaining commercial allocation)~~ until the amount of halibut that was initially available as quota for the troll fishery is taken or the overall non-Indian commercial quota is estimated to have been achieved by the IPHC. Landing restrictions implemented for the May/June salmon troll fishery will apply to this reopening of the fishery. Notice of the August/July opening of this fishery will be announced on the NMFS hotline (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825. No halibut

retention in the salmon troll fishery will be allowed after June in ~~August~~ unless the ~~August~~ opening has been announced on the NMFS hotline.

- (v) A salmon troller may participate in this fishery or in the directed commercial fishery targeting halibut, but not in both.

(2) Directed fishery targeting halibut.

Eighty-five percent of the non-Indian commercial fishery allocation is allocated to the directed fishery targeting halibut (e.g., longline fishery) in southern Washington, Oregon, and California. The allocation for this directed catch fishery is approximately 17.5 percent of the Area 2A TAC. This fishery is confined to the area south of Subarea 2A-1 (south of Point Chehalis, WA; 46°53'18" N. lat.). ~~After June 30, the overall quota for the non-Indian commercial fishery will be available to the directed commercial fishery in accordance with the specifications provided in §(e)(1)(iii) and (iv) above.~~ The commercial fishery opening date(s), duration, and vessel trip limits, as necessary to ensure that the quota for the non-Indian commercial fisheries is not exceeded, will be determined by the IPHC and implemented in IPHC regulations. If the IPHC determines that poundage remaining in the quota for the non-Indian commercial fisheries is insufficient to allow an additional day of directed halibut fishing, the remaining halibut will be made available for incidental catch of halibut in the fall salmon troll fisheries (independent of the incidental harvest allocation).

(3) Incidental catch in the sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis.

If the Area 2A TAC is greater than 900,000 lb (408.2 mt), the primary directed sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis will be allocated the Washington sport allocation that is in excess of 214,110 lb (97.1 mt), provided a minimum of 10,000 lb (4.5 mt) is available (i.e., the Washington sport allocation is 224,110 lb (101.7 mt) or greater). If the amount above 214,110 lb (97.1 mt) is less than 10,000 lb (4.5 mt), then the excess will be allocated to the Washington sport subareas according to section (f) of this Plan.

The Council will recommend landing restrictions at its spring public meeting each year to control the amount of halibut caught incidentally in this fishery. The landing restrictions will be based on the amount of the allocation and other pertinent factors, and may include catch or landing ratios, landing limits, or other means to control the rate of halibut landings. NMFS will publish the landing restrictions annually in the Federal Register.

* * *

(f) SPORT FISHERIES

* * *

(1) Subarea Management

* * *

(ii) Washington north coast subarea

No changes recommended. [i.e., "The fishery opens on May 1 and continues 5 days per week (Tuesday through Saturday). "If May 1 falls on a Sunday or Monday, the fishery will open on the following Tuesday."]

* * *

(iii) Washington south coast subarea

No change in the opening dates. [i.e., "The fishery will open on May 1. If May 1 falls on a Friday or Saturday, the fishery will open on the following Sunday."]

Change 7th sentence: "The fishery will continue until September 30, or until 1,000 lb (454 kg) are projected to remain in the subarea quota the quota is achieved, whichever occurs first."

Change the 8th sentence and delete the last two sentences: ~~"Immediately following this closure, Subsequent to this closure, if any remaining quota is insufficient for an offshore fishery, but is sufficient for a nearshore fishery (e.g., > 500 lbs.), the area from the Queets River south to 47°00'00"N. lat. and east of 124°40'00"W. long. will reopen for 7 days per week until either the remaining subarea quota is estimated to have been taken and the season is closed by the IPHC, or until September 30, whichever occurs first. The daily bag limit is one halibut per person, with no size limit. Sport fishing for halibut is prohibited in the area within a rectangle defined by these four corners: 47°16'00"N. lat., 124°53'00"W. long.; 47°19'00"N. lat., 124°48'00"W. long.; 47°16'00"N. lat., 124°53'00"W. long.; 47°16'00"N. lat., 124°48'00"W. long. If a decision is made inseason to open this closed area to sport fishing for halibut, that decision will become effective upon announcement on the NMFS halibut hotline, at (206) 526-6667 or (800) 662-9825."~~

* * *

(5) Flexible inseason management provisions.

* * *

(iv) Effective dates.

Modify (A) as follows:

- (A) Inseason actions will be effective on the day specified in the Federal Register notice or at the time that the action is filed for public inspection with the Office of the Federal Register, whichever is later., ~~except that any partial or complete inseason opening of the Washington South Coast sport fishery closed area (designated above at (f)(1)(iii)) may be made effective upon announcement on the NMFS halibut hotline.~~

PFMC
11/1/00

September 19, 2000

RECEIVED

Pacific Fishery Management Council
2130 SW 5th Avenue Suite 224
Portland, OR 97201

SEP 22 2000

PFMC

RE: SPORT HALIBUT CATCH ALLOCATION

My wife and I attended a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Halibut Advisory meeting on September 8 in Olympia. We went there in support of a proposition to allocate half the sport halibut quota for Area 4 on May 1, the other half on July 1. This year the May 1 quota went to June 16 and the July opener lasted 2 days. For the following reasons we feel a 50-50 split would be more fair.

Small boaters could fish the more dependable weather in July.

Family groups could more easily fish for halibut. As it is now almost all of the season is closed before the kids are out of school.

It would be better for the state because people are fishing Canada or buying Canadian licenses if they want to fish in July or August.


Area 4 is no longer divided into A and B so you can't fish the inside after the outside closes as has been done in the past.

With just a few days to fish in July people are more tempted to go out to Swiftsure Bank in marginal weather.

Small boat fishers are solidly behind this proposal. Many petitions of 21 signers each have been gathered at Snow Creek Resort near Neah Bay, and sport shops in western Washington. Many more will be coming. They were sent to Phil Anderson with Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

At that September meeting our wishes were ignored. The Fish and Wildlife people present said they will recommend a similar division for 2001. They give a few Neah Bay charter boat and resort operators what they want instead of dividing it fairly with small boaters. We feel that they have had their own way long enough. We think it is time that small boaters and family groups have equal opportunity. We hope the Council will make this change for 2001

Sincerely,



Ken Crane
5405 160th St. SW
Edmonds, WA 98026
(425) 743-6787

EMAIL RECEIVED AT COUNCIL OFFICE 10/13/00

Subject: Halibut Quotas and Seasons

Comments by: Janice Green, Recreational Fishing Alliance, P.O. Box 71, Umpqua,
Oregon 97486

We urge that the PFMC give added halibut quota and fishing opportunity to sportfishermen, and recognize at the same time that sportfishermen need a season that fits the weather so that the whole all-depth quota is not wiped out by the charterboat industry.

----- Original Message -----

From: Janice Green

To: Kay Brown

Cc: Don Bodenmiller

Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 11:21 PM