

## INCIDENTAL CATCH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SALMON TROLL AND FIXED GEAR SABLEFISH FISHERIES

Regulations governing incidental harvest of halibut in the salmon troll fishery and primary fixed gear fishery for sablefish north of Point Chehalis require the Council to adopt halibut landing restrictions to allow incidental harvest while assuring quotas are not exceeded.

### **Salmon Troll Fishery**

The 2015 Pacific halibut Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for Area 2A allocates 15 percent of the non-Indian commercial halibut allocation to the salmon troll fishery as incidental catch. The primary management objective outlined in the CSP is to harvest the incidental quota during the April through June salmon troll fishery with a secondary objective to harvest any remaining quota from July through the remainder of the salmon troll fishery. The Council has successfully used landing ratios and a total trip limit to ensure a manageable progression of the fishery in past years. A summary of management information for the incidental halibut fishery since the initial season in 1995 is provided in Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 1.

Current regulations provide for Pacific halibut retention starting April 1, 2015, if the pre-May 1 salmon troll fisheries occur. The landing ratio would be no more than one halibut per four Chinook, except one halibut may be possessed or landed without meeting the ratio requirement and no more than 12 halibut may be landed per trip. Under this agenda item, the Council should confirm or make recommendations to modify the April 2015 retention limits.

Further, under this agenda item, the Council should adopt for public review a range of halibut landing restrictions for the salmon troll fishery starting May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016. Such restrictions should comport with the 2015 salmon management alternatives and the early season (pre-May 1) fisheries in 2016. The Council is scheduled to take final action on the May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016 halibut landing restrictions in the salmon troll fishery at the April Council meeting.

### **Primary Sablefish Fishery North of Point Chehalis**

The total Area 2A halibut quota is large enough this year to provide for incidental halibut harvest in the primary fixed gear fishery for sablefish north of Point Chehalis. This incidental fishery is allocated that portion of the Washington sport allocation in excess of 214,110 pounds, provided a minimum of 10,000 pounds is available, up to a maximum of 70,000 pounds. The objectives for the annual landing restrictions are to attain the halibut allocation at about the same time as the end of the primary sablefish season (October 31) and to ensure an equitable sharing of the halibut landings among the fishers. In past years, the Council has successfully used landing restrictions to maintain the harvest within the allocation. A summary of management information for the incidental halibut fishery since the initial season in 2001 is provided in Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 1. Current regulations provide for Pacific halibut retention starting April 1, 2015 with a landing ratio of 75 lb dressed weight of halibut for every 1,000 pounds dressed weight of sablefish landed and up to 2 additional halibut in excess of the 75-pounds-per-1,000-pound ratio

per landing. Under this agenda item, the Council should confirm or make recommendations to modify the incidental landing limits for the primary sablefish north of Point Chehalis from April 1 to October 31, 2015.

**Council Action:**

- 1. Provide guidance, as necessary, on the appropriate halibut landing restrictions in the salmon troll fishery for April 2015 (pre-May 1 fisheries).**
- 2. Adopt for public review a range of halibut landing restrictions for the salmon troll fishery from May 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016.**
- 3. Adopt final halibut landing restrictions for the fixed gear sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis from April 1 to October 31, 2015.**

**Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item G.2.a, Attachment 1: Summary of Pacific Halibut Incidental Catch Management.

**Agenda Order:**

- a. Agenda Item Overview Kelly Ames
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Make Recommendations for Inseason Changes to April 2015 Retention Limits in the Salmon Troll Fishery, as Necessary; Adopt Public Review Options for 2015 and April 2016 Salmon Troll Fishery; Adopt Final Retention Limits for 2015 Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery

PFMC  
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