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From: **Marc Schmidt** <coastlinecharters@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Aug 14, 2015 at 10:12 PM
Subject: Public Comments - Pacific Halibut
To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Council Members,

Let me first thank you for your attention to the details that keep our fisheries going in a productive direction. I am a charter boat operator in Eureka, CA and am writing to encourage your support of additional Pacific Halibut allocation for CA. In 2015 OR and WA received 30% or more of the allocation each and CA got a ridiculous 4%. This is not a fair and equitable allocation as it should be according to the MSA and needs to be increased to a reasonable allocation. I respectfully recommend that the WA and OR sport fisheries contribute another 2% each to give CA an additional 4% for a total 2016 CA allocation of 8%. Ultimately, I feel the CA allocation should be even more to be fair to all sportfishermen and women in CA.

CA is going into a tough salmon cycle with the continued drought and difficult ocean conditions and we have depended on Pacific Halibut to keep us fishing through our short 6 month ocean fishing season (May 1st halibut is the first thing to open to Oct 31st rockfish is the last thing to close) in similar times in the past. 2016 and further look to be difficult years with limited salmon fishing and we really need a fair allocation to allow us to get more time on the water and keep the handful of 6 pack boats in business and our bills paid. Additionally, the waters off CA are contributing a significant portion of biomass to the 2A area and OR and WA are fishing on the backs of these fish and I feel overfishing their fishery.

CA DFW and it's anglers have shown great commitment to keeping inside our allocation limitations in 2015 and will continue to do so if we can get a fair and equitable allocation percentage. I have heard that Puget Sound overfishes their allocation recklessly by about 50k lbs annually.... if this is true I feel that WA should contribute 3% (or more) and OR only 1% for the additional 4% that CA should receive to have a fair and equitable allocation of 8% or more.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Respectfully,

Marc Schmidt
Coastline Charters
Eureka, CA
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Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers Inc.

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FEIN #61-1575751

August 12, 2015

Pacific Fishery Management Council
Dorothy Lowman, Chair
7700NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

RE: Pacific Halibut Catch Share Plan (CSP) Alternatives for 2016

Dear Chair Lowman and Council Members:

The Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers, Inc. (HASA) appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the Pacific Halibut Catch Share Plan (CSP) alternatives for 2016, and provides the following initial comments. The Pacific halibut fishery off of the Northern California coast is an increasingly important component of our overall fishery resource. As we endure the third year of drought in California, the likelihood of reductions in salmon populations will increase the importance of the Pacific halibut fishery to our local economy. At the November 2014 Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) meeting, HASA presented the economic impacts of the August 2014 block closure (*Agenda Item G.1.c. Supplemental Public Comment 3*), summarizing the substantial economic impacts to the northern California coastal communities caused by the 31 day closure in August 2014. In 2015, our season was further reduced such that the closure days will be at least twice as long as 2014 (minimum 63 days, and likely longer). We are experiencing much larger economic impacts in 2015 with substantial reductions in salmon fishing opportunities this summer due to low availability and warmer water conditions from the developing El Nino event. The 2016 season will likely be more damaging to our north coast economy as the effects of the ongoing 3-year California drought will further reduce salmon fishing opportunities.

As we have documented in previous comments, the current CSP is not fair and equitable for California. We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts that the PFMC and GAP, commercial fishermen, and the states of Oregon and Washington that have helped the transition towards a more fair and equitable distribution of the CSP. HASA remains committed to working very closely with CDFW as they develop, implement, monitor, and enforce real-time harvest management to ensure that California regulates its fishery with respect to the CSP.

HASA supports continuing the transition towards a more fair and equitable distribution of the Pacific halibut CSP, in parallel with substantial improvements in California harvest management to meet the CSP allocation. We respectfully request that the PFMC consider 2016 CSP alternatives that have California allocations no lower than 4% and at least 6%. We appreciate the opportunity to providing public input on this very important matter Please do not hesitate to contact me at (707) 845-0101 if you would like any additional information.

Sincerely,

Scott McBain,
President, Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers, Inc.