

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON RECREATIONAL  
 PACIFIC HALIBUT CATCHES IN 2015**

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) provides the following update on the total recreational catch of Pacific halibut from California for the 2015 fishing season. This report is intended to provide an update to the preliminary catch information CDFW provided in its September 2015 report. An update to the CDFW inseason projection methodology is also provided.

Monthly estimates produced by CDFW’s California Recreational Fishery Survey (CRFS) serve as CDFW’s best estimate of catch. However, production of these estimates involves a time lag of about six weeks after the month’s end. Therefore, CDFW uses weekly projections to estimate catch for any months for which CRFS estimates are not yet available – allowing for very timely estimation of cumulative catch during the season.

The 2015 recreational Pacific halibut fishery in California was open May 1-15, June 1-15, July 1-15, and August 1-12<sup>1</sup>. The fishery closed for the year on August 13, due to projected attainment of the quota. CDFW coordinated weekly with the National Marine Fisheries Service and International Pacific Halibut Commission to track catches and take action to close the fishery early once the quota was projected to be attained.

As the CRFS estimates for a given month became available<sup>2</sup>, those monthly estimates replaced the weekly projection values for that month (Table 1). CDFW’s 2015 season catch estimates are 24,906 net pounds, or 99 percent of the 25,220 net pound quota.

Table 1. Preliminary 2015 Pacific halibut catch estimates in California by month. CDFW projection values are provided in ~~strikeout~~ to illustrate the process of replacing the projections with CRFS estimates when those estimates became available. Data are from CRFS, preliminary and subject to change.

Month	Net Pounds Accrued	
	CDFW Projection	CRFS Estimate
May	<del>340</del>	379
June	<del>1,554</del>	1,784
July	<del>41,684</del>	13,768
August	<del>8,892</del>	8,977
September	0 (CLOSED)	
October	0 (CLOSED)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,906</b>	

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed description of the fishery’s performance, inseason tracking methodology, and fishery closure information please see the September 2015 CDFW Pacific Halibut Supplemental Report 2: [http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/11a\\_SUP\\_CDFW\\_Rpt2\\_SEPT2015BB.pdf](http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/11a_SUP_CDFW_Rpt2_SEPT2015BB.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Please see the November 2015 CDFW Report on Recreational Fishing Estimates: [http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/B1a\\_Sup\\_CDFW\\_Rpt\\_CRFS\\_Estimates\\_Nov2015BB.pdf](http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/B1a_Sup_CDFW_Rpt_CRFS_Estimates_Nov2015BB.pdf)

## **Updates to Inseason Projection Model for 2016**

In order to provide weekly preliminary approximations of catch, CDFW uses a regression to determine about how many net pounds of estimated catch are equivalent to one sampled fish<sup>3</sup>. CDFW is updating the data used to determine the regression to include data from 2015, and exclude data from years prior to 2010. This change was made because the more recent years better reflect the current fishery.

CDFW examined the number of sampled fish (A+B1) in each month/year against the corresponding catch estimate for each month/year (Table 2). There is a very strong correlation (Figure 1) between the number of fish observed/reported (A+B1 fish) and the resulting monthly catch estimate (r-squared = 0.90).

The updated regression analysis indicates that each sampled Pacific halibut in the field equates to 108.4 pounds of estimated catch – independent of month or year. CDFW intends to use this updated regression relationship to monitor catches inseason on a weekly basis, generate a preliminary projection of the total cumulative catch, and compare that relative to the California quota during the 2016 fishing season.

Table 2a-b. Numbers of sampled (A+B1) fish (a) and total catch estimates (b; net pounds) for recreationally caught Pacific halibut in California by month and year from 2010-2015 for PR and PC modes. Data from CRFS; 2015 data are preliminary.

(a)

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>May</b>	22	8	27	18	45	3
<b>June</b>	16	31	44	34	21	15
<b>July</b>	70	13	39	56	198	113
<b>August</b>	81	51	128	176	NA	86
<b>September</b>	17	21	79	23	44	NA
<b>October</b>	0	10	11	13	3	NA
<b>Yearly Total</b>	206	134	328	320	308	217

(b)

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>May</b>	2,608	2,716	1,523	1,282	4,795	378
<b>June</b>	2,513	3,154	4,119	5,419	2,779	1,783
<b>July</b>	10,347	1,347	5,369	12,446	20,124	13,768
<b>August</b>	10,918	5,170	12,306	19,179	0	8,977
<b>September</b>	2,202	2,663	3,270	2,554	3,293	NA
<b>October</b>	0	801	856	2,374	235	NA
<b>Yearly Total</b>	<b>28,587</b>	<b>15,852</b>	<b>27,442</b>	<b>43,254</b>	<b>31,227</b>	<b>24,906</b>

<sup>3</sup> For a detailed description of the inseason projection methodology see the CDFW Supplemental Report 2 from November 2014:

[http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/G1b\\_Sup\\_CDFW\\_Rpt2\\_NOV2014BB.pdf](http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/G1b_Sup_CDFW_Rpt2_NOV2014BB.pdf)

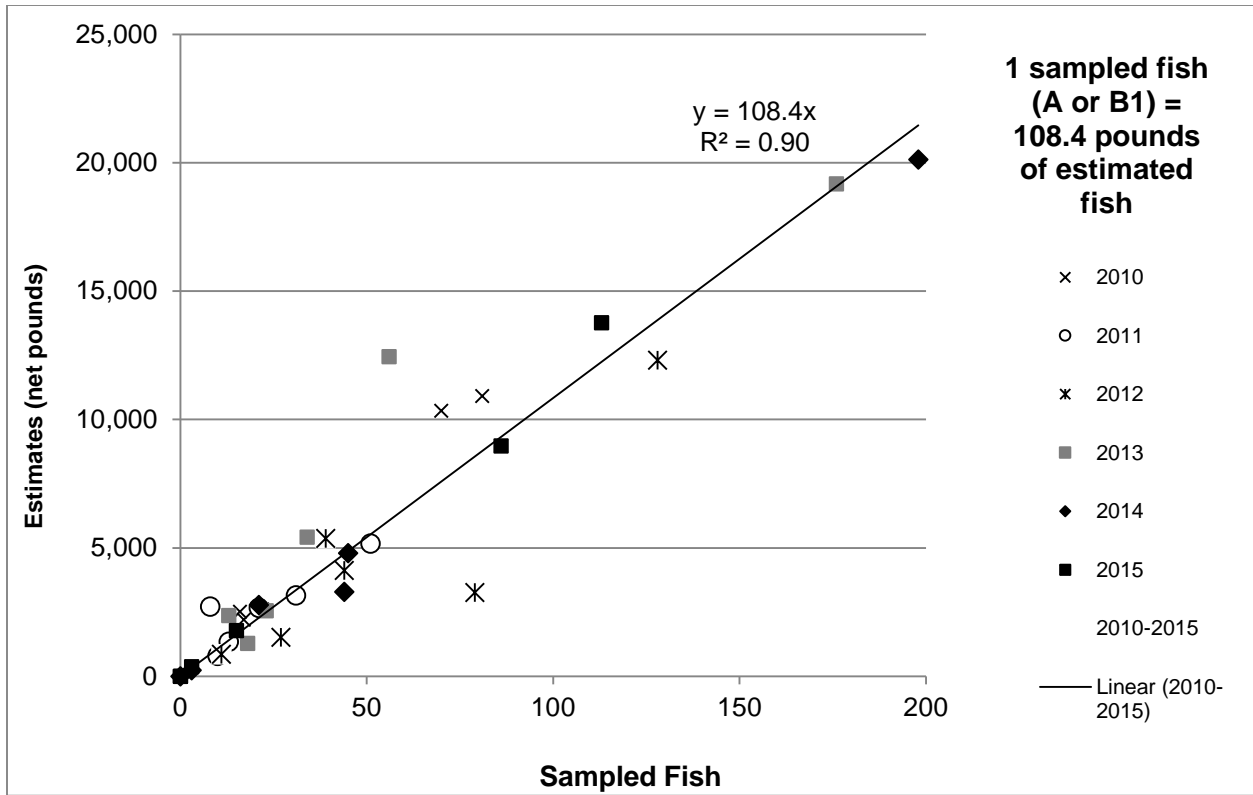


Figure 1. Regression of sampled (sampler examined, A, and angler reported kept, B1) Pacific halibut and monthly catch estimates from 2010-2015 for PR and PC modes. Data from CRFS; 2015 data are preliminary.