

INCIDENTAL CATCH RECOMMENDATION OPTIONS FOR THE SALMON TROLL AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 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 2016 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 H.2, Attachment 1.

Current regulations provide for Pacific halibut retention from April 1-30, 2016, 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 2016 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 from May 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 and April 1-30, 2017. Such restrictions should comport with the 2016 salmon management alternatives and the early season (pre-May 1) fisheries in 2017. The Council is scheduled to take final action on these limits 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 H.2, Attachment 1. Current groundfish regulations prohibit Pacific halibut retention in the primary sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis. As such, the Council should make

recommendations to establish the incidental landing limits for the primary sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis from April 1 to October 31, 2016.

Council Action:

1. **Provide recommendations, as necessary, on the appropriate halibut landing restrictions in the salmon troll fishery from April 1-30, 2016 (pre-May 1 fisheries).**
2. **Adopt for public review a range of halibut landing restrictions for the salmon troll fishery from May 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016 and April 1-30, 2017.**
3. **Adopt final halibut landing restrictions for the fixed gear sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis from April 1 to October 31, 2016.**

Reference Materials:

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

Agenda Order:

- H.2 Incidental Catch Recommendation Options for the Salmon Troll and
Final Recommendations for Fixed Gear Sablefish Fisheries Kelly Ames
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Make Recommendations for Inseason Changes to April 2016 Retention Limits in the Salmon Troll Fishery, as Necessary; Adopt Public Review Options for 2016 and April 2017 Salmon Troll Fishery; Adopt Final Retention Limits for 2016 Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery

PFMC
02/09/16