

REPORT ON THE 2018 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES IN AREA 2A (08/7/2018)

The 2018 Area 2A Pacific halibut (halibut) total allowable catch (TAC) of 1,190,000 pounds was allocated according to the 2018 Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for Area 2A as follows:

Treaty Tribes	416,500 (35%)
Non-Tribal Total	773,500 (65%)
Non-Tribal Commercial	237,465
Washington Sport	225,366
Oregon Sport	229,730
California Sport	30,940

All catch estimates in this report are preliminary, as some fisheries are ongoing and others have not had final data reconciliation. All weights in this report are net weight (gutted, head-off, and without ice and slime), unless otherwise noted. The structure of each fishery and the resulting harvests are described below.

TOTAL TRIBAL AND NON-TRIBAL FISHERIES

Best estimates of halibut catch for Area 2A indicate harvest of 647,065 pounds of the non-tribal total quota and 406,773 pounds of the tribal quota, with a total preliminary harvest estimate of 1,053,838 pounds, or 88.6%, of the 1,190,000 pound TAC. A summary of all Area 2A quotas and preliminary harvest estimates for 2018 is attached in Table 2 on the last page of this document.

NON-TRIBAL COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

A quota of 237,465 pounds (30.7% of the non-tribal share) was allocated to two fishery components:

- 1) a directed longline fishery targeting halibut south of Point Chehalis, WA; and
- 2) an incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fisheries off Washington, Oregon, and California.

An additional 50,000 pounds were allocated to an incidental catch fishery in the sablefish primary fishery for vessels using longline gear north of Point Chehalis, WA. This allowance for the sablefish primary fishery is taken from the portion of the Washington sport allocation that is above 214,110 pounds, as long as the amount is at least 10,000 pounds.

Incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery

A quota of 35,620 pounds of Pacific halibut (15% of the non-tribal commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the non-tribal commercial salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as incidental catch during salmon troll fisheries.

- Halibut retention was permitted in the salmon troll fisheries beginning May 1, with the following ratio: one halibut (minimum 32 inches) per two Chinook salmon landed by a salmon troller, except that one halibut could be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 25 halibut could be landed per trip.
- The fishery remained open with the same landing ratio until closure on July 14. On July 26, the fishery reopened with revised landing limits. The ratio changed to one Pacific halibut per three Chinook salmon, except one Pacific halibut may be possessed or landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 10 halibut may be possessed or landed per trip.
- Through July 31, the fishery is estimated to have taken 32,251 pounds.

Fishing with salmon troll gear is prohibited within the Salmon Troll Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (YRCA) off the northern Washington coast. Additionally, the "C-shaped" North Coast Recreational YRCA off Washington is designated as an area to be avoided (a voluntary closure) by salmon trollers.

Directed fishery targeting halibut

A quota of 201,845 pounds (85% of the non-tribal commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the directed longline fishery targeting 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°53.30' N. lat.). In addition, there are closed areas along the coast defined by depth contours. Between the U.S./Canada border and 40°10' N. lat. the western boundary is defined by a line approximating the 100 fm depth contour. The eastern boundary is defined as follows: Between the U.S./Canada border and 46°16' N. lat., the boundary is the shoreline. Between 46°16' N. lat. and 40°10' N. lat. the boundary is the 30 fm depth contour. One-day fishing periods of 10 hours in duration were scheduled every other week by the IPHC starting June 27, 2018. In 2018, the fishery was open for 3 fishing periods on June 27, July 11, and July 25. A 32 inch minimum size limit with the head on 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 Table 1. Vessels choosing to operate in this fishery could not land halibut as incidental catch in the salmon troll fishery, nor operate in the recreational fishery.

Table 1. 2018 fishing period limits (dressed weight, head-on with ice and slime, in pounds per vessel) by vessel size.

Vessel Class/Size (ft)		June 27 and July 11	July 25
0-25	A	860	380
26-30	B	1,075	475
31-35	C	1,715	760
36-40	D	4,735	2,100
41-45	E	5,090	2,260
46-50	F	6,095	2,710
51-55	G	6,800	3,025
56+	h	10,225	4,545

- The June 28, July 12 and 25 directed commercial open periods resulted in a catch of approximately 217,825 pounds. IPHC announced closure of the directed fishery on July 31, 2018. Final catch amounts will be available in 2019.

Incidental halibut catch in the sablefish primary longline fishery north of Point Chehalis, WA

A quota of 50,000 pounds was allocated to the primary sablefish fishery in Area 2A as incidental catch north of Point Chehalis, WA. This incidental fishery is only available to vessels with a groundfish limited entry permit endorsed for longline gear with a sablefish tier limit and with an IPHC license. Beginning April 1 the incidental landing limit was 140 pounds (dressed weight) of halibut per 1,000 pounds (dressed weight) of sablefish and up to 2 additional halibut in excess of the landing limit ratio. Effective April 23, the landing limit was changed to 160 pounds (64 kg) dressed weight of halibut for every 1,000 pounds (454 kg) dressed weight of sablefish landed and up to 2 additional halibut in excess of the 160 pounds per 1,000 pounds ratio per landing.

The fishery was confined to an area seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour. Fishing was also prohibited in the North Coast Commercial YRCA, an area off the northern Washington coast. In addition, the "C-shaped" North Coast Recreational YRCA off Washington is designated as an area to be avoided (a voluntary closure) by commercial longline sablefish fishermen.

- Through July 30, this fishery is projected to have landed 13,675 pounds.

SPORT FISHERIES (NON-TRIBAL)

486,036 pounds were allocated between sport fisheries in Washington (35.6% of non-tribal share, minus 50,000 pounds allocated to the incidental catch in the sablefish primary fishery), Oregon (29.7% of the non-tribal share), and California (4.0% of the non-tribal share). The allocations were further subdivided as quotas among six geographic subareas as described below. Unless otherwise noted the daily bag limit in all subareas was one halibut of any size, per person, per day.

Washington Inside Waters Subarea (Puget Sound and Strait of Juan de Fuca)

This area was allocated 60,995 pounds (23.5% of the first 130,845 pounds allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 32% of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 and 224,110 pounds). The fishing season in Puget Sound was open May 11, 13, 25, 27, and June 7, 9, 16, 21, 23, and 30. The fishery closed without enough quota to reopen after June 30.

- The estimated total catch in this area is 42,093 pounds, which is 18,902 pounds under the quota.

Northern Washington Coastal Waters Subarea (landings in Neah Bay and La Push)

The coastal area off Cape Flattery to Queets River was allocated 111,632 pounds (62.2% of the first 130,845 pounds allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 32% of the Washington sport allocation between 130,945 and 224,110 pounds). The fishery was open for 10 days (May 11, 13, 25, 27, and June 7, 9, 16, 21, 23, and 30). The "C-shaped" North Coast Recreational YRCA, southwest of Cape Flattery, was closed to sport halibut fishing.

- The estimated total catch for this area is 110,929 pounds, which is 703 pounds under the quota.

Washington South Coast Subarea (landings in Westport)

The area from the Queets River to Leadbetter Point was allocated 46,341 pounds (12.3% of the first 130,845 pounds allocated to the Washington sport fishery and 32% of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 and 224,110 pounds). This subarea operates with an all-depth fishery and a nearshore fishery. The nearshore fishery occurred in waters between the Queets River and 47°25.00' N. lat. south to 46°58.00' N. lat., and east of 124°30.00' W. long. The south coast subarea quota was allocated as follows: 2,000 pounds to the nearshore fishery and the remaining 44,341 pounds to the primary fishery. The all-depth fishery was open five days on May 11, 13, 25, 27, and June 21. The nearshore fishery was open June 2-6.

- The all-depth fishery estimated catch is 54,149 pounds which is 9,808 pounds over the quota.
- The nearshore fishery estimated catch is 614 pounds.

Columbia River Subarea (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon)

This sport fishery subarea was allocated 11,682 pounds, consisting of 2.0% of the first 130,845 pounds allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 4.0% of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 and 224,110 pounds, and 2.3% of the Oregon sport allocation. The fishery operates with an all-depth and nearshore fishery. The nearshore fishery is allocated 500 pounds to accommodate incidental halibut retention during groundfish fishing when the all depth halibut fishery in this area is closed.

- The all-depth fishery was open May 3, 4, 6, 10, and 11. It reopened on June 21 for one day. The nearshore fishery opened May 7 Monday –Wednesday, and opened seven days per week effective May 24.

- 717 pounds were transferred from the all-depth fishery when it closed May 11. There was enough quota to open all Washington fisheries, including the Columbia River all-depth, for an additional day on June 21. The nearshore fishery closed June 20, with remaining quota used on the June 21 opener.
- The all-depth fishery estimated catch is 15,661 pounds which is 4,479 pounds over the subarea quota.

Oregon Central Coast Subarea (Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain)

This sport fishery subarea was allocated 229,730 pounds (93.79% of the Oregon sport allocation).

Three seasons occurred in this subarea:

1. a restricted depth nearshore (inside 40-fathom) fishery, opened June 1, seven days a week;
2. a fixed Spring season in all depths that was open on May 10-12, 24-26, June 7-9, 21-23, and July 6-7;
3. a Summer season in all depths is scheduled to be open August 3-4, and may be opened August 17-18, August 31- September 1, September 14-5, and September 28-29, October 12-13, and October 26-27 until no quota remains.

Harvest in this subarea in these seasons is summarized in the bullets below.

- The inside 40-fathom fishery has an estimated catch of 16,225 pounds, as of August 1, which is 9,631 pounds under the quota of 25,856. This fishery is ongoing and catch is still accruing.
- The Spring all-depth fishery resulted in an estimated catch of 127,774 pounds, which is 7,968 pounds under the spring allocation.
- Quota left from the Spring all-depth fishery (7,968 pounds) was transferred to the Summer all-depth fishery.

Southern Oregon (Humbug Mountain to the OR/CA Border)

This sport fishery was allocated 8,982 pounds (3.9% of the Oregon sport fishery allocation minus the Oregon contribution to the Columbia River subarea). This area has a pre-set season of 7 days per week from May 1 to October 31. As the fishery is ongoing, catch is still accruing.

- This fishery resulted in an estimated catch of 1,860 pounds, as of August 1, which is 7,122 pounds under the quota. This fishery is ongoing and catch is still accruing.

California (Off the California Coast)

This sport fishery was allocated 30,940 pounds (4.0% of the non-tribal share). The fishery was open May 1- June 15, and July 1-15, and is scheduled to be open from August 1-15 and September 1-October 31, or until no quota remains.

- This fishery resulted in an estimated catch of 13,836 pounds, as of July 18. This fishery is ongoing and catch is still accruing.

TRIBAL FISHERIES

416,500 pounds (35% of the Area 2A TAC) was allocated to tribal fisheries. The tribes estimated that 27,000 pounds would be used for ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) fisheries and the remaining 389,500 pounds were allocated to the commercial fishery.

- The unrestricted fishery was open 36 hours for each tribe between March 24 and April 28. The unrestricted fishery landed 153,753 pounds.
- The restricted fishery was open 37 hours for each tribe between March 24 and April 28, with a 500 pound/vessel/day limit. The restricted fishery landed 38,050 pounds.
- The late fishery was open for 30 hours May 4 through 23, without limits. This fishery landed 214,970 pounds. The total landings for all tribal fisheries is 406,773 pounds, which is 17,273 pounds over the tribal commercial allocation. The C&S fishery will continue through December 31 and tribal estimates of catch will be reported by the tribes in January 2019.

Table 2. Summary of all Area 2A quotas and preliminary 2018 harvest estimates, updated with fishery information reported to NMFS through 8/1/2018.

2018 Area 2A TAC and Catch (in pounds)			2018 Quota	Inseason Revised Quota	Catch as of 8/1	% Quota taken
Tribal			416,500		408,703	98.1
Tribal	C&S		27,000		-	0.0
Tribal	Comm		389,500		408,703	* 104.9
Non-Tribal			773,500		647,141	83.7
Commercial			237,465		250,076	105.3
Commercial	Directed		201,845		217,825	* 107.9
Commercial	Incid. Salmon Troll		35,620		32,251	90.5
WA Sport			275,366		221,535	80.5
WA Sport	Incid. Sable		50,000		13,675	27.4
WA Sport	Puget Sound		60,995		42,168	* 69.1
WA Sport	North Coast		111,632		110,929	* 99.4
WA Sport	South Coast	Primary	44,341		54,150	* 122.1
WA Sport	South Coast	Nearshore	2,000		613	* 30.7
WA/OR	Columbia River	All-Depth	11,182		15,661	* 140.1
WA/OR	Columbia River	Nearshore	500		173	* 34.6
OR Sport			229,730		145,860	63.5
OR Sport	Central OR Coast	Spring all-depth	135,742		127,774	* 94.1
OR Sport	Central OR Coast	Summer all-depth	53,866	61,834	-	0.0
OR Sport	Central OR Coast	Nearshore	25,856		16,225	62.8
OR Sport	Southern OR		8,982		1,861	20.7
CA Sport			30,940		13,836	44.7
Total			1,190,000		1,055,844	88.7
* Fishery closed for the season						