

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON COMMERCIAL DIRECTED FISHERY TRANSITION PROCESS AND WORKSHOP PLANNING

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed the documents under this agenda item and received an overview from Pacific Fishery Management Council's (PFMC, Council) Salmon and Halibut Staff Officer Robin Ehlke and offers the following thoughts and suggestions.

The Workgroup's report ([Agenda H.1, Attachment 1](#)) provides a thorough overview of the potential management transition of the non-tribal directed commercial fishery from the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) to the U.S. (PFMC and National Marine Fisheries Service).

Regarding the questions in that report, the GAP understands the IPHC does want to transfer management authority, so the answer to question #1 appears to be yes. The GAP appreciates the IPHC understanding that the Council and NMFS need time to develop a management regime for this fishery. The GAP suggests maintaining the current IPHC vessel licensing system in the short term until the Council can establish a management regime. Phasing in minor changes over time seems like a good way to proceed. The IPHC process is simple and fishermen are familiar with the requirements.

Furthermore, the GAP believes a September-November Council meeting process for the 2020 fishery would suffice. The Council still has more time – if needed – to work on this issue in March or April as the fishery doesn't typically start until late June. The Council should consider an expanded effort to reach out to fishermen who participate in the directed halibut fishery, since only a few fishermen would probably make the trip to Boise in September or Costa Mesa in November.

The GAP notes that most of the directed halibut fishery occurs off of Oregon. Holding a hearing – similar to the pre-season salmon hearings – in the Newport and Charleston/Coos Bay areas in the spring may provide Council and NMFS staff with ideas for longer-term management. A full workshop may be premature at this point.

For guidance, the GAP recommends referring to our [November 2018](#) and [June 2017](#) statements for potential season management options. The GAP requests these season structure ideas be incorporated into any discussion about future NMFS/Council management of the directed commercial fishery for years beyond 2020.

PFMC
06/21/19