

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON COMMERCIAL DIRECTED FISHERY REGULATIONS FOR 2020

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a briefing from PFMC Staff Officer Robin Ehlke; International Pacific Halibut Commission Assistant Director Steve Keith; Lynn Mattes with the Oregon Department of Fish Wildlife; and Heather Hall with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on this agenda item.

The GAP also reviewed public comments from Mr. Marc Schmidt and Mr. Harrison Ibach, both of whom wanted a 5-day season, and Mr. Mike Banks, who supported the status quo for the duration of this season.

Season duration

The GAP discussed a concern that a 5-day opening might result in additional vessels participating in the fishery than number of those who would participate in a 10-hour opening. Members of the GAP suggested that a 5-day opening could result in only one opening commercially for 2A. However, the GAP believes it is time to experiment with a multiple-day opening and use the results to help design a long-term practice for this fishery. Therefore, the GAP recommends a 5-day season for 2020.

Season start date

The GAP recommends the current June opening, which is status quo, for the 2020 season. There was concern expressed by the sportfishing interest of the commercial fishery being conducted concurrently in May. This guided the GAP against endorsing a May opener. Additionally, a May opening might attract effort by some commercial fishing interests that leave for Alaska salmon operations in June. These Alaska fishing operations would likely choose to fish in an earlier opening in area 2A if it were available.

PFMC
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