

TRANSITION OF AREA 2A FISHERY MANAGEMENT

The Area 2A Non-Indian Commercial Directed Pacific Halibut Fishery (directed fishery) structure has been a topic of discussion between the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) and the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) over the past few years. During the course of 2019, the Council decided to move forward with the transition of management authority of this fishery from IPHC to the Council and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Recognizing that the transition process would take some time and require collaboration, the Council committed to work closely with IPHC and stakeholders.

Some 2019 highlights related to work on this topic to help inform the Council include a [scoping report](#) provided in April that outlined tasks and considerations that may need to be addressed as part of a transition plan, and a second [report](#) in June which focused mainly on transition timing and licensing of the fishery. At the June meeting, the Council confirmed its intent to begin the transition process, and approved a [list of actions](#) and steps to take in preparation for the transition. In September, the Council sent a [letter to IPHC](#) outlining its plans to pursue the transition of management authority for the directed fishery, and utilized the Catch Sharing Plan process (September/November) to recommend the 2020 season structure of the directed fishery for IPHC consideration (Agenda Item F.3, Attachment 1). In November, the Council discussed the [NMFS report](#) on the process and workload for the management transition. During its discussion in November, the Council acknowledged some elements of the directed fishery management may involve consideration of other 2A fisheries, mainly the current rules governing which 2A licenses can or cannot be held in tandem. With that in mind, the successful transfer of management authority of the directed fishery will require holistic thought and successive steps.

As a result of the November Council discussion, NMFS and Council staff were tasked with drafting a report outlining a range of alternatives for the successful transfer of management authority for the directed fishery (Agenda Item F.3, Attachment 2). The Council also identified a three-meeting process to solicit industry input and public comment as this topic progresses. Currently this topic is on the 2020 Council agenda in March (range of alternatives), and tentatively in September (preliminary preferred alternatives), and November (final preferred alternatives).

Council Action:

- 1. Review a range of alternatives for transition of Area 2A non-Indian Pacific halibut fisheries.**
- 2. Consider adopting preliminary preferred alternatives.**
- 3. Discuss the future workload and schedule.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.3, Attachment 1: Letter from Pacific Fishery Management Council Chair Philip Anderson to International Pacific Halibut Commission Executive Director Dr. Wilson Regarding Council Recommendations for the 2020 Non-Indian Commercial Directed Halibut Fishery, dated December 13, 2019.

2. Agenda Item F.3, Attachment 2: Draft Range of Alternatives for the Proposed Transfer of Management Responsibilities for Area 2A Pacific Halibut Fisheries with Focus on the Non-Indian Directed Commercial Fishery.
3. If received, Public Comments are electronic only (see [e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- F.3 Transition of Area 2A Fishery Management Robin Ehlke
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Review a Range of Alternatives for Transition of Area 2A Non-Indian Pacific Halibut Fisheries, Consider Adopting Preliminary Preferred Alternatives, and Discuss the Future Workload and Schedule

PFMC
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