

# Updated 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

Prepared for:

Pacific Fishery Management Council

Prepared by:

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West Coast Region National Marine Fisheries Service Staff

# Goals for today



Consider Range of Alternatives



Adopt Preliminary Preferred Alternatives



Discuss the Future Workload and Schedule

# Document Highlights



Sections 1 & 2: Purpose and Need, & Scope of Action



Section 3: Council process for transfer, and associated tasks



Section 4: Range of Alternatives  
4.1 – Fishery Management  
4.2 – Permitting Process



Sections 5 & 6 cover workload planning, timeline, and tables

# Purpose and Need

Note: Purpose statement revised to better reflect the intended action

(previously stated: *...is to provide Area 2A managers and stakeholders a direct role in the management of all Area 2A Pacific halibut fisheries, including the non-Indian directed commercial fishery*)



The purpose of the action is to provide the Council and stakeholders with opportunities to consult on the transitions of regulations and permitting responsibilities from IPHC to NMFS, and for the Council to develop a process for its future consideration of regulations affecting the Area 2A non-Indian directed commercial fishery.



This action is needed because IPHC requested that management of the non-Indian directed commercial fishery be transferred to Area 2A managers as soon as possible.

# Scope of Action



(1) Develop a permitting process for halibut fisheries. This scope would include all licenses currently issued by IPHC



(2) Transfer management of the non-Indian directed commercial fishery from IPHC to the Council and NMFS. This scope includes development of a schedule, process and regulatory language for season structure. This scope includes both preseason and inseason protocols.



(3) Identify lead entities and management responsibilities for preseason, inseason, and post season activities.

### 3.0 Council Process to transfer management and associated tasks

Assuming responsibility for managing the directed fishery will require:

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Establishing a schedule for a preseason process & inseason guidance



Amending the CSP and COP 9;  
Identifying agency tasks



Developing protocols for a new permitting process

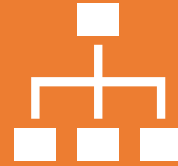


Consider establishing an advisory body to help inform the Council on fishery management

## 4.0 Range of Alternatives

4.1 Fishery management process

4.2 Permitting process



Focus is the transfer of management responsibilities

4.1 – Fishery management process: When to consider the framework of the directed fishery falls mainly to the Council

4.2 – Permitting process: How to implement the permitting process is mostly an administrative task and falls mainly to NMFS

## 4.1 Fishery Management Process

To accommodate the management transfer, the Council will need to:

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1. Establish a framework for a preseason process



2. Provide guidance for inseason management



3. Decide when decisions will be made



Provide for public comment and review



## 4.1.1 Fishery Management Process

Three Alternatives for the schedule and process for setting seasons and potentially initial vessel limits



4.1.1: No Action Alternative



4.1.2: Directed fishery considered during the CSP process

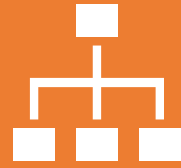


4.1.3: Same as 4.1.2, except delay some guidance until spring

## 4.1 Fishery Management

### 4.1.1 Alternative 1

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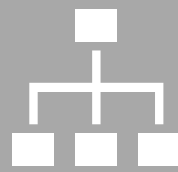
### Alternative 1: No Action

No management transfer;  
Maintain existing IPHC process

## 4.1 Fishery Management

### 4.1.2 Alternative 2

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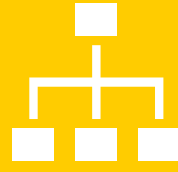
Alternative 2: Consider the directed fishery during the CSP process (Sep/Nov)

- September: adopt fishery framework, including any guidance for vessel limits and inseason changes, for public review
- November: adopt fishery framework for recommendation to NMFS
- NMFS implements fishery
- No changes needed for NMFS rulemaking schedule

## 4.1 Fishery Management

### 4.1.3 Alternative 3

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Alternative 3: Same as Alternative 2 but delay some guidance until spring

- September/November CSP process for fishery framework
- Delay Council final guidance on vessel limits and/or inseason changes until spring (March or April)
- NMFS implements fishery
- Requires change to NMFS rulemaking schedule

## 4.2 Permitting Process

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4.2.1 Which Area 2A halibut fisheries would be issued permits



4.2.2 Application deadlines



4.2.3 Development of application process



4.2.4 Notification for issuance of permit



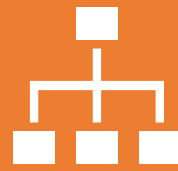
4.2.5 Proof of permit

## 4.2.1

### Which Permits to Issue

Although the focus is on the directed fishery, including all Area 2A fisheries in the new NMFS permitting system appears to be the most efficient approach, and would relieve IPHC of Area 2A duties related to licensing

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Alternative 1: Issue permits only for the Area 2A non-Indian directed commercial halibut fishery



Alternative 2: Issue permits for all Area 2A halibut fisheries

Permits would include:  
commercial directed,  
incidental salmon troll,  
incidental sablefish, and  
recreational charter halibut fisheries

## 4.2.2 Application Deadlines

Current IPHC deadlines:  
April 30 - directed  
March 15 - incidental

Consider adjusting the deadlines to an earlier date to better align with Council meetings as necessary

Information from applications:  
- Number of permits issued  
- Vessel class assigned to each permit

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### Alternative 1:

Status quo: Maintain the IPHC application deadline for the directed fishery of April 30



### Alternative 2:

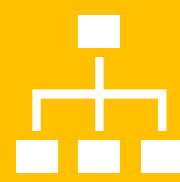
NMFS determines appropriate application deadlines

## 4.2.3 Development of an Application Process

This is mainly an administrative matter that can be addressed by NMFS

The new process should require similar information and take about the same amount of time to complete the application form

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NMFS is the best suited to determine and implement the most efficient and appropriate application platform

The transfer of management responsibilities will require a new system to be developed to accept applications and issue permits

In November 2019, NMFS provided 3 scenarios for a new system that would allow participants to submit applications and obtain permits

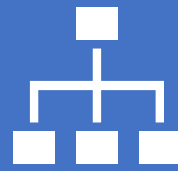


## 4.2.4 Notification for Issuance of Permit

This is mainly an administrative matter that can be addressed by NMFS

Master log of permits issued will be maintained

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NMFS best suited to determine the appropriate means of notification

In March 2020, the Project Team provided multiple options for notification upon application approval, either in electronic or paper form

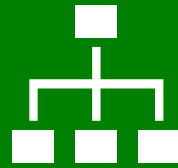
- a. Confirmation code, or unique number, sent electronically;
- b. Confirmation with electronic permit to access and/or print;
- c. Provide a paper permit via postal mail (current IPHC method);
- d. Combination of methods.

## 4.2.5 Proof of Permit

Currently, participants are required to carry a paper copy of the permit onboard the vessel and made available to show as proof of permit upon request.

Strong support from industry and enforcement to continue with status quo

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Alternative 1: Status quo. Require paper copy of proof of permit to be onboard fishing vessel and made available upon request. NMFS to provide access to permit in a printable format or send paper copy directly to participant.



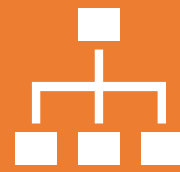
Alternative 2: No requirement for paper proof of permit to be onboard fishing vessel. NMFS work with enforcement to develop acceptable format of required proof of permit.

## 4.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Which management entity(s) will be responsible for any tasks related to management of the fishery during and after the transfer.

As the transition progresses and is eventually complete, roles and responsibilities may need to change.

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Some tasks fall into NMFS purview while others fall naturally to the Council

NMFS responsible for permits and management (comparable to IPHC process).

Council responsible for public process to recommend seasons and regulations to NMFS

Section 6 provides additional information

# 5.0 Workload and Timeline

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November 2019 - Project Team assigned to develop report for March 2020



March 2020 – Council approves purpose and need, scope of action, and adopts range of alternatives (ROAs) for public review



September 2020 – Council considers ROAs and adopts preliminary preferred alternatives (PPAs) for public review



November 2020 – Council considers PPAs and adopts final preferred alternatives for recommendation to NMFS



February –March 2021 NMFS develops permitting system



January 2022: NMFS initiates new permit system

# 6.0 Tables

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Table 1. PFMC Area 2A halibut fishery management topics (chain of events)

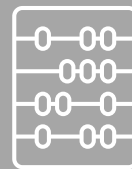


Table 2. Organizational list of contributors in halibut management



Table 3. List of roles and responsibilities necessary for halibut fishery management (potential changes highlighted)

Kind reminder:  
Goals for today



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Alternatives



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and Schedule