

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE REPORT ON THE
2020 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES IN AREA 2A

The 2020 Area 2A Pacific halibut (halibut) total allowable catch (TAC) of 1,500,000 pounds was allocated according to the 2020 Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for Area 2A as follows:

Treaty Tribes	525,000 (35%)
Non-Tribal Total	975,000 (65%)
Non-Tribal Commercial	299,325
Washington Sport	347,100
Oregon Sport	289,575
California Sport	39,000

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 704,736 pounds of the non-tribal total quota and 473,256 pounds of the tribal quota, with a total preliminary harvest estimate of 1,177,992 pounds, or 79%, of the 1,500,000 pound TAC. A summary of all Area 2A quotas and preliminary harvest estimates for 2020 is attached in Table 2 on the last page of this document.

NON-TRIBAL COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

A quota of 299,325 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 70,000 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 44,899 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 35 halibut could be landed per trip.

- On July 1, the fishery was extended at the same ratio and landing limit.
- The fishery is estimated to have taken 28,935 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 254,426 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 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 of the closed area is defined by a line approximating the 100 fm depth contour. The eastern boundary of the closed area 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. Fishing periods were 58 hours in duration every other week, starting Monday, June 22. In 2020, the fishery was open for five fishing periods: June 22-24, July 6-8, July 20-22, August 3-5, and August 17-19. 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. 2020 fishing period limits (dressed weight, head-on with ice and slime, in pounds per vessel) by vessel size.

Vessel Class/Size (ft)		Jun 22-24	Jul 6-8	Jul 20-22	Aug 3-5	Aug 17-19
0-25	A	905	1,810	2,263	2,263	905
26-30	B	905	1,810	2,263	2,263	905
31-35	C	905	1,810	2,263	2,263	905
36-40	D	1,364	2,728	3,410	3,410	1,364
41-45	E	1,364	2,728	3,410	3,410	1,364
46-50	F	1,818	3,636	4,545	4,545	1,818
51-55	G	1,818	3,636	4,545	4,545	1,818
56+	H	2,045	4,090	5,113	5,113	2,045

- The five directed commercial open periods resulted in a catch of approximately 242,647 pounds. Final catch amounts will be available in 2021.

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

A quota of 70,000 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.

The fishery is confined to an area seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour. Fishing is 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.

- Beginning April 1, the incidental landing limit was 200 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. On October 19, the landing limit increased to 250 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.
- Through October 13, this fishery is projected to have landed 47,394 pounds, with 22,606 pounds remaining. Retention of halibut in this sablefish fishery is ongoing and catch is still accruing. At the September meeting, the Council recommended extending the sablefish fishery until December 31, and allowing incidental halibut retention until the IPHC season closure on November 15.

SPORT FISHERIES (NON-TRIBAL)

675,675 pounds were allocated between sport fisheries in Washington (35.6% of non-tribal share, minus 70,000 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 77,550 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 fishery in Puget Sound was open May 20 through June 30 on alternating days. The fishery reopened August 6-8, 13-15, 20-22, 27-29, September 3-5, 10-12, 17-19, 24-26, and 27-29.

- The estimated total catch in this area is 59,002 pounds, which is 18,548 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 128,187 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 August 6-8, 13-15, 20-22, 27-29, September 3-5, 10-12, 17-19, 24-26, and 27-29. 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 59,993 pounds, which is 68,194 pounds under the quota.

Washington South Coast Subarea (landings in Westport)

The area from the Queets River to Leadbetter Point was allocated 62,896 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). In 2020, this subarea operated with an all-depth fishery as the primary fishery, and the nearshore fishery did not open. The all-depth fishery was open August 6, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30, September 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 17, 20, 24, and 27-29.

- The all-depth fishery estimated catch is 54,550 pounds which is 8,346 pounds under the quota.

Columbia River Subarea (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon)

This sport fishery subarea was allocated 18,450 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, 2.3% of the Oregon sport allocation, and any quota over 8,000 pounds in the Southern Oregon subarea. 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 August 6, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30, September 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27, 28, and 29. The nearshore fishery was open August 10 Monday – Wednesday each week until September 30.
- The all-depth fishery estimated catch is 5,617 pounds which is 12,333 pounds under the subarea quota.

Oregon Central Coast Subarea (Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain)

This sport fishery subarea was allocated 271,582 pounds (93.79% of the Oregon sport allocation).

Three seasons occurred in this subarea:

1. a restricted depth nearshore (inside 40-fathom) fishery, opened May 1, seven days a week;
2. a fixed Spring season in all depths that was open on May 21-23, 28-30, June 11-13, 18-20, July 9-11, 16-18, 23-25, and July 30-August 1;
3. a Summer season in all depths that was open August 6-8, and was open every other Thursday through Saturday until October 31 or until no quota remains. On August 27, the fishery opened every Thursday through Saturday until October 31 or until no quota remains.

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

- The Spring all-depth fishery resulted in an estimated catch of 114,235 pounds, which is 56,868 pounds under the spring allocation. The remaining quota would shift to other fisheries as needed.
- The Summer all-depth fishery has an estimated catch of 19,500 pounds, which is 48,398 pounds under the initial allocation. This fishery is ongoing and catch is still accruing.
- The inside 40-fathom fishery has an estimated catch of 23,411 pounds, which is 9,180 pounds under the initial allocation. This fishery is ongoing and catch is still accruing.

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

This sport fishery was allocated 8,000 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.

- This fishery has estimated catch of 6,891 pounds, which is 1,109 pounds under the quota. This fishery is ongoing and catch is still accruing.

California (Off the California Coast)

This sport fishery was allocated 39,000 pounds (4.0% of the non-tribal share). The fishery was open May 1- August 11, and closed after the quota was estimated to be taken.

- The fishery has an estimated catch of 42,561 pounds which is 3,561 pounds over the quota.

TRIBAL FISHERIES

525,000 pounds (35% of the Area 2A TAC) was allocated to tribal fisheries. The tribes estimated that 32,200 pounds would be used for ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) fisheries and the remaining 492,800 pounds were allocated to the commercial fishery.

- The unrestricted fishery was open 55 hours for each tribe between March 14 and September 30. The unrestricted fishery landed 277,916 pounds.
- The first restricted fishery was open 222 hours for each tribe between March 14 and September 30. The first restricted fishery landed 93,970 pounds.
- The second restricted fishery was open 36 hours for each tribe between March 14 and September 30. The second restricted fishery landed 84,571 pounds.
- The late fishery is open October 5- November 15. The fishery has caught 16,799 pounds to date.
- The total landings for all tribal fisheries is 473,256 pounds, which is 19,544 pounds under the tribal commercial allocation. The C&S fishery will continue through December 31 and catch estimates will be reported by the tribes in January 2021.

Table 2. Summary of all Area 2A quotas and preliminary 2020 harvest estimates, updated with fishery information reported to NMFS through 10/14/2020.

2020 Area 2A TAC and Catch (in pounds)			2020 Quota	Catch to date	% Quota taken
Tribal			525,000		
Tribal	C&S		32,200	-	-
Tribal	Comm		492,800	473,256	96
Non-Tribal			975,000	704,736	72
Commercial			299,325	271,582	91
Commercial	Directed		254,426	242,647	* 95
Commercial	Incid. Salmon Troll		44,899	28,935	64
WA Sport			347,100		0.0
WA Sport	Incidental. Sable		70,000	47,394	68
WA Sport	Puget Sound		77,550	59,002	* 76
WA Sport	North Coast		128,187	59,993	* 47
WA Sport	South Coast		62,896	54,550	* 87
WA/OR	Columbia River	All-Depth	17,950	5,617	* 31
WA/OR	Columbia River	Nearshore	500		*
OR Sport			289,575	164,037	57
OR Sport	Central OR Coast	Spring all-depth	171,103	114,235	* 67
OR Sport	Central OR Coast	Summer all-depth	67,898	19,500	29
OR Sport	Central OR Coast	Nearshore	32,591	23,411	72
OR Sport	Southern OR		8,000	6,891	86
CA Sport			39,000	42,561	* 109.1
Total			1,500,000	1,177,992	79

* Fishery closed for the season