

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON PROPOSED
CHANGES TO THE PACIFIC HALIBUT CATCH SHARING PLAN AND 2021 ANNUAL
REGULATIONS

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) held a meeting with recreational halibut anglers on October 28, 2020. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss proposed changes to the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (PFMC) Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for 2021, and refine the proposals adopted for public review at the September PFMC meeting.

In September, the primary recommendation for 2021 Washington recreational season dates was to follow the same general approach approved for 2020 ([Supp WDFW Report 1, September 2020](#)). Based on the input we received, WDFW recommends the Council adopt the following season dates for the Columbia River, South Coast, North Coast and Puget Sound sub-areas for 2021:

[Statewide Season Dates:](#)

Marine Areas 6 - 10:

April 22 through May 22, three days per week, Thursday, Friday, Saturday
Memorial Day weekend, open Friday, through Sunday, May 28, 29, and 30
June 3 through June 26, three days per week, Thursday, Friday, Saturday

Marine Area 5:

May 6 through May 22, two days per week, Thursday, and Saturday
Memorial Day weekend, open Friday, through Sunday, May 28, 29, and 30
June 3 through June 26, three days per week, Thursday, Friday, Saturday

Marine Areas 3 and 4:

May 6 through May 22, two days per week, Thursday and Saturday
Memorial Day weekend, open Friday and Sunday, May 28, and 30
June 3 through June 26, two days per week, Thursday and Saturday

Marine Area 2:

May 6 through May 23, two days per week, Thursday and Sunday
Memorial Day weekend, open Thursday, May 27
If sufficient quota remains, open June 17, 20, 24, 27

Marine Area 1:

May 6 through May 23, two days per week, Thursday and Sunday
Memorial Day weekend, open Thursday, May 27
June 3 through June 27, open two days per week, Thursday and Sunday

[Changes to the CSP](#)

While changes to the CSP aren't needed to implement the recommended 2021 recreational halibut season dates, the changes described below are needed to align halibut regulations with groundfish regulations adopted for the 2021-2022 biennium and halibut regulations.

South Coast Subarea

Proposed Change: Revise the CSP to remove the description of the South Coast Recreational Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (YRCA) and the Westport Offshore YRCA from section 6.9.3 South coast subarea, h. Closed conservation areas.

Rationale: This proposed change was analyzed during the 2021-2022 groundfish harvest specifications and management measure process and was included in the groundfish regulations adopted by the Council and anticipated to be implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service beginning in 2021. However, it also needs to be implemented into the halibut regulations in order to be available for 2021.

Columbia River Subarea

Proposed Change: Revise the CSP to allow the retention of yellowtail rockfish, widow rockfish, canary rockfish, redstriped rockfish, greenstriped rockfish, slivergray rockfish, chilipepper, bocaccio, and blue/deacon rockfish, Pacific cod, flatfish species, and lingcod north of the Washington – Oregon border on all depth halibut days.

Rationale: This proposed change was analyzed during the 2021-2022 harvest specifications and management measure process and aligns groundfish retention regulations in Washington and Oregon. This change was included in the groundfish regulations adopted by the Council and anticipated to be implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service beginning in 2021. However, it also needs to be implemented into the halibut regulations in order to be available for 2021.