

## 2022 CATCH SHARING PLAN AND ANNUAL REGULATIONS – FINAL ACTION

As described in Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) Operating Procedure (COP) 9, the Council solicits proposed changes to the Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for Area 2A (Agenda Item G.2, Attachments 1 and 2) and annual fishery regulations at its September meeting. At its November meeting, the Council is scheduled to take final action, after reviewing public and agency comments.

At the September 2021 meeting, the Council adopted for public review proposed changes to the current Area 2A Pacific Halibut CSP and annual fishing regulations in Washington and Oregon, recreational fisheries. No changes were proposed for California recreational fisheries.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) proposed three changes for public review:

1. All Washington subareas: Work with National Marine Fishery Service (NMFS) to identify potential changes to the CSP to streamline NMFS regulatory process to allow for continued flexibility in inseason management.
2. Puget Sound Subarea: Revise the CSP language to allow season openings up to four or five days per week.
3. Coastal subareas (Columbia River, North Coast, and South Coast): In addition to status quo, analyze the following season structure under the following three options – open the coastal subarea on the first Thursday in May, two days per week for the specified period or until the combined coastal subarea allocation is taken. Each subarea would be open one weekday and one weekend day. The weekday would be the same in all areas (e.g., Thursday) the weekend day could be different based on area preference (e.g., Sunday in the south coast and Saturday in the north coast).
  - Option a: Open four weeks
  - Option b: Open five weeks
  - Option c: Open six weeks

If coastal subarea allocation remains after the initial weeks as described in Options a, b, and c, the balance will be distributed to the three coastal subareas consistent with status quo allocations. Additional fishing days will follow the ‘Thursday plus one weekend day’ model.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) proposed three changes for public review:

1. Central Oregon Coast and Columbia River Subareas: Allow groundfish retention on all ‘All-Depth’ Dates
- Status quo: During periods when the groundfish fishery is depth restricted, only sablefish, Pacific cod, and other flatfish species or longleader gear species are allowed with all-depth halibut.
- Alternative 1: All groundfish (within bottomfish bag limits) would be allowed with halibut; this would include lingcod, greenlings, rockfish species, etc.

2. Central Oregon Coast subarea: All-depth open days (Alternatives may be combined)
  - Status quo: The Central Oregon Coast Subarea Spring and Summer All-Depth season is open Thursdays through Saturdays.
  - Alternative 1: If the Central Oregon Coast Subarea Spring All-Depth allocation is greater than 100,000 pounds, the season may open seven days per week starting the 2nd Thursday in May through May 31; then open every Thursday through Saturday, except weeks can be skipped to avoid adverse tides.
  - Alternative 2: If after the first summer all-depth opening (first Thursday-Saturday in August), it is estimated that there will be 60,000 pounds or more remaining on the Central Oregon Coast combined nearshore and all-depth quotas remaining, the fishery may open seven days per week beginning the Tuesday after Labor Day.
3. Central Oregon Coast subarea: Daily Bag Limit
  - Status quo: The bag limit can be increased to two fish after Labor Day.
  - Alternative 1: At the conclusion of the spring all-depth season, the International Pacific Halibut Commission, NMFS, Pacific Fishery Management Council, and ODFW will consult to determine whether increasing the bag limit to two fish is warranted with the intent of taking the subarea quota by September 30.

NMFS has provided information on catch-to-date of Pacific halibut in 2021 (Agenda Item G.2.a, NMFS Report 1). Supplemental reports are anticipated from WDFW and ODFW describing the proposed changes and any public input received during their respective processes.

#### **Council Action:**

1. Adopt final changes to the 2022 Pacific halibut CSP, as necessary.
2. Adopt final changes to the 2022 annual fishery regulations, as necessary.

#### **Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item G.2, Attachment 1: 2021 Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan for Area 2A.
2. Agenda Item G.2, Attachment 2: Visual Representation of the 2021 Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan for Area 2A.
3. Agenda Item G.2.a, NMFS Report 1: National Marine Fisheries Service Report on the 2021 Pacific Halibut Fisheries in Area 2A.
4. If received, Public Comments are electronic only (see [e-portal](#)).

#### **Agenda Order:**

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| G.2 2022 Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Regulations – Final Action   | Robin Ehlke |
| a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies  |             |
| b. Public Comment   |             |
| c. <b>Council Action:</b> Adopt Final 2022 Area 2A Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Fishery Regulation Changes |             |