

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON 2023 CATCH SHARING PLAN AND ANNUAL REGULATIONS – FINAL ACTION

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) thanks Ms. Robin Ehlke, Pacific Fishery Management Council (staff officer) and Ms. Lynn Mattes, with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Marine Resources Program, for their assistance in reviewing this agenda item.

The GAP supports the analysis of certain changes for coastal Oregon and Washington recreational opportunities suggested by ODFW and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) at the September 2022 Council meeting. Those suggested changes were reviewed by the public in meetings conducted in Oregon and Washington prior to the current November meeting. The GAP supports those proposed changes, as listed in the [ODFW](#) and [WDFW](#) reports, for implementation for the 2023 season.

Additionally, the GAP supports the Makah Tribe's International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) regulatory proposal, [IPHC-2022-IM098-PropC2](#), which would retain the Area 2A 1.65 million pounds fixed total catch exploitation yield (TCEY) adopted by the IPHC in 2019. As noted in the Tribe's proposal, the fixed TCEY "... has provided a consistent and biologically justified TCEY for an Area which has minimal impact on the larger halibut biomass to the north. Regulatory Area 2A represents a small fraction of the Region 2 allocation, and of the overall Pacific halibut stock. As such, a higher IPHC Regulatory Area 2A TCEY than what may be indicated by the biological distribution of the stock estimate which the IPHC Secretariat generates will not create a biological conservation concern."

The fixed TCEY has benefitted both recreational and commercial sectors and eliminated much of the conflicts between sectors. It also reduced the variability and uncertainty for all Area 2A fisheries. The GAP supported the Makah Tribe's original proposal, as noted in our [November 2018 GAP statement](#) under Agenda Item F.1, and we support the Tribe's request for the 2023 Catch Sharing Plan (CSP).

The California recreational sector appreciates the comments from the [California Department of Fish and Wildlife Supplemental Report](#) under this agenda item: "... *the allocation and resulting quota are perhaps constraining the fishery more than anticipated, and the California recreational fishery may have a greater capacity than assumed in 2015.*" California recreational fishermen would like to consider changes to the CSP in the future in order to maximize their fisheries. Therefore, the GAP supports additional consideration of CSP changes as the process moves forward. The GAP recognizes the Council will take final action on the 2023 CSP at this meeting and that it is too late to make changes for 2023. The GAP requests potential changes to the 2024 CSP be scheduled as early as possible in 2023, specifically June, to accommodate further discussion. As a matter of process, the GAP could begin scoping this agenda item in March (GAP agenda only; no Council agenda item) to identify the primary concerns. This would serve to focus the range of suggestions for public scoping during the June Council meeting. More information from this year, including fisheries changes and landings, will better inform the scoping process in 2023.