

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC



HALIBUT COMMISSION

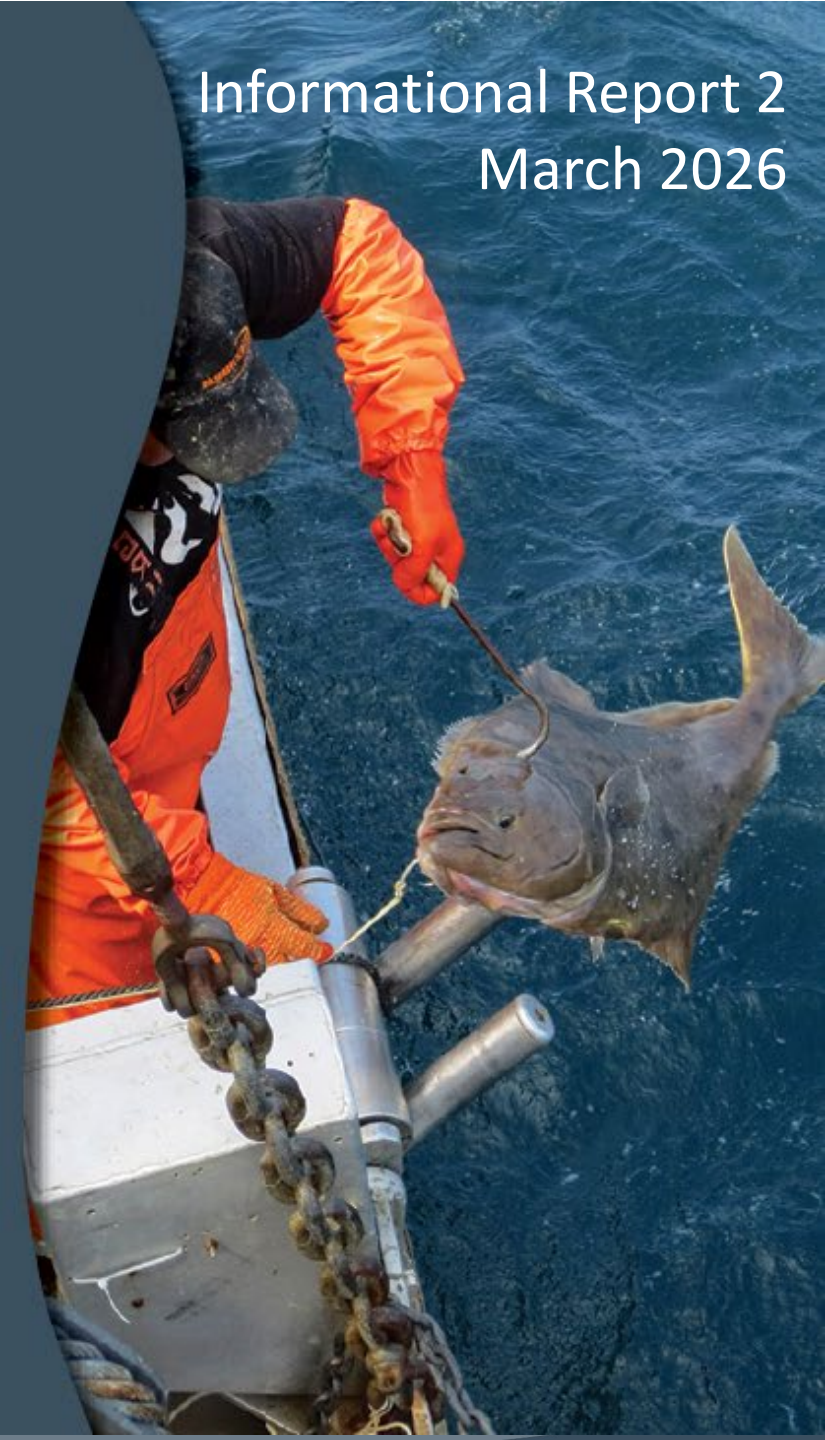
# Outcomes of the 102nd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102)

PFMC meeting

March 2026

(B. Hutniczak, Fisheries Regulations and Data  
Services Branch Manager)

Informational Report 2  
March 2026



# 102nd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102)

- 19-22 January 2026
- Held in Bellevue, WA, USA (Hybrid)
- 213 attendees: 5 Commissioners, 17 advisors/experts, and 191 members of the public (113 in-person and 78 remote)
- [AM102 report](#)
- AM102 webpage: <https://www.iphc.int/meetings/102nd-session-of-the-iphc-annual-meeting-am102/>



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IPHC-2026-AM102-R

## Report of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102)

Bellevue, WA, USA, 19-22 January 2026

### Commissioners

Canada	United States of America
Mark Waddell	Jon Kurland
Neil Davis	Robert Alverson
Peter DeGreef	Richard Yamada

### Executive Director

David T. Wilson, Ph.D.

### DISTRIBUTION:

Participants in the Session  
Members of the Commission  
IPHC Secretariat

### BIBLIOGRAPHIC ENTRY

IPHC 2026. Report of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM102). Bellevue, WA, USA 19-22 January 2026.  
*IPHC-2026-AM102-R, 54 pp.*



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## 2) PropA1 - 2026 adopted mortality limits (TCEYs)

IPHC Regulatory Area	Mlb	tonnes	% change from 2025
<b>Canada Total: 2B</b>	5.06	2,295	<b>-7.2%</b>
USA: 2A	1.65	748	0.0%
USA: 2C	5.22	2,368	0.0%
USA: 3A	9.08	4,119	0.0%
USA: 3B	2.86	1,297	0.0%
USA: 4A	1.34	608	0.0%
USA: 4B	1.04	472	0.0%
USA: 4CDE	3.08	1,397	0.0%
<b>USA: Total</b>	<b>24.27</b>	<b>11,009</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>Total: IPHC Convention Area</b>	<b>29.33</b>	<b>13,304</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>

- **Coastwide change from 2025 = -1.3%**

- **Fishing intensity = F51%**

## 2) Detailed 2026 projections, by sector, based on the mortality limits (TCEYs) adopted by the Commission

	2A	2B	2C	3A	3B	4A	4B	4CDE	Total
Commercial discards	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.55</b>
O26 Non-directed discards	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.23</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.27</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>0.26</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>2.50</b>
Recreational	<b>NA</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>1.36</b>	<b>0.90</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2.30</b>
Subsistence	<b>NA</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.81</b>
<b>Total non-FCEY</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>1.66</b>	<b>1.28</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.33</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>1.45</b>	<b>6.15</b>
Commercial discards	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>0.36</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>0.46</b>
Recreational	<b>0.62</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>1.47</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>3.38</b>
Subsistence	<b>0.01</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Commercial landings	<b>0.90</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>5.96</b>	<b>2.48</b>	<b>1.01</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>1.63</b>	<b>19.32</b>
<b>Total FCEY</b>	<b>1.54</b>	<b>4.24</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>7.80</b>	<b>2.48</b>	<b>1.01</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>1.63</b>	<b>23.18</b>
							<i>4C FCEY</i>	<b>0.76</b>	
							<i>4D FCEY</i>	<b>0.76</b>	
							<i>4E FCEY</i>	<b>0.12</b>	
<b>TCEY</b>	<b>1.65</b>	<b>5.06</b>	<b>5.22</b>	<b>9.08</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>1.34</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b>29.33</b>
U26 Non-directed discards	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.15</b>	<b>0.02</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>1.80</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.66</b>	<b>5.16</b>	<b>5.22</b>	<b>9.30</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>4.26</b>	<b>31.13</b>



# Limits for IPHC Regulatory Area 2A

(2) The fishery limits resulting from the IPHC-adopted distributed mortality (TCEY) limits and the existing Contracting Party catch sharing arrangements are as follows, recognizing that each Contracting Party may implement more restrictive limits:\*\*

IPHC Regulatory Area	Fishery limits (net weight)	
	Tonnes (t)	Million Pounds (Mlb)*
<b>Area 2A (California, Oregon, and Washington)</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>1.54</b>
Non-treaty directed commercial (south of Pt. Chehalis)	118	261,211*
Non-treaty incidental catch in salmon troll fishery	21	46,096*
Non-treaty incidental catch in sablefish fishery (north of Pt. Chehalis)	32	70,000*
Treaty Indian commercial	240	528,200*
Treaty Indian ceremonial and subsistence (year-round)	5	10,800*
Recreational – Washington**	130	286,356*
Recreational – Oregon**	135	297,297*
Recreational – California**	18	40,040*

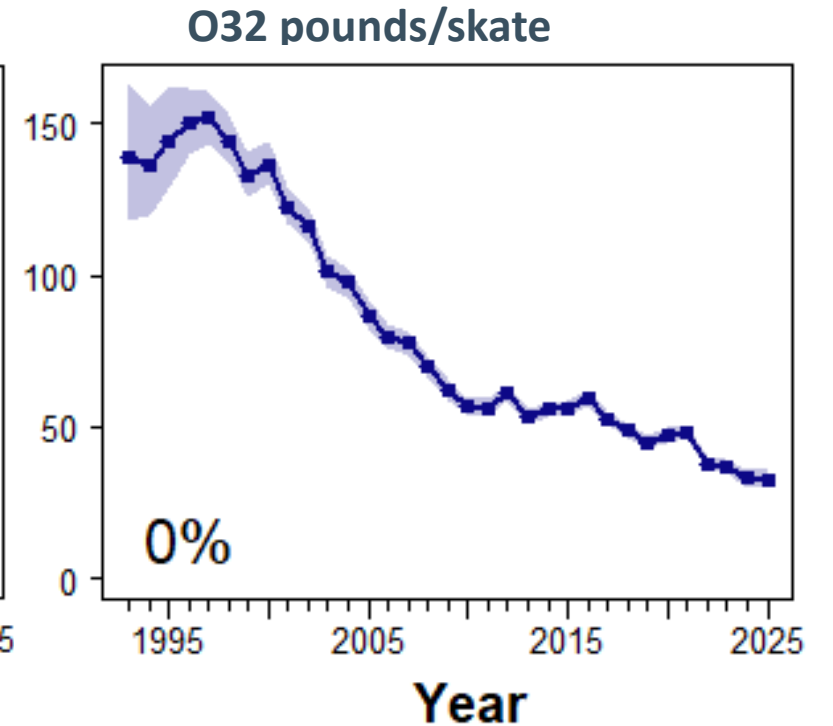
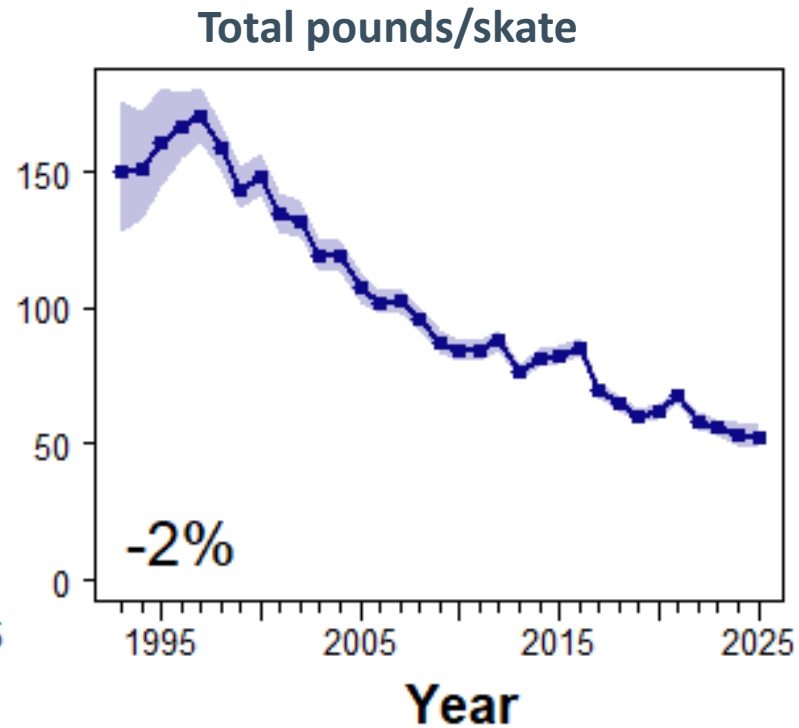
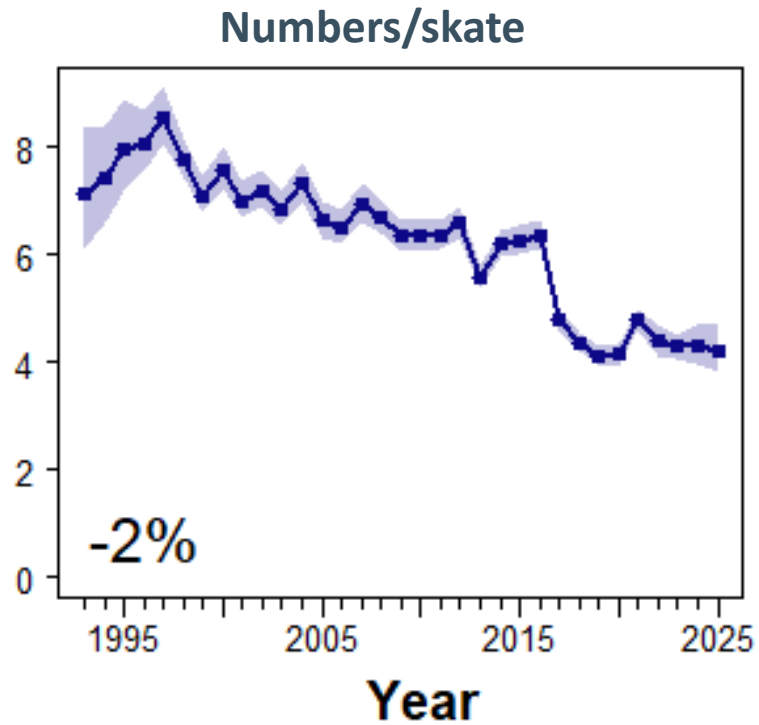
\* Allocations resulting from the IPHC Regulatory Area 2A Catch Share Plan are listed in *pounds*.

\*\* In IPHC Regulatory Area 2A, the USA (NOAA Fisheries) may take in-season action to reallocate the recreational fishery limits between Washington, Oregon, and California after determining that such action will not result in exceeding the overall IPHC Regulatory Area 2A recreational fishery limit and that such action is consistent with any domestic catch sharing plan. Any such reallocation will be announced by the USA (NOAA Fisheries) and published in the Federal Register.



# Coastwide FISS data trends

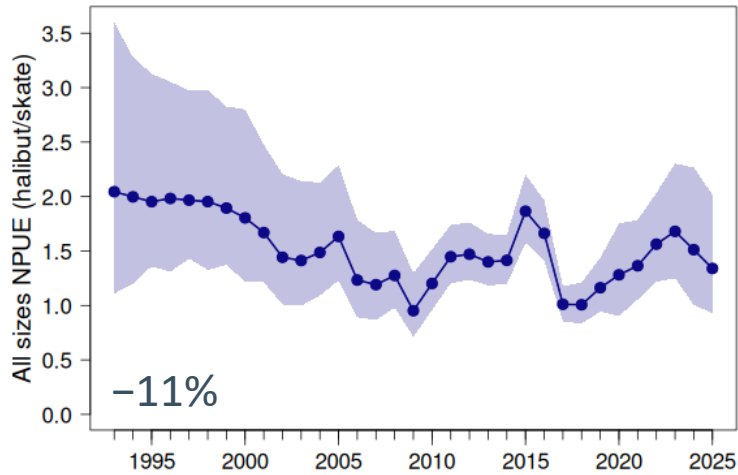
Little change in coastwide trends



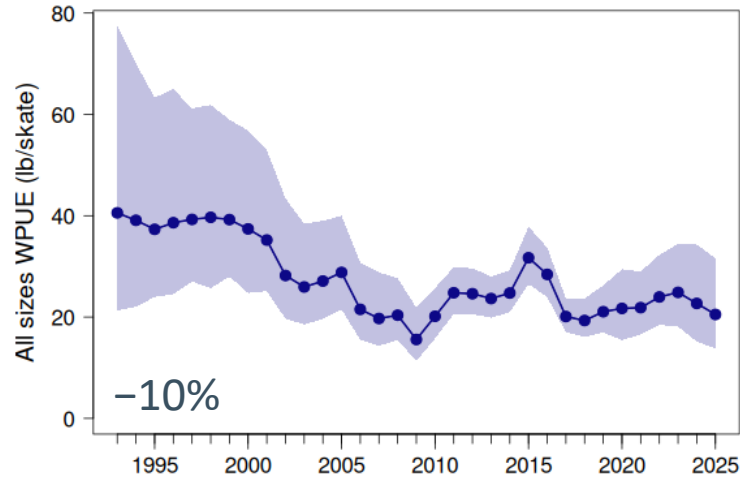
# Trends in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A

Decrease in all survey quantities from 2024 to 2025 in Regulatory Area 2A

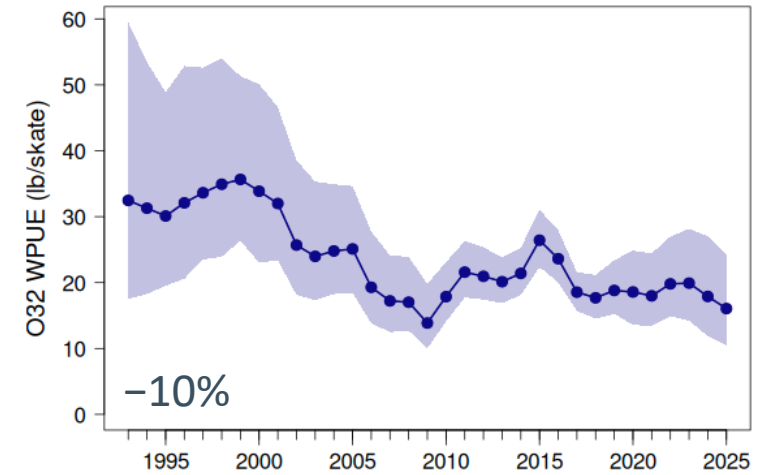
### Numbers/skate



### Total pounds/skate

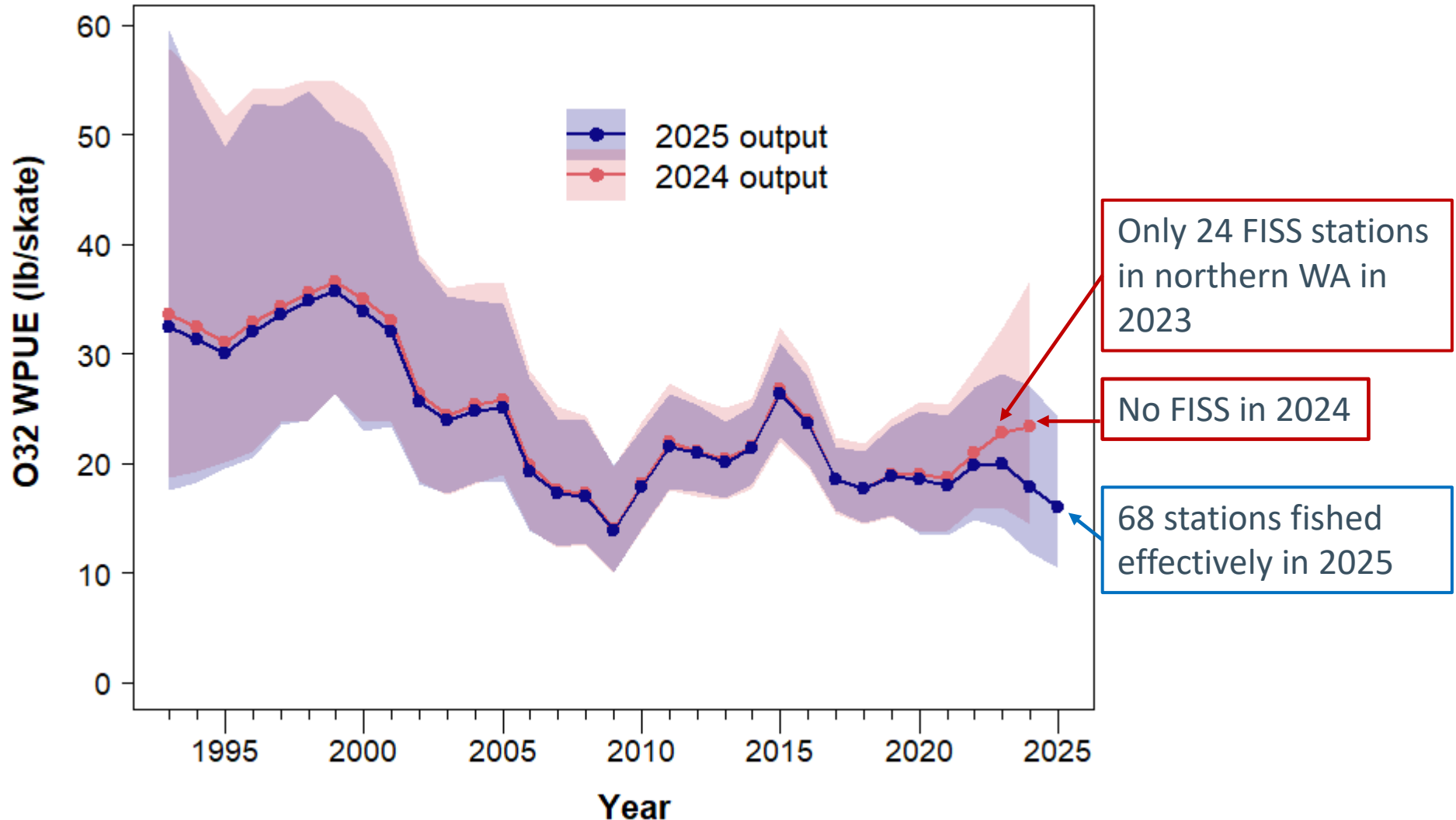


### O32 pounds/skate

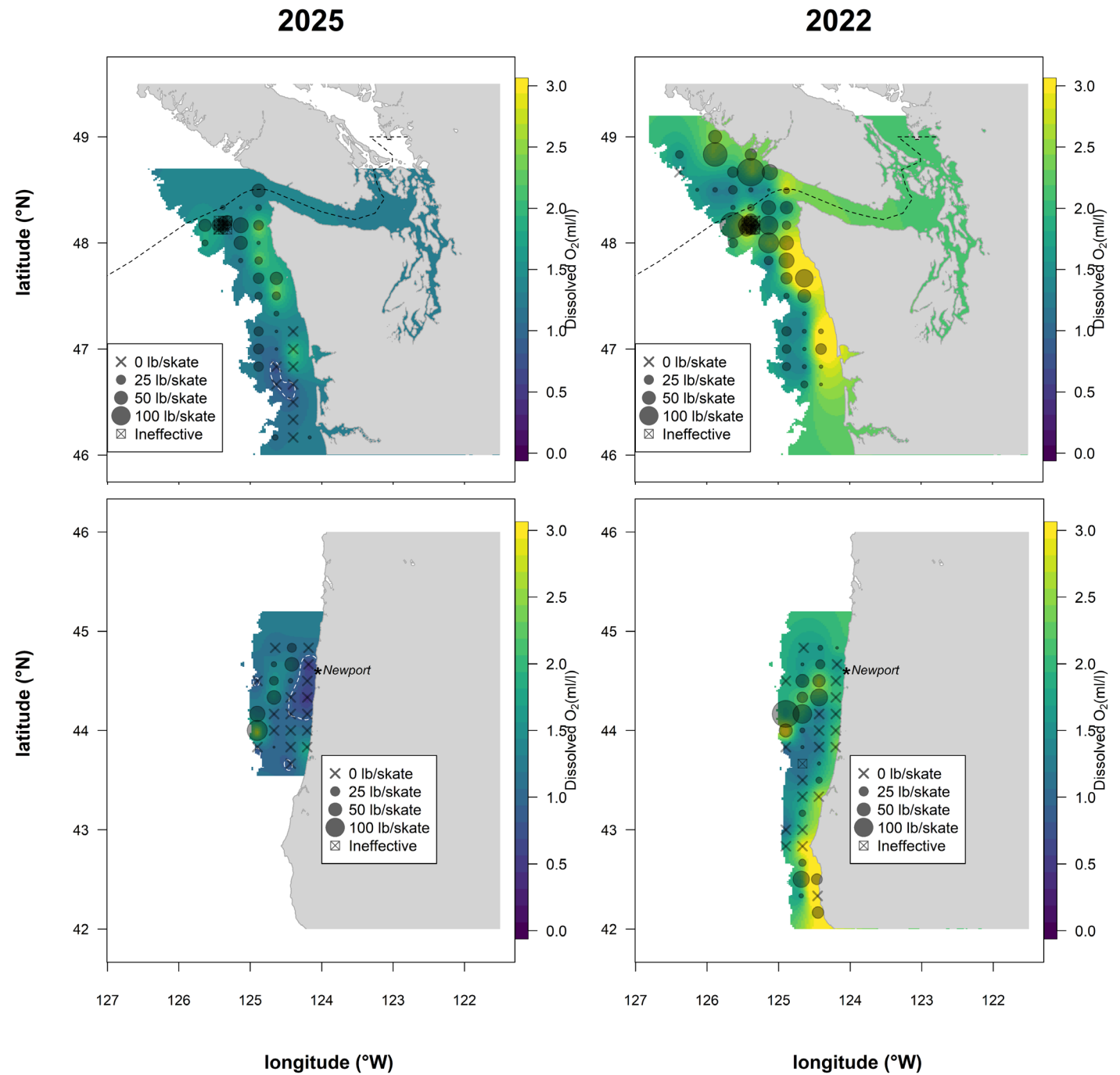


# Comparison with 2024 time series estimates

## IPHC Regulatory Area 2A

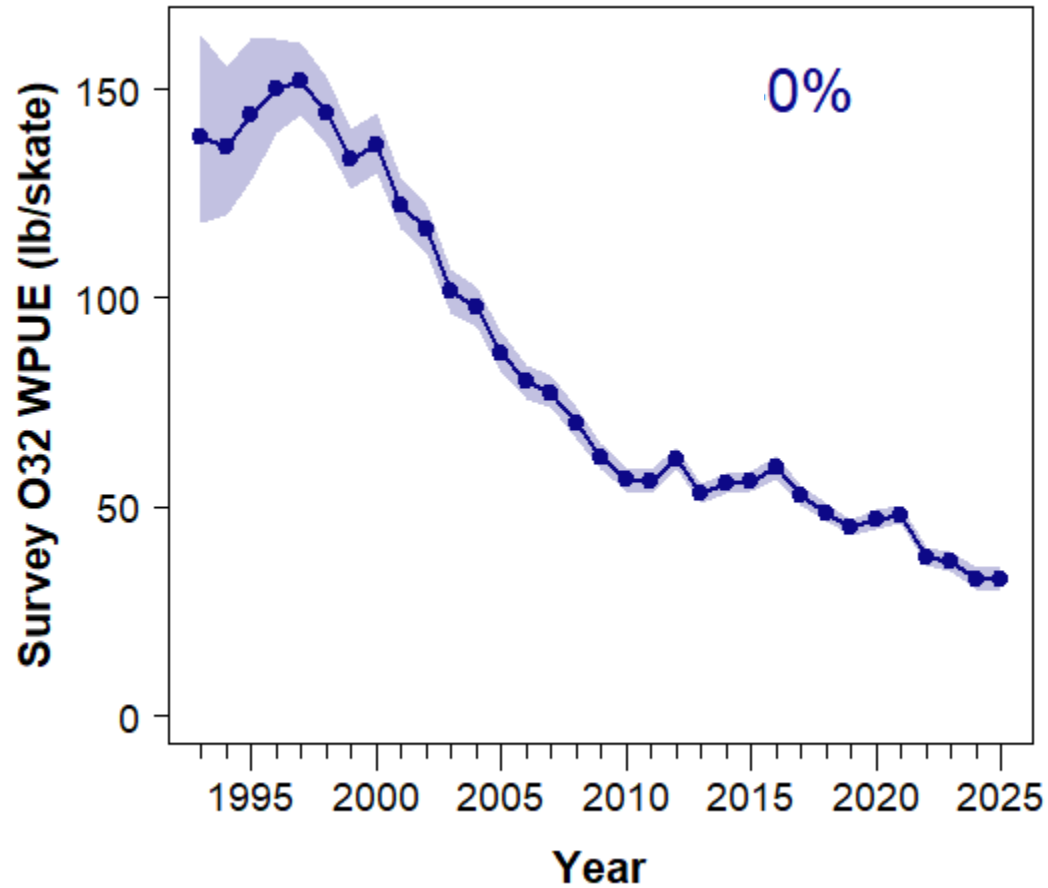


# Dissolved oxygen in Regulatory Area 2A

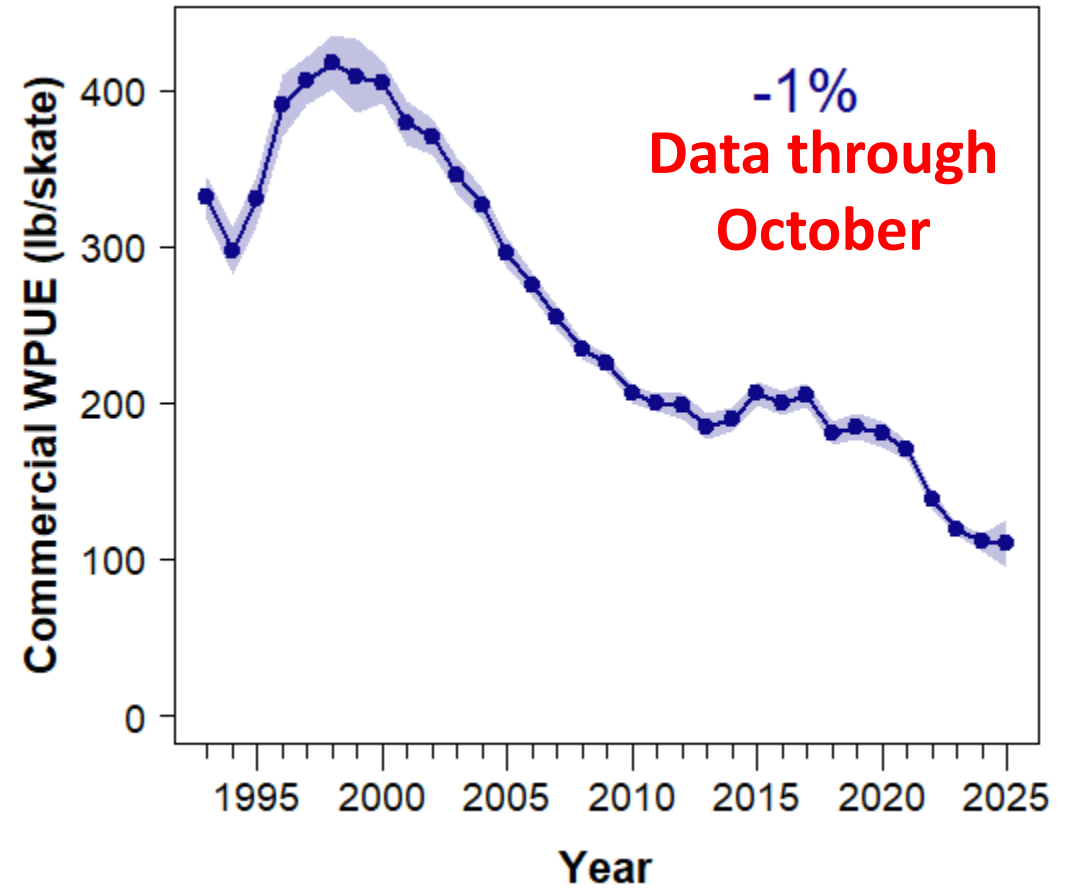


# O32 FISS and Fishery trends

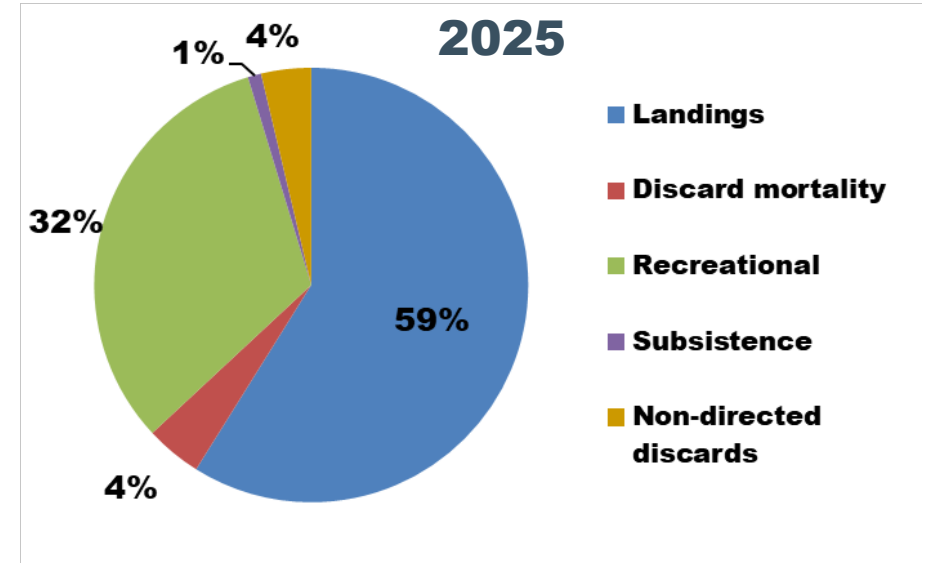
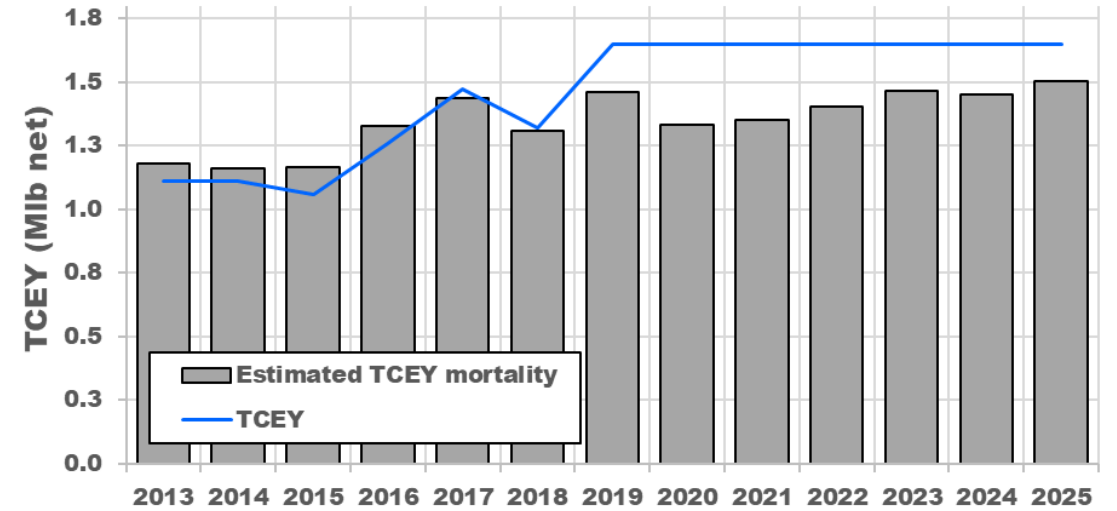
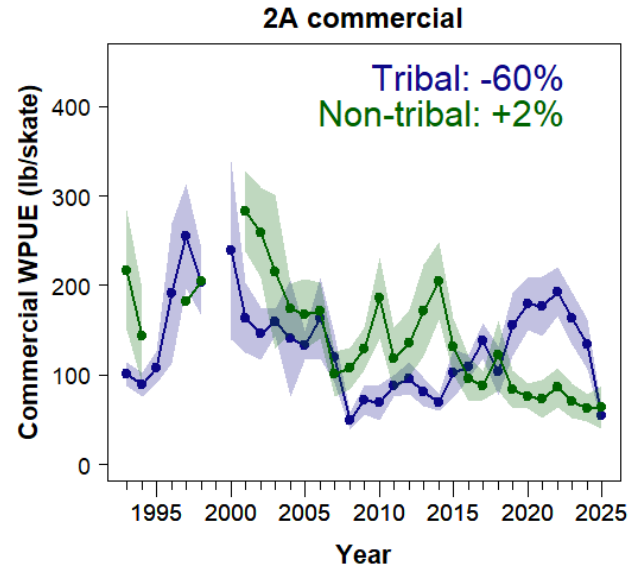
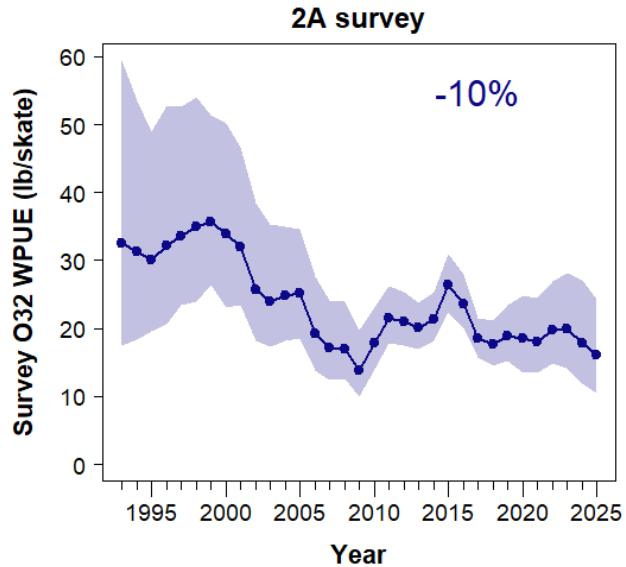
### Coastwide survey



### Coastwide commercial



# Trends in IPHC Reg. Area 2A

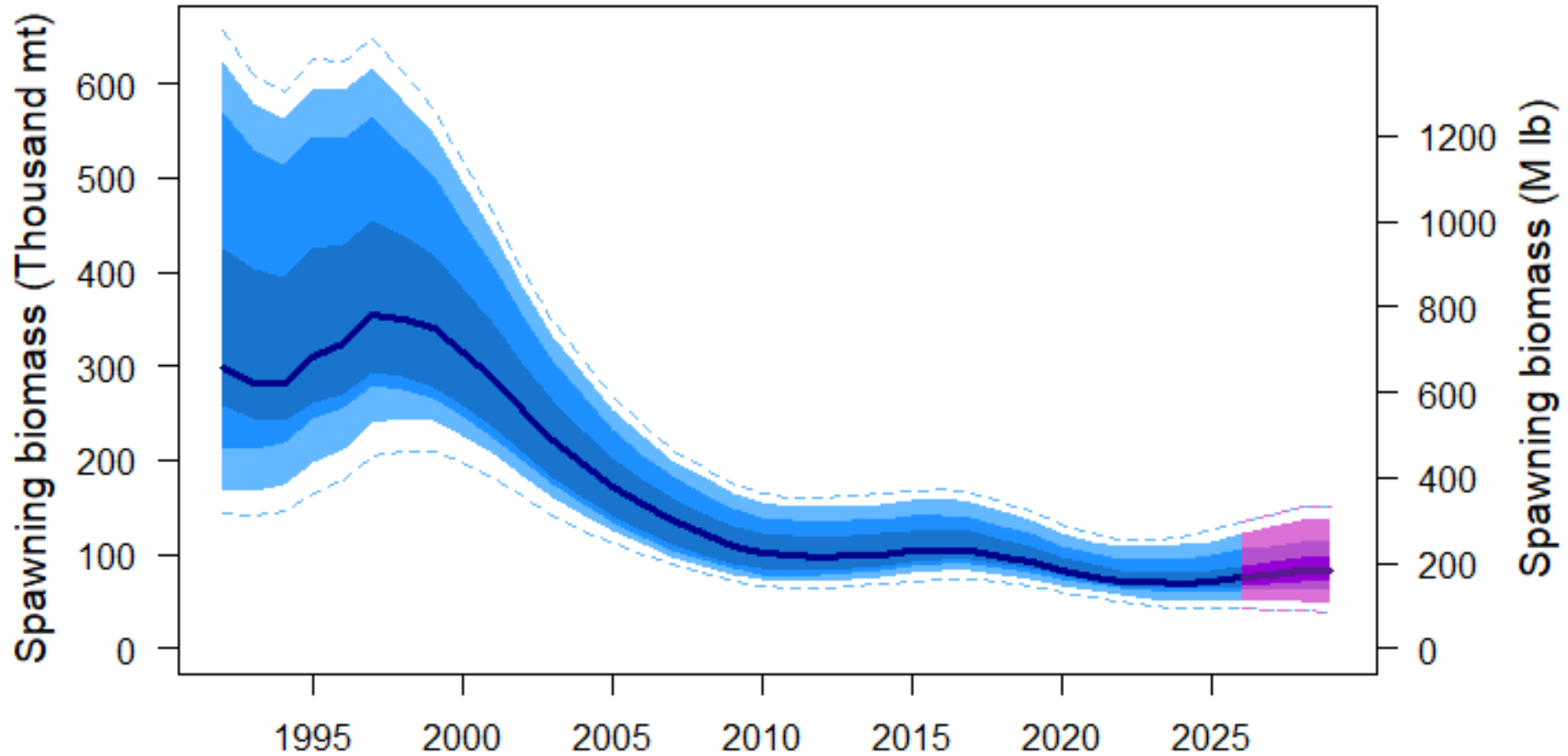


# Summary of stock assessment results

- Reduced mortality limits appear to have reached levels consistent with surplus production created by the 2012, 2016 and 2017 year-classes
- FISS and fishery indices remain at historically low levels
- The stock remains at a low productivity level due to low average weight-at-age and recruitment
- Despite low absolute spawning biomass, the stock is estimated to be above  $B_{30\%}$  and the fishing intensity much lower than  $F_{43\%}$



# Three-year projection at current harvest levels



# Projection summary

- Poor recruitment and low weight-at-age continue and are limiting 3-year yields, even if strong year-classes emerge in the future
- These projections include the rapidly-maturing 2016 & 2017 year-classes
- *Additional risks not included in the decision table:*
  - Stock remains at or near historically low spawning biomass
  - Continued low catch rates in the FISS and directed commercial fishery
  - Causes of ongoing low productivity remain unknown



# 2026 commercial fishing period

The Commission **ADOPTED** fishing periods for 2026 as provided below, thereby superseding the relevant portions of Section 9 of the IPHC Pacific halibut fishery regulations by specifying that commercial fishing for Pacific halibut in all IPHC Regulatory Areas may begin no earlier than **06:00 local time on 26 March** and must cease at **23:59 local time on 07 December 2026**.

NOTE: With the transition of management authority of the IPHC Regulatory Area 2A non-tribal directed commercial Pacific halibut fishery from the IPHC to the PFMC and NOAA Fisheries (87 FR 74322), the IPHC no longer needs to consider setting dates for the 2A non-tribal directed commercial fishery. The dates set by NOAA Fisheries must be set within the overall commercial fishing period dates.



# Prop B3 Season opening dates for recreational fishery subareas within IPHC Regulatory Area 2A

## 26. Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Area 2A

(8) In Convention waters of the Washington Puget Sound and the U.S. Convention waters in the Strait of Juan de Fuca subarea, the recreational (sport) fishing season opens on the first Thursday in April and runs through 30 June, seven days per week. NOAA Fisheries may modify these dates in-season. The daily bag limit is one Pacific halibut of any size per person. The Washington Puget Sound and the U.S. Convention waters in the Strait of Juan de Fuca subarea is defined in 50 CFR 300.63(c)(5)(i)(A).

(9) In Convention waters off California the recreational (sport) fishing season is from 1 April through 15 November, seven days per week, in the Northern California Coast subarea and from 1 April to 31 December, seven days per week, in the South of Point Arena subarea. NOAA Fisheries may modify these dates in-season. The daily bag limit is one Pacific halibut of any size per person. The California subareas are defined in 50 CFR 300.63(c)(5)(iii).

(810) ~~Specific~~ **Additional** regulations describing fishing periods, fishery limits, fishing dates, and daily bag limits are promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and published in the Federal Register.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> NOAA Fisheries could implement more restrictive regulations for the recreational (sport) fishery or components of it, therefore, anglers are advised to check the current Federal or State regulations prior to fishing.



# ***IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation & Harvest Strategy Policy***

The Commission adopted a Harvest Strategy Policy in 2025 (<https://www.iphc.int/research-monitoring/harvest-strategy-policy/>)

The Commission **NOTED** that the 2026 MSE and HSP Program of Work will include the following low-priority topics, which may not be completed before AM103:

- a) Improve the estimation model used in the MSE framework to better characterize the stock assessment in the simulations;
- b) Evaluate potential management actions to invoke when approaching a depleted limit reference point;
- c) Evaluate additional elements of Management Procedures which may include a triennial assessment frequency, constraints and smoothers on the interannual change in the TCEY, and empirical rules to determine the reference TCEY in years without a stock assessment;
- d) Determine reference points using the updated MSE Operating Model (e.g.  $F_{MSY}$  and MSY);
- e) Develop guidance documents for the Harvest Strategy Policy (e.g. specifications of a rebuilding plan);

The Commission **NOTED** that the 2026 MSE and HSP Program of Work should not include topics related to the distribution of the TCEY, as this is part of the decision-making process and not part of the management procedure, as described in the Harvest Strategy Policy.

The Commission **NOTED** that outcomes of the 2026 MSE workplan (e.g. an optimal fishing intensity) may be used to update the Harvest Strategy Policy in the future.



# ***IPHC Management Strategy Evaluation & Harvest Strategy Policy***

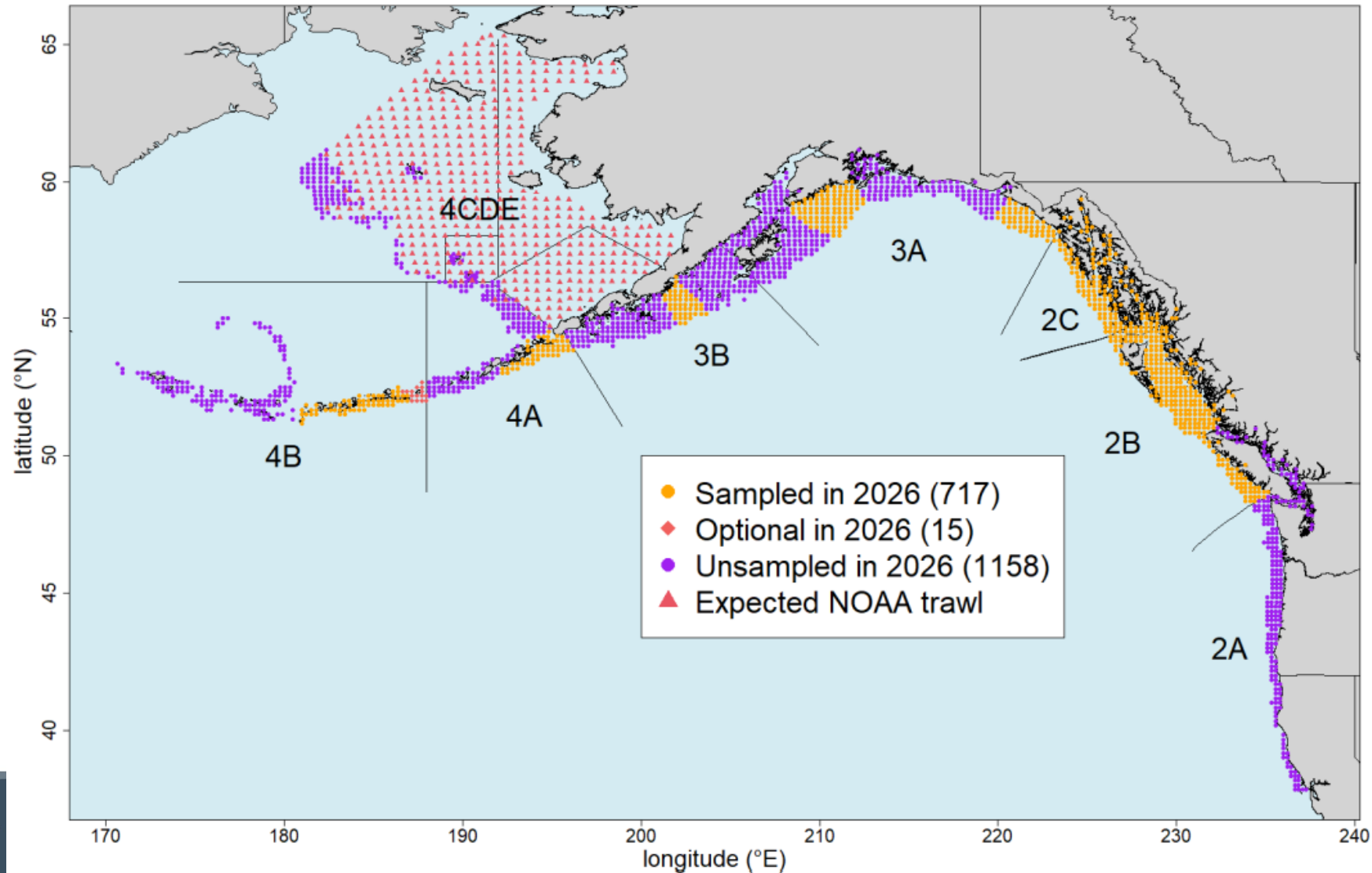
The Commission **NOTED** that the 2026 MSE and HSP Program of Work will include the following high-priority topics:

- a) Update and recondition the MSE Operating Model in accordance with the schedule defined in the Harvest Strategy Policy;
- b) Evaluate a range of SPR values to determine if the optimal reference coastwide fishing intensity is different than the current reference fishing intensity (F43%) defined in the HSP;
- c) Investigate productivity regimes to determine how the Pacific halibut population and fisheries respond to different productivity regimes, if the optimal reference fishing intensity differs across productivity regimes, and how productivity regimes may be incorporated into a Management Procedure;
- d) Further develop the Depleted concept and identify a limit reference point below which recovery of the Pacific halibut population would be uncertain.

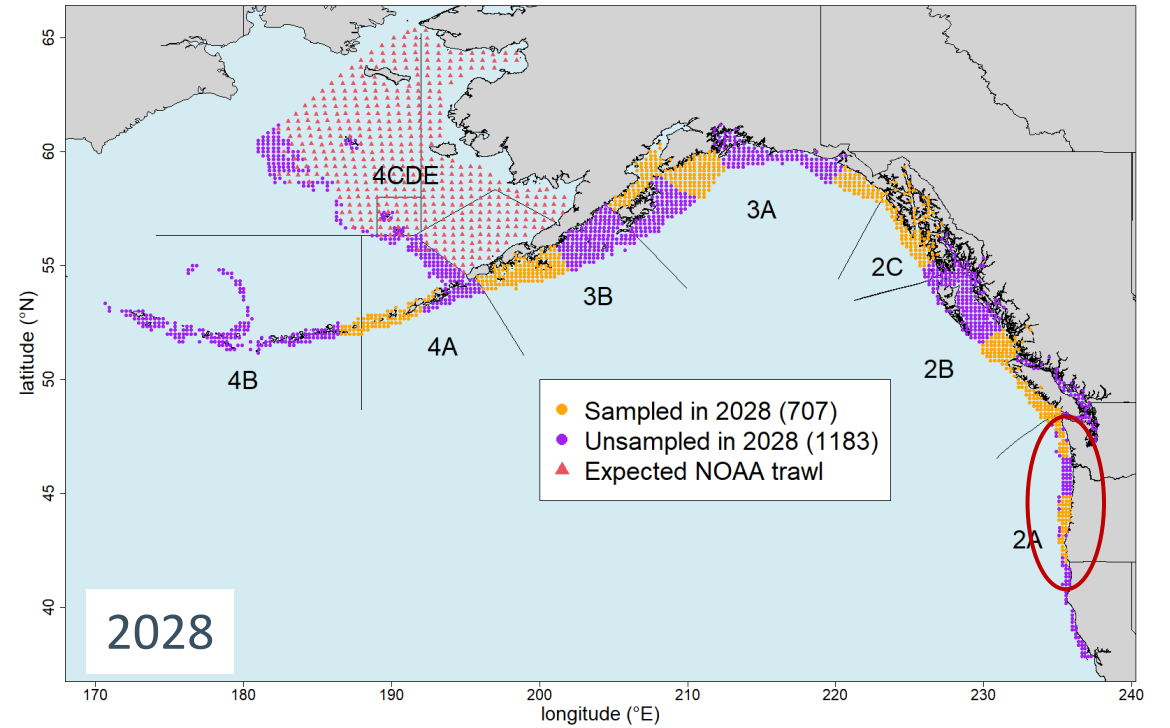
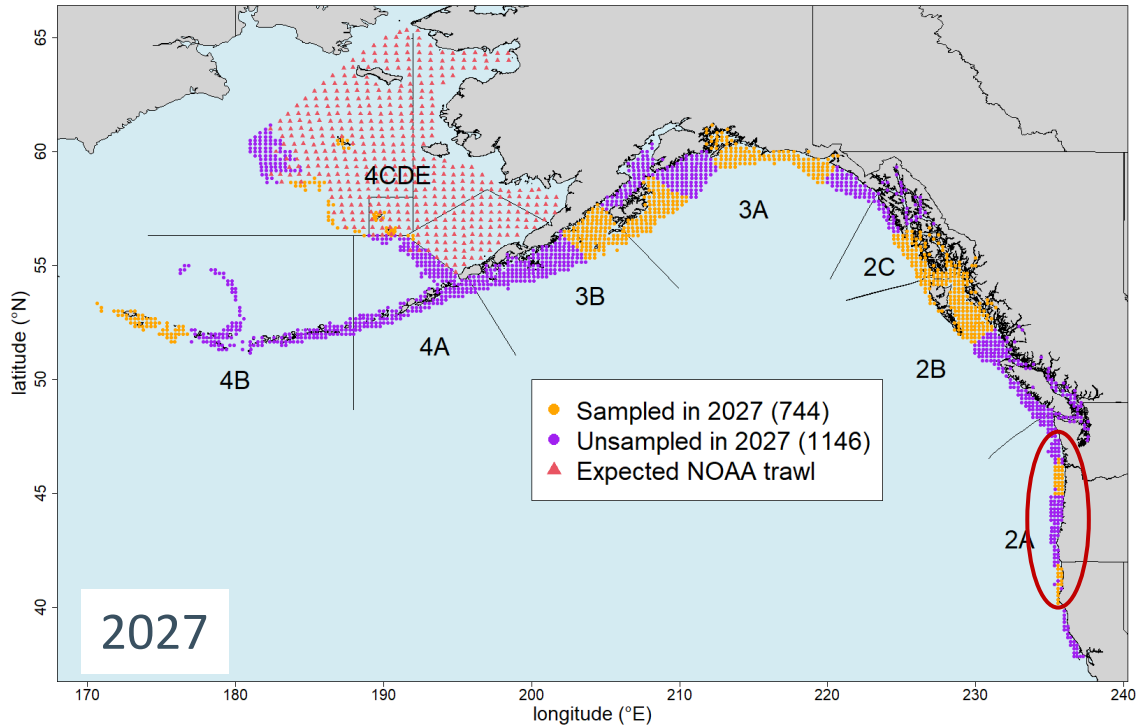


# 2026 Fishery-Independent Setline Survey (FISS)

- The Commission ADOPTED a revised 2026 FISS design on the understanding that vessel availability, bids received, additional bait needs, and field staff recruitment may impact operational feasibility (total FISS stations 717 for 2026)



# FISS - potential 2027-28 designs

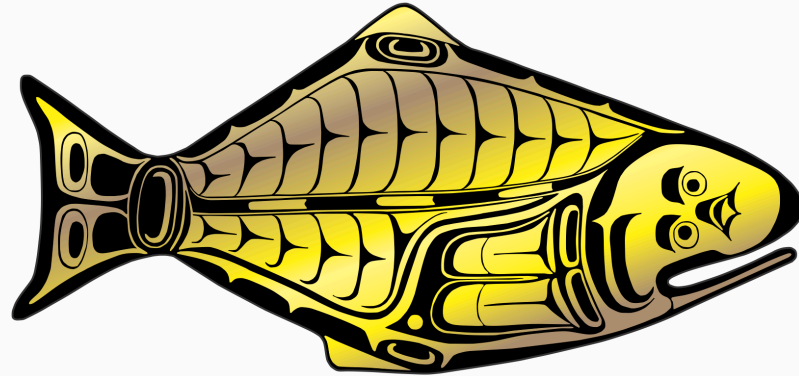


# Looking ahead

- Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB022): 12-14 May 2026, virtual
- Scientific Review Board (SRB028): 19-21 May 2026, Seattle, WA
- Scientific Review Board (SRB029): 22-24 September 2026, Seattle, WA
- Research Advisory Board (RAB027): 17-18 November 2026, Seattle, WA
- Interim Meeting (IM102): 24 November (virtual)
- IPHC Finance and Administration Committee (FAC103), 20 January 2027, virtual
- 103rd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM103): 25-28 January 2027, Victoria, BC



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