

COUNCIL MEETING TRANSCRIPTS
285th Session of the
Pacific Fishery Management Council
December 18, 2025
1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Online Meeting

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Meeting Transcript Summary

Verbatim transcripts of Council Actions are available on the Council website. The transcripts may be accessed at <https://www.pcouncil.org/council-meetings/previous-meetings/>.

A. Call to Order

3. Agenda

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] With that, we'll move along. There was an agenda published in the advance briefing book. We'll need to approve that motion, or excuse me, approve that agenda. And Sharon Kiefer, did you have your hand up?

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:22] Yes Mr. Chairman.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:27] Go ahead.

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:28] There's the tower of power. Thank you. I move the Council approve the agenda presented in A.3 in the December 2025 Briefing Book.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:39] Thank you. I followed along. What we see on the screen there looks accurate and complete. Do you agree?

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:44] Yes Mr. Chairman.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:45] Thank you. Is there a second to the motion?

Brad Pettinger [00:00:53] Second.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:53] Seconded by...

Brad Pettinger [00:00:57] I'm Brad.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:57] All right, I was going to make that....yes, seconded by Brad Pettinger. Thank you Brad. Sharon, go ahead and speak your motion as necessary.

Sharon Kiefer [00:01:08] Mr. Chairman, I believe it is self-explanatory.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:11] All right, thank you. I will pause for a second, see if there are any hands raised for any discussion on the motion? Not seeing any discussion then I will call the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:01:27] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:32] Opposed? Abstentions? The motion passes unanimously. Thank you. So we have our agenda set. It is very brief.

B. Pacific Halibut Management

1. 2026 Commercial and Recreational Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Regulations – Final Action

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] So that will take us to Council discussion and action on this item and I will look for a hand to initiate that. And while I scroll down, Heather Hall.

Heather Hall [00:00:18] Thank you Chair Hassemer. I wanted to start by just saying that I think in September and November we had a really good opportunity to consider some changes to the Catch Sharing Plan and vet them with our public both at state held, or meetings that we held at home and from comment at the Council meeting. In September a great opportunity for public review between September and November. And similar to what Miss Mattes said, our November report for WDFW summarizes those discussions and does a nice job of laying out our recommendations for the season in 2026. Also appreciate Angela Forristall coordinating with the states and NMFS following the November Council meeting and helping us collaborate on the changes that you see in the Catch Sharing Plan strike-through document that's in the briefing book. So just acknowledging all the work that we've done so far and the new work that we're bringing to the Council at this meeting. I don't want to cut off any discussion, but I have a motion when the time is right.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:51] Thank you Heather. I think the time may be right then. A motion can always provide for additional discussion, so go ahead when you're ready.

Heather Hall [00:02:08] Thank you. I move the Council adopt the proposed 2026 commercial and recreational season structures and changes to the Catch Sharing Plan as reflected in B.1, Supplemental Attachment 3, December 2025. And recommend the season dates found in H.1.a, Supplemental Revised WDFW Report 1, November 2025, and H.1.a, ODFW Report 1, November 2025. And a start date for the California recreational subareas of April 1.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:45] Thank you Heather. What I see on the screen before me sounds accurate and complete, is that correct?

Heather Hall [00:02:54] Yes.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:54] Thank you. Is there a second to the motion? Seconded by Lynn Mattes. Please speak to your motion as necessary.

Heather Hall [00:03:03] Thank you. Again, I think the process that we have in place provided for a really robust opportunity to consider past seasons and plan for the upcoming season. Those are well described in the two reports attached and the conversation around the California subarea desire to open April 1. What is not in this motion, but Angela mentioned at the beginning, is the desire to have a status quo for the directed halibut fishery, so acknowledging that that would be in place without any need for a motion. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:03:51] Thank you Heather. Any questions regarding the motion? Seeing no questions on the motion, any discussion on the motion? Josh Lindsay.

Josh Lindsay [00:04:13] Thank you Mr. Chair. I just wanted to briefly note or make a comment on something we expressed during the November Council meeting and that is the caution we've provided the Council previously on our ability to implement earlier season start dates than what we've been doing in the past, recognizing that there was a desire from states and certain areas to try to have these earlier open dates, we did a little bit of brainstorming between November and this meeting now to try to figure out a way to accomplish that this year versus needing to postpone that to following seasons. We do think we've come up with an avenue for that this year. We plan to utilize actually the IPHC regulatory process for these April dates specifically and nothing else. We'll still go through our normal proposal for federal rulemaking for other aspects of any sort of Council recommendation on changes to the CSP and season structure. We do see that as a placeholder until we have, we can implement something that is more long term. But I did want to let the Council know that we had explored that and therefore I would be supporting the motion as well. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:05:36] Thank you Josh. Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:05:40] Yes, thank you Mr. Chair. Just want to express California's appreciation for the inclusion of the April 1 start date for the California recreational subareas in this motion. I really appreciate the work that has been done since November to explore the ability to accomplish an earlier start date. April 1 is when our groundfish seasons open, our recreational groundfish fishery in the northern part of California, so this would, April 1 would align those start dates. I want to acknowledge the GAP for their recommendation on this point. And again, there's been quite a lot done, and I know it was a lot of exploratory work on the how and much appreciated. Thank you so much.

Pete Hassemer [00:06:38] Thank you Marci. Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:06:45] Thank you Chair. I just wanted to express my appreciation as well to the NMFS staff as well as the staff from the three state agencies who've been working together, coordinating with, led by Miss Forristall on getting us to where we are, so this is a pretty quick and easy hopefully motion. I'm fully supportive of it, but just really acknowledge the communication and coordination, which is part of what makes the halibut process work. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:07:16] Thank you Lynn. Any further discussion? Pause a moment. I'm not seeing any hands so I will call a question on this. Before I do I'm going to read the motion in its entirety, that's as per our Council Operating Procedures. And also I don't know whether or not you can see the same thing I'm seeing on my screen. So I will read the motion as moved by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Heather Hall. Seconded by Lynn Mattes. I move the Council adopt the proposed 2026 commercial and recreational season structures and changes to the Catch Sharing Plan as reflected in B.1, Supplemental Attachment 3, December 2025. And recommend the season dates found in H.1.a, Supplemental Revised WDFW Report 1, November

2025, and H.1.a, ODFW Report 1, November 2025. And a start date for the California recreational subareas of April 1. All those in favor of that motion signify by saying "Aye".

Council [00:08:47] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:08:52] Opposed? Abstentions? The motion passes unanimously. Thank you Heather. With that, let me turn back to Angela to see if there is other business to take up at this time? Angela.

Angela Forristall [00:09:15] No, no other business. The Council action was to adopt final 2026 commercial and recreational CSP recommendations and regulations, which the Council just did in their motion. Next steps will be to transmit those to the National Marine Fisheries Service and to inform the IPHC of the changes that the Council recommended today. So with that, your action on this agenda item is complete.

Pete Hassemer [00:09:42] Thank you Angela. With that then we will close out that agenda item, which completes our agenda. And before I look for a motion to adjourn I want to check with Executive Director Burden if he has any closing comments.

Merrick Burden [00:10:00] Thank you Mr. Chairman. No closing comments other than to say thank you all for your attention to this and for getting such a large role of people to attend this special and unusual meeting, so appreciate the effort. And that's all I have Mr. Chairman.

Pete Hassemer [00:10:18] All right. Likewise, I appreciate the effort of everyone to participate. Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:10:25] Mr. Chairman, not to cut off conversation, but I do have a motion when appropriate.

Pete Hassemer [00:10:32] Let's have your motion now.

Sharon Kiefer [00:10:35] Mr. Chairman, I move the Council adjourn the 285th session of December 2025.

Pete Hassemer [00:10:49] Excuse me. I was muted. I see on the screen your motion. It appears accurate and complete. Is that correct?

Sharon Kiefer [00:10:56] That is correct.

Pete Hassemer [00:10:58] All right, is there a second to the motion? Seconded by Butch Smith. Please speak to your motion as needed.

Sharon Kiefer [00:11:07] Mr. Chairman, I believe we have accomplished the business of the agenda and adjournment is appropriate.

Pete Hassemer [00:11:17] Thank you. With that, the motion before us, it was moved that the Council adjourn the 285th session, December 2025. All those in agreement with that motion signify by saying "Aye".

Council [00:11:32] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:11:36] Opposed? Abstentions? The motion passes unanimously. Again, thank you all for that and enjoy the remainder of the year. We'll see you in the new year.