

From: Marc Schmidt <fvreelmagic@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Aug 27, 2018 at 4:48 PM
Subject: Comments for transition from Derby style pacific halibut fishery from participating small boat owner
To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Councilmembers,

I am a small commercial boat (26') owner and operator out of northern CA and am an active participant with landings in recent years in the Directed commercial Pacific Halibut fishery. I am excited to hear the IPHC is wanting to get away from the derby style fishery as it has been brutal on us small boat fishermen; from the actual weather the day of..... always big and windy it seems, the morning ebbing bar crossings on the big tide cycles the openers always seems to be on the last few years, where they live in CA is where weather is often even worse, and the quota being chopped to very low numbers on the final opener for the smallest boat classes to mention a few.

As you all decide the direction of the new season structure I would like to see some consideration for the small family business and boat participants and want to share my thoughts and ideas as a small boat trying to pioneer this fishery in CA for the last 6 years. I saw there is talk of possible multiple 5-10 day seasons, I would prefer to see 10-15 days; after all we are trying to get us on the water on safer days and I think 10-15 is much more reasonable. Also if boats are limited to a boat quota per catch period then what is the difference in how long it takes as long as there are breaks between for the catches to be tallied up.

I would also suggest that if there are multiple open periods that they are in separate 2 month block periods for open access as the first consideration and in different months as a second consideration. If we could have the last half of june, last half of july, and last half of aug as openers it would allow participants to retain halibut caught while participating in other fisheries such as blackcod, lingcod, and rockfish; all of which I participate in. This would maximize the efficiency of our fishing trips and provide less release mortality in the big picture for all species.

The other main consideration moving forward that has me wondering if this fishery will be worth investing anymore time and money in; is if it will be open access for anyone and everyone going forward. I feel we need to have it limited entry to protect those that have been investing time and money over the years to participate. I have spent thousands of dollars in gear and 100s of hours building longline specific to this fishery, and I have risked my boat and well being just to get landings and participate. If everyone that wants a permit gets one, the quota will be one or two fish per boat and not even worth calling it a fishery anymore. I propose that boats need to have at least one or two landings in the last 3-5 years to get a permit moving forward and also allow a lottery of 3 or so new permits to be applied for in each state in Area 2A (CA,OR,WA). This would allow new people to come in and out of the fishery while keeping the quota projectable for the open periods based on yearly allocation for non directed commercial. There were many years I pulled the permit and could not get out due to weather as a small boat so I would like to see those that don't have landings but have pulled permits have a shot at still participating or get a couple entries into the permit lottery.

Additionally, unlimited entry will send out a new wave of competition for the halibut hotspots and lead to the same derby style fishing on the first day of the open period that we are trying to avoid. The last thing I want to bring up is if there is a limited entry permit of sorts, if they could be transferred to another boat. Boats come and go through careers so I think it may be good to attach a limited entry permit to the owner and the boat so that it could be transferred if the owner got a different boat or had major mechanical issues midseason.

As a fishermen with young kids at home I have invested more time in groundfishing the last few years as I get to stay home and not have to leave town for days, weeks, or months to chase salmon, which is what I used to do much more of. This directed pacific halibut fishery is one I bank on for a good payday once or twice a year and I'd hate to see it turn into something not worth my time so please consider the ramifications to the small boats in the fleet as a new season structure is crafted, and I hope, implemented by 2019..... the derby days are very high stress days and I have only ever fished one in pleasant weather.

A quick story from this year I said no way to the first halibut opener due to weather; the second one I had to go try and catch some for landings to say I participated in case it was the last one for the year and ended up hauling longline back in 13 ft at 10 seconds in my little boat and only caught a handful, definitely not worth the risk or effort in hindsight but that's fishing; the final opener this year it looked good enough even though it wasn't that nice to set gear where I have wanted to for years and I caught the small quota I was allowed for my size boat and had to release \$4000 worth of halibut I would have been able to keep 2 weeks earlier. Kinda bittersweet to catch all I could but not get that big payday I could have really used and just turn them loose when the boats 4' bigger could have kept them all.

Thanks for your consideration and I am always happy to talk about my perspective trying to make a living fishing with a small boat in rural northern CA.

Marc Schmidt
F/V Reel Magic
Eureka, CA

From: Harrison Inch <harrison.ibach@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon, Aug 27, 2018 at 4:01 PM
Subject: Changing Non-treaty Directed Commercial Pacific Halibut Fishery in IPHC Area 2A
To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Dear PFMC,

I'm writing in regards to changing the non-treaty directed commercial Pacific halibut fishery in IPHC Area 2A. I am in full support of going away from the fishery's current 'derby-style' management structure. These 10 hour openers jeopardize the safety of fishermen as they feel compelled to fish in unfavorable and dangerous conditions. I agree with a proposal of a longer 10-day fishing period each year, with the possibility of additional fishing periods. This will ensure more opportunity to fish in safer conditions while reducing the race to fish.

Thank You-
Harrison Ibach
F/V Oceana

From: FREDERICK MAU <fredmau47@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Aug 16, 2018 at 11:02 AM
Subject: PACIFIC HALIBUT
To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov
Cc: Lynn Mattes <Lynn.Mattes@state.or.us>

Dear Council members,

I am writing with regards to your Retention of bottom fish on All-Depth Halibut days. Allow me to make this simply and hopefully clear.....this regulation is plain WRONG! This is not about Yelloweye Rockfish nor is it about Halibut, it is about right and wrong.

When fishermen go out in the ocean for a day of enjoyment and catch some bottom fish and then fortunate enough to land a halibut on an All-Depth Day, your regulation only promotes waste and encourages the fishermen to ignore this foolish regulation and face sever fines if caught by a law-enforcement officer. The Council either has no compassion or is ignorant to the predicament this regulation put the sportsmen in. Figuring, at best, half the days during All-Depth Halibut Days are fishable due to weather, this regulation is only in effect 8-10 days a year. What do you think you are accomplishing (in a positive sense) in this short period?

So you understand up front, I am not going to let this extremely poor, ineffective and just plain wrong regulation continue without every newspaper on the west coast knowing about my feelings.

Time for Council members to look beyond the Yelloweye Rockfish and start thinking about the people that participate on the water of our wonderful Pacific Ocean.

Respectfully,
Fred C. Mau
fredmau47@gmail.com