

# Information Bulletin



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## HALIBUT CATCH IMPROVES IN 1975

The catch of halibut in 1975 was 25 million pounds, 4 million more than was taken in 1974. Commercial halibut fishing in Areas 2 and 3 ended on September 6. The season in Area 2 would have ended in late August, but a 3-week strike in British Columbia reduced the Canadian catch. All areas except the Bering Sea (Area 4) are closed to halibut fishing until reopened in 1976. Certain areas in the Bering Sea are open until September 30 and others will remain open until November 15.

The catch quota in Areas 2 and 3 in 1975 was 25 million pounds, 13 million in Area 2 and 12 million in Area 3. The catch was 12.3 million pounds in Area 2, 12.6 million pounds in Area 3. To date, the catch in Area 4 is 0.3 million. Canadian landings were 10.9 million pounds and U.S. landings were 14.3 million pounds. Landings in Washington and Oregon were 1.4 million pounds, 7.6 million pounds in British Columbia, 7.0 million pounds in southeastern Alaska, and 9.2 million pounds in central Alaska.

Examination of log records indicate that the catch per skate (CPUE) in 1975 was higher than in 1974. Although the increase in CPUE was small (5%), it is the first increase since 1968. In recent years, CPUE has been decreasing between 5 and 15 pounds annually. The improvement in CPUE indicates that the conservation measures instituted in the last few years have been successful. This fact, coupled with the restrictions imposed on foreign trawlers beginning in 1974, should result in a gradual increase in stock abundance in the coming years.

These statistics of the fishery are preliminary and the final figures with a more detailed account of the season will be presented at the Commission's annual meeting which will be held in Seattle, Washington from January 20-23, 1976.