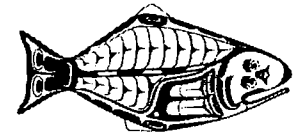


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### RESEARCH FISHING OFF THE OREGON COAST

During August 1985, the International Pacific Halibut Commission conducted research fishing for stock assessment purposes off the central Oregon coast. The Commission chartered the Newport-based BLUE HARVEST for the operation. Fishing locations were selected both within and outside known fishing grounds from Heceta Bank to Stonewall Bank. The purpose of the charter was to determine the distribution of halibut over the central Oregon grounds, to estimate relative abundance of fish in the study area, and to gather information on the size and age structure of the population, with particular emphasis on sublegal fish. Eleven skates of snap gear with circle hooks were fished daily. The gear was set between 6:30 and 10:00 each morning and hauled back after a minimum of 3.5 hours of soak. Salmon was the principal bait used, although a minor amount of octopus and fresh shack bait was also used. A total of 23 stations were fished over six days. The catch totalled 3,459 pounds of legal-sized halibut with a CPUE of 86 pounds per standard skate. CPUE of sublegal halibut averaged 16.9 pounds per skate. These preliminary CPUE values may not represent the relative abundance of halibut in the survey area because halibut were concentrated in small areas and their distribution was relatively patchy over much of the central Oregon coast. Halibut abundance was highest in depths less than 40 fathoms, where CPUE was 144 pounds per skate. Abundance declined with increasing depth. At this time, the interpretation of the survey results and analyses of stock condition are incomplete, but a thorough evaluation will be available for the annual meeting in February 1986. Locations fished and CPUE of legal-sized halibut are shown in the following table:

Location	Depth (Fathoms)	CPUE (Pounds)	Location	Depth (Fathoms)	CPUE (Pounds)
South Heceta Bank	59-67	0	8 mi. south of Stonewall Bank	44-47	20
	51-56	105		47-51	139
	35-47	90		51-52	94
	80-108	0	South Stonewall Bank	35-37	177
North Heceta Bank	57-66	76		30-34	154
	45-55	64		38-46	52
	35-44	92		40-40	104
	60-71	206	North Stonewall Bank	31-32	223
8 mi. north of Heceta Bank	46-51	39		28-36	47
	49-53	7		28-37	118
	43-50	0		46-50	106
	40-44	69			

Results from other IPHC setline surveys in 1985 are also available from the Seattle office.