

REPORT ON THE 2016 PACIFIC HALIBUT FISHERIES IN AREA 2A  
(January 10, 2017)

The 2016 Area 2A Pacific halibut (halibut) total allowable catch (TAC) of 1,140,000 pounds (lbs.), set by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), was allocated according to the 2016 Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) for Area 2A as follows:

Treaty Tribes	399,000 lbs. (35%)
Non-Tribal Total	741,000 lbs. (65%)
Non-Tribal Commercial	227,487 lbs.
Washington Sport	214,110 lbs.
Oregon Sport	220,077 lbs.
California Sport	29,640 lbs.

All weights in this report are net weight (gutted, head-off, and without ice and slime). The structure of each fishery and the resulting harvests are described below. Refer to the table at the end of this report for the catches by the tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries.

#### TOTAL TRIBAL AND NON-TRIBAL FISHERIES

Best estimates of halibut catch for Area 2A indicate harvest of 749,285 lbs. of the non-tribal total quota and 359,991 lbs. of the tribal quota, with a total preliminary harvest estimate of 1,109,276 lbs., or 97.3%, of the 1,140,000 lbs. TAC. A summary of all Area 2A quotas and best available harvest estimates for 2016 is attached in Table 2 on the last page of this document.

#### NON-TRIBAL COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

A quota of 227,487 lbs. (30.7% of the non-tribal share) was allocated to two fishery components: 1) a directed longline fishery targeting on halibut south of Point Chehalis, WA; and 2) an incidental catch fishery during the salmon troll fisheries off Washington, Oregon, and California. An additional 49,686 lbs. were allocated to an incidental catch fishery in the sablefish primary fishery for vessels using longline gear north of Point Chehalis, WA. This allowance for the sablefish primary fishery is only available in years when the overall Area 2A TAC exceeds 900,000 lbs. and is taken from the portion of the Washington sport allocation that is above 214,110 lbs., as long as the amount is at least 10,000 lbs.

#### *Incidental halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery*

A quota of 34,123 lbs. of Pacific halibut (15% of the non-tribal commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the non-tribal commercial salmon troll fishery in Area 2A as incidental catch during salmon troll fisheries.

The initial catch ratio established by the Council was one halibut (minimum 32 inches) per four Chinook salmon landed by a salmon troller, except that one halibut could be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 12 halibut could be landed per open period. Fishing with salmon troll gear is prohibited within the Salmon Troll Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Area (YRCA) off the northern Washington Coast. Additionally, the "C-shaped"

North Coast Recreational YRCA off Washington is designated as an area to be avoided (a voluntary closure) by salmon trollers.

- Halibut retention was permitted in the salmon troll fisheries beginning May 1, 2016, with the following ratio: 1 halibut per each 3 Chinook, except that 1 halibut may be landed without meeting the ratio requirement, and no more than 20 halibut may be possessed or landed per trip.
- The fishery is estimated to have taken 26,874 lbs., which is 7,249 lbs lower than the quota.

*Directed fishery targeting on halibut*

A quota of 193,364 lbs. (85% of the non-tribal commercial fishery allocation) was allocated to the directed longline fishery targeting on halibut in southern Washington, Oregon, and California. The fishery was confined to the area south of Subarea 2A-1 (south of Point Chehalis, WA; 46°53.30' N. lat.). In addition, there are closed areas along the coast defined by depth contours. Between the U.S./Canada border and 40°10' N. lat. the western boundary is defined by a line approximating the 100 fm depth contour. The eastern boundary is defined as follows: Between the U.S./Canada border and 46°16' N. lat., the boundary is the shoreline. Between 46°16' N. lat. and 40°10' N. lat. the boundary is the 30 fm depth contour. One-day fishing periods of 10 hours in duration were scheduled every other week by the IPHC starting June 22, 2016. In 2016, the fishery was open for three fishing periods on June 22, July 6, and July 20. A 32 inch minimum size limit with the head on was in effect for all openings. Vessel landing limits per fishing period based on vessel length were imposed by IPHC during all openings as shown in Table 1. Vessels choosing to operate in this fishery could not land halibut as incidental catch in the salmon troll fishery, nor operate in the recreational fishery.

*Table 1. 2016 fishing period limits (dressed weight, head-off without ice and slime, in pounds per vessel) by vessel size.*

Vessel Class/Size (ft)	June 22 and July 6 Opening (lbs)	July 20 Opening (lbs)
A 0 - 25	755	210
B 26 - 30	945	265
C 31 - 35	1,510	420
D 36 - 40	4,165	1,160
E 41 - 45	4,480	1,245
F 46 - 50	5,365	1,490
G 51 - 55	5,985	1,665
H 56+	9,000	2,500

- The June 22, July 6, and July 20 directed commercial open periods resulted in a catch of approximately 198,529 lbs. IPHC announced closure of the directed fishery on July 27, 2016. Final catch amounts will be available in 2017.

Incidental halibut catch in the sablefish primary longline fishery north of Point Chehalis, WA. A quota of 49,686 lbs. was allocated to the primary sablefish fishery in Area 2A as incidental catch north of Point Chehalis, WA. This incidental fishery is only available to vessels with a groundfish limited entry permit endorsed for longline gear with a sablefish tier limit and with an IPHC license. Beginning April 1 the incidental landing limit was 110 lbs (dressed weight) of halibut per 1,000 lbs (dressed weight) of sablefish and up to 2 additional halibut in excess of the landing limit ratio. The fishery was confined to an area seaward of a boundary line approximating the 100-fm depth contour. Fishing was also prohibited in the North Coast Commercial YRCA, an area off the northern Washington coast. In addition, the "C-shaped" North Coast Recreational YRCA off Washington is designated as an area to be avoided (a voluntary closure) by commercial longline sablefish fishermen.

- Through September 11 this fishery is projected to have landed 21,679 lbs.

#### SPORT FISHERIES (NON-TRIBAL)

463,827 lbs were allocated between sport fisheries in Washington (35.6% of non-tribal share, minus 49,686 lbs allocated to the incidental catch in the sablefish primary fishery), Oregon (29.7% of the non-tribal share), and California (4.0% of the non-tribal share). The allocations

were further subdivided as quotas among seven geographic subareas as described below. Unless otherwise noted the daily bag limit in all subareas was one halibut of any size, per person, per day.

*Washington Inside Waters Subarea (Puget Sound and Strait of Juan de Fuca)*

This area was allocated 57,393 lbs. (23.5% of the first 130,845 lbs allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 32% of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 and 224,110 lbs.). Due to inability to monitor the catch in this area inseason, a fixed season was established preseason based on projected catch per day and number of days to achieve the sub-quota. The fishing season in Puget was open May 7, 12, 13, 14, 26, 27, 28, and 29.

- The estimated total catch for this area is 102,699 lbs, which exceeded the quota by 45,306 lbs.

*Northern Washington Coastal Waters Subarea (landings in Neah Bay and La Push)*

The coastal area off Cape Flattery to Queets River was allocated 108,030 lbs. (62.2% of the first 130,845 lbs. allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 32% of the Washington sport allocation between 130,945 lbs. and 224,110 lbs.). The fishery was open for six days (May 7, 12, 14, 28, June 11 and 23), and closed after June 23 because the remaining quota was not enough for the fishery to be open for further 2 day open periods. The "C-shaped" North Coast Recreational YRCA, southwest of Cape Flattery, was closed to sport halibut fishing.

- The estimated total catch for this area is 107,417 lbs., which is 613 lbs. under the quota.

*Washington South Coast Subarea (landings in Westport)*

The area from the Queets River to Leadbetter Point was allocated 42,739 lbs. (12.3% of the first 130,845 lbs. allocated to the Washington sport fishery and 32% of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 and 224,110 lbs.). This subarea operates with a primary fishery and a nearshore fishery. The nearshore fishery occurred in waters between the Queets River and 47°25.00' N. lat. south to 46°58.00' N. lat., and east of 124°30.00' W. long. The south coast subarea quota was allocated as follows: 2,000 lbs. to the nearshore fishery and the remaining 40,739 lbs. to the primary fishery. The primary fishery was open four days on May 1, 3, 8, and 10. The nearshore fishery was open May 2, 4-7, 9, 11-15, and 16-21.

- The primary fishery estimated catch is 41,683 lbs. which is 944 lbs. over the quota.
- The nearshore fishery opened with a revised quota of 1,056 lbs. when the overage from the primary fishery was deducted from the original 2,000 lbs. quota.
- The estimated catch in the nearshore fishery 2,102 lbs., which is 1,046 lbs. over the revised nearshore quota.

*Columbia River Subarea (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon)*

This sport fishery subarea was allocated 11,009 lbs., consisting of 2.0% of the first 130,845 lbs. allocated to the Washington sport fishery, and 4.0% of the Washington sport allocation between 130,845 lbs. and 224,110 lbs., and 2.3% of the Oregon sport allocation. The fishery operates with an all depth and nearshore fishery. The nearshore fishery is allocated 500 lbs. to accommodate

incidental halibut retention during groundfish fishing when the all depth halibut fishery in this area is closed.

- The all depth fishery opened May 1. The nearshore fishery opened May 2.
- The all depth fishery estimated catch is 11,895 lbs. which is 886 lbs. over the subarea quota.
- Because the all depth fishery exceeded the subarea total, both the nearshore and all depth fisheries were closed effective June 8.

*Oregon Central Coast Subarea (Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain)*

This sport fishery subarea was allocated 206,410 lbs (93.79% of the Oregon sport allocation).

Three seasons occurred in this subarea:

1. a restricted depth nearshore (inside 40-fathom) fishery, open June 1-October 31, 7 days a week;
2. a fixed Spring season in all depths that was open on May 12-14, 19-21, 26-28, June 2-4, and June 17-18;
3. a Summer season in all depths that was open August 5-6, 19-20, September 2-3, 16-17, and September 30-October 1.

Harvest in this subarea in these seasons is summarized in the bullets below.

- The inside 40-fathom fishery has an estimated catch of 32,132 lbs., which is 637 lbs. under the revised quota.
- The nearshore quota was increased on 9/9 and 9/22 with pounds from the summer and Southern Oregon subareas.
- The Spring all-depth fishery resulted in an estimated catch of 132,097 lbs, which is 2,059 lbs. over the spring allocation.
- The Summer all-depth fishery resulted in an estimated catch of 38,423 lbs, which is 4,121 lbs. under the revised allocation of 42,544 lbs.

*Southern Oregon (Humbug Mountain to the OR/CA Border)*

This sport fishery was allocated 8,605 lbs. (3.9% of the Oregon sport fishery allocation minus the Oregon contribution to the Columbia River subarea). This area had a pre-set season of 7 days per week from May 1 to October 31.

- This fishery resulted in an estimated catch of 4,173 lbs., which is 3,432 lbs. under the adjusted quota of 7,605 lbs.

*California (Off the California Coast)*

This sport fishery was allocated 29,640 lbs. (4.0% of the non-tribal share). The fishery was open May 1-15, June 1-15, July 1-15, August 1-15, and September 1-23. The fishery was closed on September 23 because catch projections estimated there was not sufficient quota for the fishery to remain open past September 23.

- This fishery resulted in an estimated catch of 29,581 lbs, which is 59 lb under the quota.

## TRIBAL FISHERIES

399,000 lbs (35% of the Area 2A TAC) was allocated to tribal fisheries. The tribes estimated that 33,900 lbs would be used for ceremonial and subsistence (C&S) fisheries and the remaining 365,100 lbs were allocated to the commercial fishery. The 2016 management plan was based on a court-order, to use the 2000 season plan, updated to reflect the current allocation and management measures. It contains provisions for both unrestricted fisheries with no landing limits and restricted fisheries with limits as well as a late season or mop-up fishery that can be set up to have no landing limits or with limits, toward the end of the season.

- The unrestricted fishery was open March 19-21, 20-21 and 21-23 (39 hrs.) and landed 239,513 lbs. in 248 landings.
- The restricted fishery was open April 1-2 (28 hours), with a 500 lbs./vessel/day limit. The restricted fishery landed 52,745 lbs in 234 landings.
- The late fishery was open May 1-2 and 11-12 (24 hr.) with a 800 lbs/vessel/day limit, May 18-Aug 15 with a 1,200 per Tribe limits, July 25-August 2, with a 3,000 lbs tribal limit and Sept. 12-Nov. 15 lbs. 437 lbs. per Tribe limit. Therefore the total landings for all tribal fisheries is 359,991 lbs., which is 5,109 lbs. under the tribal commercial allocation. The C&S fishery continued through December 31 and tribal estimates of catch will be reported by the tribes in January 2017.

Table 2. 2016 Area 2A Total Allowable Catch, Catch Sharing Plan Quotas and Best Estimates of Harvest (all values in pounds, net weight), updated January 9, 2017

	Quota (pounds)	Inseason- Adjusted Quota (pounds)	Catch (pounds)		% of Quota Taken
<b>TRIBAL INDIAN - Total</b>	399,000		359,991	*	90.2
Commercial	365,100		359,991		98.6
Ceremonial and Subsistence	33,900			*	0.0
<b>NON-TRIBAL - Total</b>	741,000		749,285		101.1
<b>COMMERCIAL - Total</b>	277,173		247,082	^	89.1
Salmon troll - incidental	34,123		26,874		78.8
Sablefish primary - incidental	49,686		21,679		43.6
Directed	193,364		198,529		102.7
<b>SPORT - Total</b>	463,827		514,099		110.8
Washington Sport - Total	214,110		265,797		124.1
Oregon Sport - Total	220,077		206,825		94.0
California Sport - Total	29,640		29,581		99.8
<b>Washington</b>					
Inside Waters	57,393		102,699		178.9
North Coast	108,030		107,417		99.4
South Coast	42,739		43,785		102.4
Columbia River - Total	11,009		11,896		108.1
All Depth	10,509		11,896		113.2
Nearshore	500		0		0.0
<b>Oregon</b>					
Central Coast - Total	206,410	205,351	202,652		98.2
Nearshore, inside 40 fathoms	24,769	32,769	32,132		98.1
Spring (May-July)	130,038	130,038	132,097		101.6
Summer (August- October)	51,603	42,544	38,423		90.3
Southern	8,605	7,605	4,173		54.9
<b>California</b>	29,640		29,581		99.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,140,000		1,109,276	*	97.3

\* Complete data not available

^ Quota listed here includes the 49,686 lbs allocated to the sablefish primary fishery, which comes from the Washington sport allocation not a commercial allocation.