



**REGULATORY PROPOSAL 2018**

**TITLE:** Trawler Halibut Bycatch Tender boat program

**SUBMITTED BY:**

**NAME:** James Kearns

**AFFILIATION:** Alaska Halibut Forever

**COUNTRY:** USA

**DATE:** 22-Dec-2017

*Explanatory Memorandum*

All Regulatory Areas  All Alaska Regulatory Areas  All U.S. Regulatory Areas

2A  2B  2C  3A  3B  4A  4B  4C  4D  4E

I am writing to re-introduce the proposal previously sent in by Kent Huff regarding a Trawler Halibut Bycatch Tender boat program. It would reduce the total poundage of halibut harvested by the commercial halibut fleet each year by the amount of halibut caught by the trawler fleet as halibut bycatch. This would allow the halibut biomass in areas 2A, 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B and 4CDE to increase back to normal levels at a faster rate than they currently are and increase the total harvest for both commercial halibut and charter halibut fishermen in the near future. How the Process Would Work: A tender boat, similar to the boats that tender the salmon commercial fleet, would tender the trawler fleet to transport all non-releasable halibut bycatch to a processing plant. The total pounds processed by the processing plant would be put into a pool. The commercial shareholders from Alaska and Canada could turn in their quota in exchange for an equal amount from the pool and be paid for their turned in quota minus the cost of the tender transport without having to actually fish for their turned in quota. This would reduce halibut wastage, increase the total percentage of catch that is used, and reduce the pressure on the stocks for the other regulatory areas, thus allowing them to rebuild. Shareholders could trade in any percentage of quota they have. And if the total bycatch does not exceed the demand by the shareholders, then each shareholder could trade in a percentage based on quota held and available pounds in the halibut pool.

If the demand is less than the THBTBP, then the following year that percentage of quota would be equally divided among all quota shareholders prior to quota allocation. The total pounds allocated would be reduced by the bycatch left in the pool, and compensation would be based on a percentage of quota held by each shareholder. Example: Shareholder allocation 10,000,000 pounds Trawler halibut bycatch 3,000,000 pounds Shareholder THBTBP quota turned in (3,000,000) pounds Total harvest after THBTBP 10,000,000 pounds Example: Shareholder Allocation 10,000,000 pounds Trawler halibut bycatch 3,000,000 pounds Shareholder THBTBP quota turned in (2,000,000) pounds Total harvest after THBTBP 11,000,000 pound Example: Shareholder allocation 10,000,000 pounds Previous year overharvest compensation to shareholders (1,000,000) pounds Total shareholder harvest after THBTBP 9,000,000 ponds Example: Shareholder allocation 10,000,000 pounds Trawler halibut bycatch 3,000,000 pounds Shareholder quota turned in 4,000,000 pounds Percentage of compensation to each quota (75%) 3,000,000 pounds Total shareholder harvest after THBTBP 10,000,000 pounds.

*Suggested Regulatory Language*

There is no current language to change but please note that this proposal would not eliminate halibut bycatch, however it would eliminate halibut bycatch as wastage. Additionally, all methods that are currently being implemented to reduce bycatch should continue to be used. This was originally proposed by Kent Huff of Eagles Nest Lodge in Gustavus, Alaska. He is a member of the Charter Halibut Management Committee for NPFMC.