



**IPHC Fishery Regulation Proposal:**

**Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E (Sect. 29) – Charter management measures in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A**

**SUBMITTED BY: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (NOAA-FISHERIES) (20 DECEMBER 2022)**

- Directed Commercial  Recreational  Subsistence  Non-directed commercial  All
- All Regulatory Areas  All Alaska Regulatory Areas  All U.S. Regulatory Areas
- 2A  2B  2C  3A  3B  4A  4B  4C  4D  4E

**PURPOSE**

To propose charter management measures in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A reflective of mortality limits adopted by the IPHC and resulting allocations under the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) Pacific halibut Catch Sharing Plan.

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) recommended the following management measures for guided recreational (sport) Pacific halibut fisheries in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A for application in 2023, in order to achieve the charter Pacific halibut allocation under the NPFMC Halibut Catch Sharing Plan.

The NPFMC selected these management measures at its December 2022 meeting, following review of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) analysis of proposed management measures for 2023, and after receiving input from the Charter Halibut Management Committee, which includes stakeholder representatives from both IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A.

**IPHC Area 2C**

Management measures for all allocations shown below include a daily bag limit of one Pacific halibut, combined with a progression of size limits, days closed to the retention of Pacific halibut, and an annual limit, in the following order:

1. A daily bag limit of one halibut, with a reverse slot size limit, where the upper limit is fixed at O80 (halibut equal to 80 inches or more may be retained), and a decreasing lower size limit that is applied until the allocation is reached, but no lower than U40 (halibut equal to 40 inches or less may be retained). These measures cover projected charter removals that range from 0.867 up to 1.121 million pounds (Mlb), as provided by [Table 2C.5 \(page 21\)](#) of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) analysis.
2. If the allocation cannot be reached with a lower size limit of U40 and upper size limit of O80, then also prohibit halibut retention on Mondays, beginning with September 18 and all other Mondays through the end of the season; then, if necessary, add consecutive

Monday closures from September 18 working toward the beginning of the season until the allocation is reached. These additional measures cover projected charter removals that range from 0.734 to 0.867 Mlb, as indicated in [Table 2C.8.b \(page 25\)](#) of the ADF&G analysis.

3. If the allocation cannot be reached with a lower limit of U40 and all Mondays closed, add an annual limit of three fish per charter angler. If possible, increase the lower size limit to U41 or U42 to reach the allocation. These additional measures cover projected charter removals that range from 0.686 to 0.723 Mlb, as indicated in [Table 2C.10.b \(page 30\)](#) of the ADF&G analysis.
4. If the allocation is not reached by closing all Mondays and applying a three-fish annual limit, then allow the lower size limit to decrease from U40 until the allocation is reached. This covers projected charter removals that range from 0.564 to 0.686 Mlb, as indicated in [Table 2C.10.b \(page 30\)](#) of the ADF&G analysis.

If an annual limit is adopted in Area 2C, implement a requirement for charter anglers to record, immediately upon retaining a halibut, the following information: the date, location (IPHC Regulatory Area), and species (Pacific halibut) on their harvest record, consistent with the past reporting requirements implemented in IPHC Area 3A.

### **IPHC Area 3A**

Management measures for all allocations shown below include, unless otherwise specified, a daily bag limit of two halibut; one fish of any size and one fish with a maximum size limit; one trip per charter vessel per day with retention of halibut; one trip per charter halibut permit per day.

1. If the allocation is less than 2.37 Mlb, but greater than or equal to 2.075 Mlb, apply:
  - One fish of any size and one fish less than or equal to 28 inches;
  - and,
  - Adjust the number of Wednesdays closed to the retention of halibut, so that projected charter removals are within the Area 3A allocation, as indicated in [Table 3A.13 \(page 74\)](#) of the ADF&G analysis.
2. If the allocation is less than 2.075 Mlb, but greater than 1.75 Mlb: in addition to all closed Wednesdays and a second halibut 28 inches or less, close as many Tuesdays as needed to keep the charter harvest removals within the Area 3A allocation, as indicated in [Table 3A.5 \(page 65\)](#) of the ADF&G analysis.
3. If the allocation is below 1.75 Mlb, in addition to closing all Tuesdays and Wednesdays, lower the size of the second fish to as low as 26 inches, until the projected charter harvest removals meet the allocation. This covers allocations as low as 1.69 Mlb as indicated in [Table 3A.6 \(page 65\)](#) of the ADF&G analysis

### **Supporting information**

The December 2022 NPFMC final motion for charter halibut management measures, the minutes of the December 2022 NPFMC Charter Halibut Management Committee, and the ADF&G analysis of the charter halibut management measures for 2023 are available on the

NPFMC website at: <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/2964> (see Agenda Item C6, 2023 Charter Halibut Management Measures – Final Action).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** IPHC Fishery Regulation proposal IPHC-2023-AM099-PropB1 which proposes charter management measures in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A reflective of mortality limits adopted by the IPHC and resulting allocations under the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) Pacific halibut Catch Sharing Plan.

## APPENDICES

[Appendix A](#): Suggested Regulatory Language.

### APPENDIX A

#### SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

#### 29. Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E

- (1) ...
- (2) For guided recreational (sport) fishing (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) in IPHC Regulatory Area 2C:
  - (a) no person on board a charter vessel (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) shall catch and retain more than one Pacific halibut per calendar day.
  - (b) no person on board a charter vessel (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) shall catch and retain any Pacific halibut that with head on is greater than 40 inches (101.6 cm) and less than 80 inches (203.2 cm) [as described above, size limits may be adjusted to meet the 2023 Area 2C charter harvest allocation] as measured in a straight line, passing over the pectoral fin from the tip of the lower jaw with mouth closed, to the extreme end of the middle of the tail.
  - (c) [as described above, this section may be added according to the progressive management measures described in the NPFMC recommendation] no person on board a charter vessel may catch and retain Pacific halibut on the following Mondays: [a list of dates of 2023 Mondays would follow]
  - (d) [as described above, this section may be added according to the progressive management measures described in the NPFMC recommendation] charter vessel anglers may catch and retain no more than three Pacific halibut per calendar year on board charter vessels in IPHC Regulatory Area 2C. Pacific halibut that are retained as GAF, retained while on a charter vessel fishing trip in other Commission regulatory areas, or retained while fishing without the services of a guide do not accrue toward the three-fish annual limit for Regulatory Area 2C.
- (3) For guided recreational (sport) fishing (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) in IPHC Regulatory Area 3A:
  - (a) no person on board a charter vessel (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) shall catch and retain more than two Pacific halibut per calendar day;
  - (b) at least one of the retained Pacific halibut must have a head-on length of no more than 28 inches (71.1 cm) [as described above, the size limit may be adjusted to meet the 2023 harvest allocation in Area 3A] as measured in a straight line, passing over the pectoral fin from the tip of the lower jaw with mouth closed, to the extreme end of the middle of the tail. If a person sport fishing on a charter vessel in IPHC Regulatory Area 3A retains only one Pacific halibut in a calendar day, that Pacific halibut may be of any length;
  - (c) a “charter halibut permit” (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.67) may only be used for one charter vessel fishing trip in which Pacific halibut are caught and retained per calendar day. A charter vessel fishing trip is defined at 50 CFR 300.61 as the time period between the first deployment of fishing gear into the water by a charter vessel angler (as defined at 50 CFR 300.61) and the

offloading of one or more charter vessel anglers or any Pacific halibut from that vessel. For purposes of this trip limit, a charter vessel fishing trip ends at 2359 (Alaska local time) on the same calendar day that the fishing trip began, or when any anglers or Pacific halibut are offloaded, whichever comes first;

- (d) a charter vessel on which one or more anglers catch and retain Pacific halibut may only make one charter vessel fishing trip per calendar day. A charter vessel fishing trip is defined at 50 CFR 300.61 as the time period between the first deployment of fishing gear into the water by a charter vessel angler (as defined at 50 CFR 300.61) and the offloading of one or more charter vessel anglers or any Pacific halibut from that vessel. For purposes of this trip limit, a charter vessel fishing trip ends at 2359 (Alaska local time) on the same calendar day that the fishing trip began, or when any anglers or Pacific halibut are offloaded, whichever comes first; and
- (e) no person on board a charter vessel may catch and retain Pacific halibut on any Wednesday, or on the following Tuesdays in 2023: July 25 and August 1. [as described above, Wednesday and Tuesday closures to Pacific halibut retention may be adjusted, to meet the 2023 harvest allocation in Area 3A].