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**REGULATORY PROPOSAL 2019**  
**Minimum TCEY in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A**

**SUBMITTED BY:**  
PATRICK DEPOE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
26 OCTOBER 2018

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**IPHC Regulatory Area(s) that may be affected: 2A**  
**Fishery Sector(s): Commercial, Recreational**

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

Variable and declines below a certain threshold in fishery limits from year to year create significant uncertainty and hardship for 13 halibut tribes and three coastal states (California, Oregon and Washington) dependent on the Pacific halibut fisheries in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A. Regulatory Area 2A represents a small fraction of Region 2, and of the overall Pacific halibut stock. As such, a higher IPHC Regulatory Area 2A TCEY than indicated by the biological distribution of the stock estimate by the IPHC Secretariat will not create a biological conservation concern. This has been demonstrated in recent years when the Commission has set TCEYs higher than the levels suggested by the harvest decision table. Recent experience suggests that a constant TCEY floor in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A can be sustained by the biomass available in Region 2. In recent years, the TCEYs adopted for IPHC Regulatory Area 2A have been between 1.06 and 1.47Mlb, which produced FCEYs of 0.96 to approximately 1.33Mlb. A stable level of catch between of 1.5Mlb would reduce the variability and uncertainty for all fisheries in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A, and should be used as a floor level in annual TCEY decisions.

**SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE**

Adopt a TCEY for IPHC Regulatory Area 2A that supports a FCEY no lower than 1.5Mlb. In years when the distribution would indicate a FCEY higher than 1.5Mlb is available, that number would be adopted.