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### IPHC NEWS RELEASE 2018-02

#### **INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION REQUESTS CHARTER BIDS FOR THE 2018 FISHERY-INDEPENDENT SETLINE SURVEY**

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) is seeking to charter longline vessels to conduct its fisheries-independent setline survey (setline survey) in 2018. The purpose of the setline survey is to collect standardized data for use in the Pacific halibut stock assessment. This information is used to study aspects of the Pacific halibut resource such as growth, distribution, biomass, age composition, sexual maturity, and relative abundance of other species. Legal-sized Pacific halibut from all skates and some bycatch will be retained, sampled for biological data, and sold by the IPHC to offset setline survey expenses.

The 2018 setline survey will cover 30 regions within the IPHC Convention Area with a standard grid of stations from Oregon to the northern Bering Sea, including the Aleutian Islands. The 2018 setline survey will also include an expanded number of stations in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2A, 2B, and 2C to gather additional data from these areas. All regions are open for single-year bids.

Vessels will fish 7 skates of gear at each setline survey station in most regions (except 8 skates in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2A and part of 4CDE) following standard setline survey protocol. A maximum of 4 stations will be permitted per day. Most regions require 12-22 fishing days plus additional days for running, loading and offloading gear and fish, foul weather days, etc. Depending on the region, total charter duration for each region can be expected to be 20-36 days. Vessels are encouraged to bid for multiple areas, and may be awarded up to a maximum of four regions. Setline survey fishing must be completed between 28 May and 31 August 2018.

Vessels need not be licensed for Pacific halibut fishing in Canada or the U.S.A. to be eligible. The IPHC is not restricted as to nationality of the vessels it charts for operation in any region as long as customs and immigration regulations are followed.

The IPHC will consider only those vessels with captains and crews that have recent (within 5 years) Pacific halibut fishing experience. Most areas require vessels that have adequate deck space and suitable accommodations for two to three male or female IPHC employees. Vessels must supply **conventional fixed-hook setline gear** conforming to IPHC standards (see Charter Specifications) as well as all associated equipment normally required for commercial halibut fishing.

The IPHC may require an inspection of the vessel prior to awarding the charter. Bids will be evaluated based on (1) the Pacific halibut fishing experience of captain and crew, (2) the characteristics and safety features of the vessel, (3) the vessel's availability, and (4) the IPHC operating costs. The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted, and the IPHC will contract according to its own interests.

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Interested vessel owners are invited to submit bids based upon standard IPHC contract structure as described in the IPHC Request for Proposal specifications. **Charter Specifications** and **Vessel Tender Forms** for this project may be downloaded directly from the IPHC web site at <https://iphc.int/the-commission/opportunities> or requested from the IPHC Secretariat office. **Bids must be received at the IPHC office in Seattle by 12:00 noon (Pacific Time) on Monday, 12 March 2018.**

For further information please contact Tracee Geernaert (ext. 7665), or Eric Soderlund (ext. 7678) at (206) 634-1838.

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