

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## North Pacific Fishery Management Council Charter Halibut Management Implementation Committee December 8, 2015

The North Pacific Fishery Management Committee's Charter Halibut Implementation Committee met on December 8, 2015 in Anchorage, AK to recommend management measures for the Area 2C and Area 3A 2016 Charter halibut season.

Scott Meyer (ADF&G Sportfish Division) provided a brief summary of his analysis of proposed management measures forwarded by the committee at their October 21 2015 meeting. Mr. Meyer responded to questions from the committee after which the committee members from each area caucused together to make recommendations for 2016 management measures for the Council.

The Area 2C 2016 blue line resulting from the interim IPHC meeting is 847,000 lbs. The 2015 allocation was 851,000 lbs. Area 2C representatives made the following consensus recommendations for 2016:

- If the IPHC FCEY remains at the blue line, recommend the same management measures as were in place in 2015:
  - Limit of one fish per day that must be 42" or less or 80" or more (reverse slot limit).
- If the IPHC FCEY is higher than the blue line:
  - Incrementally increase the 42" lower limit to achieve charter allocation
- If the IPHC FCEY is lower than the blue line:
  - Enact a 5 fish annual limit,
  - If necessary, incrementally reduce the 42" lower limit to achieve charter allocation.

The Area 3A 2016 blue line resulting from the interim IPHC meeting is 1.771 Mlbs. The 2015 allocation was 1.89 Mlbs. Area 3A representatives were not able to achieve consensus, and made two recommendations. The first recommendation includes the management measures enacted for the 2015 season: two fish bag limit with maximum size limit of 29 inches on one of the fish, one trip per vessel per day, day of the week closures, and annual limits. Additional recommendations for 2016 include:

- If the IPHC FCEY remains at 2015 level:
  - Extend the day of the week (Thursday) closure for the entire year.
- If the IPHC FCEY is at the 2016 blue line:
  - Implement additional day of the week (Tuesday) closures from 15 June through 31 August
  - Eliminate the 5 fish annual limit
- If the IPHC FCEY is higher than the 2016 blue line:
  - Status quo 29-inch maximum size limit on one fish and extend the day of the week (Thursday) closure for the entire season.
  - Incrementally eliminate some of the recommended Tuesday closures to reach the recommended allocation.

The recommendations described above are projected to stay within the Area 3A charter allocation (2016 blue line or 2015 allocation). The recommendations described above assume that extending the Thursday closures for the entire season would achieve an additional 2.6% reduction in harvest, and adding a second day of the week (Tuesday) closure will achieve at least an additional 11.7% reduction in harvest, based on Table 15 in Meyer and Powers (2015). This is based on a further assumption that because Thursdays are already closed for part or all of the season, adding an additional day of the week closure would likely achieve a greater reduction in harvest than suggested in Table 15.

The second set of recommendations from Area 3A include, in addition to the existing 2015 management measures:

- If the IPHC FCEY remains at 2015 level:
  - Extend the existing day of the week (Thursday) closure to the entire year.
- If the IPHC FCEY is at the 2016 blue line:
  - Extend the existing day of the week (Thursday) closure to the entire year
  - Reduce the maximum size of the “second” fish to 26”
  - Reduce the annual limit to 4 fish.
- If the IPHC FCEY is above the 2016 blue line:
  - Extend the existing day of the week (Thursday) closure to the entire year
  - Incrementally increase the maximum size of the “second” fish to achieve the recommended allocation
  - If the maximum size of the “second” fish reaches 29”, raise the annual limit to 5 fish.

The recommendations described above are projected to stay within the Area 3A charter allocation (2016 blue line or 2015 allocation). The recommendations described above assume that extending the Thursday closure for the entire season would achieve an additional 2.6% reduction in harvest, and reducing the size of the second fish would achieve additional reductions in harvest.

Representatives from NMFS Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries Division informed the committee that, in contrast to 2015, if an annual limit is selected, guided anglers would be required to report all halibut caught during a guided trip on their 2016 ADF&G sport fishing license or harvest record card at the time of landing.

The committee heard public comment from Tom Gemmell, Ken Newman, James Akana, Dave Goldstein, Ken Newman, Mel Erickson, and Nate Smith.

Committee members present: Andy Mezirow (Chairman), Mike Flores (Phone), Richard Yamada, Steve Zernia, Dan Donich, Seth Bone, Stan Malcom, Kent Huff, Nicole Kimball (ADF&G), Steve MacLean (Council staff), Sarah Marinnan (Council staff).

Others present: Martin Spargo, Tom Taube, Chance Weller, Mel Erickson, Jimmy Akana, Nate Smith, Eric Higbee, Ryan Makinster, Ricky Gease, Dan Ernhart, Julie Scheurer, Ken Newman, Tim Cashman, Robert Powers, Jim Hasbrouck, Tom Ohaus, Bo Breuner, Rachel Baker, Tom Gemmell, Bill Tweit, Tom Brookover, Dave Goldstein.