

C-3 Self-guided rental boats
Draft Council motion
December 7, 2017

The Council adopts the following purpose and need statement and directs staff to develop an expanded discussion paper exploring an unguided rental boat registration requirement.

Purpose and Need:

Due to declines in halibut abundance and associated changes in charter halibut sport fishing regulations, the charter halibut sector in IPHC Areas 2C and 3A currently has more restrictive management measures than non-charter halibut anglers. Additionally, charter halibut catch is limited by an allocation between the commercial and charter sectors; whereas the non-charter halibut harvest is not constrained by a sector catch limit.

The Council is concerned that differences in regulations between the charter and non-charter sectors, and growth of unguided halibut rental vessels affiliated with charter operations may result in increased halibut harvest in the non-charter sector that may negatively impact other sectors. To address this concern, the Council intends to a) establish a registration requirement for vessels affiliated with charter operations, remote lodges, or businesses that require annual saltwater fishing guide licenses, and b) estimate halibut catch from this segment of the sector. The intent of the registration requirement and catch estimation is to identify and track these unguided vessels to better understand impacts of this portion of the sector to communities, the halibut resource and other halibut stakeholders. This information will help the Council determine whether additional management actions are necessary for this segment of the fishery.

In addition, the Council requests staff provide focused discussion of the following tradeoffs and considerations:

- Appropriate agency to administer a registration (State of Alaska or NMFS)
- Number of businesses and vessels that meet the proposed registration requirement
- Whether the registration should be annual or valid for some number of years
- Further examination of the number of unguided vessels associated with charter operations
- Steps necessary to estimate catch from this segment of the unguided sector.
- Challenges of a selective registration requirement focused on vessels affiliated with charter operations, remote lodges, or businesses that require annual saltwater fishing guide licenses.
- Define the kind or business that supplies unguided halibut rental boats. Consider adapting the State of Alaska definition of a Hunting Outfitter as a guideline.