Rex Murphy
April 11, 2006

Queue Model

Key Provisions:

1. Government control of the halibut resource, including data collection and enforcement.

    Option 1: Federal
    Option 2: State
    Option 3: A tightly coupled combination of State and Federal control.

2. Choice of entry model

    Option 1: Open Entry
    Option 2: Limited Entry
    Option 3: Open entry in Amendment 66 areas, limited entry elsewhere

3. An allocation remains in effect for the fishery

    Option 1: charter recreational fishery
    Option 2: private and charter recreational fishery

4. The allocation is in pounds, and does not float up or down with abundance.

    Option 1: Allocation in fish
    Other Options: All previously discussed allocation schemes

5. The allocation can increased by acquisition of commercial IFQ's. Methods of acquisition could include: purchase by user fee fund, forfeiture, federal or state grant, bequest.

6. Halibut harvest tickets are issued to individual fishermen:

    Tickets are available on a first come, first served basis, with ticket sales stopped when total sold equals meets allocation.

    Tickets are available to the general public in increments.

Option 1: Daily ticket, good for 1 limit for 1 person on any day of the fisherman's choosing, in the year issued.

Option 2: Yearly ticket, good for x number of fish total.

Tickets are non-transferable, to enforce reporting requirements and eliminate possibility of hoarding or scalping.

Tickets are refundable if not used, allowing return of catchable fish to the pool.

7. A harvest record is part of harvest ticket. Upon landing a fish, harvest record is filled out. Location of catch and length of fish is recorded. The harvest record should be simple to fill out and machine readable. Upon trip completion, harvest record is submitted to the responsible authority.

Option 1: No harvest record, no data collection

8. A halibut database is created to do the following:

A. Issue and track Halibut Harvest Ticket sales

B. Maintain a real time count of number of tickets available

C. Collect harvest records resulting from the exercise of ticket privileges.

D. Generate reports as necessary at season's end.

Sample Timeline:

These dates are somewhat arbitrary, but the idea is to have decision making data from all sectors available at the same time.

December: Allocation is set for following year, based on good data from that year's harvest, and IFQ's acquired. Allocation is converted to fish, based on the previous year's average size fish. Total number of halibut harvest tickets offered = (Allocation converted to Fish)/daily limit.

January: Ticket sales begin on a first come, first served, basis to the general public. When all tickets for the year's allocation are sold, ticket sales close, perhaps reopening at times if fish are returned to the available pool. At all times, the number of available and sold tickets is known, and available to all online for planning purposes.

February 1: Seasons open:
Fisherman has harvest ticket in possession while fishing. Ticket holder goes fishing, dates his or her harvest report, catches fish, fills in the required harvest information and submits harvest report. No report: 2 average fish added to harvest count. Report with 0 or 1 fish caught results in 2 or 1 fish being returned to the available pool.

October 15: end of recreational halibut season.

November 15: end of commercial season

Nov 15 to Dec 15: analysis to determine next year's allocation commences

Dec 15: The cycle repeats.

Comments:

The recreational fishermen who catch the fish bear the cost of their share of the harvest, and fund programs to enhance the fishery. This concept is similar to the Federal Duck Stamp program.

A first come, first served model for ticket distribution should be readily acceptable to a charter customer, who after all, makes his charter reservation on a first come, first served basis, and indeed, stands in line for virtually everything else he or she buys.

In an open entry model, charter operators would be free to compete for customers, as they do today, and new operators would be allowed.

In a limited entry model, for example a permanent extension of the proposed charter moratorium, customers are still free to choose which (permitted) charter operator they want to fish with.

The open entry model would convert easily to limited entry in areas where limited entry is deemed necessary, by application of a localized moratorium.

A mechanism for compensated, orderly growth of the allocation is essential for this model.

A reasonable allocation would be enough to accommodate all expected demand, with an additional buffer to accommodate unexpected demand, or unexpected size increases.

This model incorporates comprehensive, accurate and timely reports of harvested fish. All sectors finish reporting concurrently, allowing fast calculation this years harvest and next year's allocations, without the use of projections or survey results. Harvest data could be precise enough to visualize the harvest, and possibly identify areas of localized depletion.

An allocation in pounds (or fish) may make more sense for the charter sector. Charter operators are unlikely to be able to take advantage of an allocation that stairsteps or floats up, since they still have to recruit customers to catch the fish. Charter operators will suffer if their allocation is fully utilized and stairsteps or floats down.

Assuming the average size fish does not change drastically upward from year to year, there is no possibility of exceeding the allocation. There is no need for any management measures, since sales are halted automatically when the allocation is met.

This model provides security of investments and allocations in both commercial and charter sectors.

Should this model be applied to the charter recreational sector only, the private recreational sector could be easily incorporated at a later date.

This proposal does not attempt to address localized depletion or overcapitalization.

Items needing resolution:

Fee collection: Federal and or state legislation will be needed to handle ticket sales and IFQ acquisition.