

C-1 Halibut Catch Sharing Plan

Final action

October 5, 2012

The Council recommends Alternative 3 for Area 2C and Alternative 4 for Area 3A as its preferred alternative for the halibut catch sharing plan (CSP). The purpose of the proposed action is to create a halibut catch sharing plan that establishes a clear allocation, with sector accountability, between the charter and commercial setline halibut sectors in Areas 2C and 3A. To this end, the Council requests that the IPHC annually set a combined charter and setline halibut catch limit, to which the allocation percentage for each area will be applied to establish the domestic harvest targets for each sector. The Council also supports the IPHC implementation of separate accountability for the charter and commercial sectors such that wastage in the commercial sector is deducted from the commercial sector's catch limit and wastage in the charter sector is deducted from the charter sector's catch limit.

This action also outlines Council intent to engage in an annual process for determining charter halibut management measures. Upon analysis, and through the Council process, the Council will select the management measure that best minimizes the difference between the annual projected harvest and target allocation, without exceeding the charter halibut allocation. This will allow the Council and public to engage in an effective and transparent process for considering both stakeholder input and the most current information regarding the charter fishery and its management. Annual management measures recommended by the Council will be provided to the IPHC for implementation during the subsequent fishing year.

The Council recognizes that management measures are imprecise; therefore, a small variance can be expected to occur around the target allocation. The Council's expectation is that these variances will balance over time, to ensure IPHC conservation and management objectives are achieved, and that harvest projections will improve over time as fishery information improves.

Under this action, in Areas 2C and 3A, there is no retention of halibut by skipper and crew while paying clients are on board.

Element 1 – Charter allocation

Area 2C:

At a combined charter and setline halibut catch limit of <5 million pounds, the charter allocation will be 18.3% of the combined charter and commercial setline halibut catch limit. When the combined charter and setline halibut catch limit is between ≥ 5 million pounds and ≤ 5.755 million pounds, the charter allocation will be 0.915 million pounds. When the combined charter and setline halibut catch limit is > 5.755 million pounds, the charter allocation will be 15.9% of the combined charter and setline halibut catch limit.

Area 3A:

At a combined charter and setline halibut catch limit of <10 million pounds, the charter allocation will be 18.9% of the combined charter and commercial setline halibut catch limit. When the combined charter and setline halibut catch limit is between ≥ 10 million pounds and ≤ 10.8 million pounds, the charter allocation will be 1.890 million pounds. When the combined charter and setline halibut catch limit is between > 10.8 million pounds and ≤ 20 million pounds, the charter allocation will be 17.5% of the combined charter and commercial setline halibut catch limit. When the combined charter and setline

halibut catch limit is between >20 million pounds and ≤25 million pounds, the charter allocation will be 3.5 million pounds. When the combined charter and setline halibut catch limit is greater than 25 million pounds, the charter allocation will be 14.0% of the combined charter and commercial setline halibut catch limit.

Area 2C

| CCL (Mlbs) | Charter % | Charter Mlbs | IFQ % |
|----------------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| 0- <5.000 | 18.30% | | 81.70% |
| 5.000 – ≤5.755 | | 0.915 | |
| >5.755 | 15.90% | | 84.10% |

Area 3A

| CCL (Mlbs) | Charter % | Charter Mlbs | IFQ % |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| 0 - <10.000 | 18.90% | | 81.10% |
| 10.000 – ≤10.800 | | 1.890 | |
| >10.800 – ≤20.000 | 17.50% | | 82.50% |
| >20.000 – ≤25.000 | | 3.500 | |
| >25.000 | 14.00% | | 86.00% |

Element 2 – Charter harvest data collection method

Upon implementation of the halibut CSP, the Council recommends using Alaska Department of Fish & Game logbooks as the primary data collection method for charter harvest.

Element 3 – Guided Angler Fish (GAF)

Individual charter halibut permit (CHP) holders will be allowed to lease commercial IFQ, in order to provide charter anglers with harvesting opportunities, not to exceed limits in place for unguided anglers.

1. Leasing commercial IFQ for conversion to Guided Angler Fish (GAF):

- A CHP holder may lease IFQ for conversion to GAF for use on the CHP.
- Commercial halibut QS holders may lease up to 10% or 1500 pounds of their annual Area 2C IFQ, whichever is greater, for use as GAF. Commercial halibut QS holders may lease up to 15% or 1500 pounds of their annual Area 3A IFQ, whichever is greater, for use as GAF.¹ If a QS holder chooses to lease IFQ to a Community Quota Entity (CQE), the same limitations apply.
- With regard to a CQE leasing its IFQ, any quota which a CQE holds, regardless of origin, could be leased up to 100% to eligible residents of the CQE community as GAF. For

¹ The lease limits (10% or 1500 pounds of Area 2C IFQ, whichever is greater and 15% and 1500 pounds of Area 3A IFQ, whichever is greater) apply to the start year fishable IFQ pounds for an IFQ permit. Start year fishable pounds is the sum of IFQ equivalent pounds, as defined in regulations at § 679.2, for an area, derived from QS held, plus or minus adjustments pursuant to § 679.40(d) and (e) of this title.

example, a CQE may hold IFQ derived from purchase, leased from another qualified CQE, or leased from an individual, and then lease up to 100% of the quota it holds to eligible residents.² If the CQE is leasing IFQ to an individual that is not an eligible resident to use as GAF, the CQE has the same limitations as other QS holders (i.e., up to 10% or 1500 pounds of their annual Area 2C IFQ, whichever is greater; and up to 15% or 1500 pounds of their annual Area 3A IFQ, whichever is greater.)

- No more than 400 GAF may be assigned to a CHP endorsed for 6 or fewer clients.
 - No more than 600 GAF may be assigned to a CHP endorsed for more than 6 clients.
2. CHP holders harvesting GAF while participating in the charter halibut fishery are exempt from landing and use restrictions associated with the commercial IFQ fishery, but subject to the landing and use provisions detailed below.
 3. GAF will be issued in numbers of fish. Conversion of IFQ pounds to numbers of fish would be based on the average weight of GAF from the previous year for each area. In the first year of CSP implementation, the GAF weight-to-fish conversion factor will be based on the previous year's estimates of each area's average weight of halibut harvested in the charter fishery, or the most recent year without a charter halibut size limit in effect.
 4. Except for CQEs as described above in provision 1, subleasing of GAF will be prohibited.
 5. Unused GAF may revert back to IFQ pounds and be subject to the underage provisions applicable to their underlying commercial QS on September 1, with an automatic return 15 days prior to the end of the commercial halibut fishing season each year.
 6. Charter operators landing GAF on private property (e.g., lodges) and motherships would be required to allow ADF&G and IPHC samplers/enforcement personnel access to the point of landing.
 7. Commercial and charter fishing may not be conducted from the same vessel on the same day.
 8. The skipper is responsible for ensuring that GAF are marked by removing the tips of the upper and lower lobes of the tail and reporting the length of retained GAF halibut to NMFS through the NMFS approved electronic reporting system.

² With respect to a charter business that may be leasing IFQ from a CQE to use as GAF, the charter business is considered an eligible resident if it operates in the CQE community (e.g., charter trips begin and/or end in the community).