

News Release



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24 April 2017

REPRODUCTIVE ASSESSMENT COLLECTION 2018 CHARTER ANNOUNCEMENT

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) is seeking commercial longline and research vessels to conduct two monthly Pacific halibut collection charters, in July and August 2018. Collections will be confined to the greater Portlock Bank region, bounded between the following points (58°03'N, 152°44'W); (58°55'N, 151°58'W), (57°45'N, 148°41'W), and (56°59'N, 150°04'W) in the Gulf of Alaska. Fishing is to occur between the 1st and 15th of each month (July and August 2018). The objective of the monthly charters will be to obtain reproductive samples (ovaries, testes, blood, ultrasound imagery, weights) from a total target number of 60 Pacific halibut (up to 30 males [>70 cm], up to 30 females [>90 cm]) in each of the two collection charters (July and August 2018). The vessel must be capable of taking up to two (2) IPHC field biologists for the data and sample collections. Vessel crew may set as much gear as they feel is necessary to achieve the sampling targets; however, once the targets are met, all remaining gear must be hauled and all fish released with minimal injury if the charter is not combined with quota fishing. It is expected that during these months the targets likely can be obtained in 2-3 fishing days. IPHC will bear bait and ice costs; fuel costs will be borne by the vessel. Unless combined with quota fishing, some Pacific halibut will be retained and sold by IPHC, and limited retention of Pacific cod and rockfish bycatch may be allowed.

The main purpose of this study is to document and describe temporal changes (changes over time) in gonadal (sex organs) morphological characteristics as well as the levels of reproductive hormones and physiological condition throughout an entire annual reproductive cycle in order to improve and update our estimation of maturity in this species. Understanding the reproductive biology of Pacific halibut is important for estimating the reproductive potential and spawning biomass of the stock and, consequently, for optimizing the management of the species.

Charter specifications and bid tender forms are available from IPHC via email and on our website (<https://iphc.int/the-commission/opportunities>). The IPHC will consider only those vessels and captains having a history of commercial longline fishing. Vessels must have accommodations for two IPHC employees (including women) in addition to an experienced captain and crew, capable of fishing 25 or more skates per day and handling Pacific halibut in adverse weather conditions. The IPHC will evaluate vessels based upon the experience of the captain and crew with longline fishing, the safety features of the vessel, and charter costs. Vessels must have a bait shed or a sheltered space for sample collection and data recording and to protect personnel from weather. The vessels will provide setline gear and all associated equipment normally required for commercial Pacific halibut fishing. The IPHC will replace all fishing gear lost in the course of being put into the sea for fishing.

The IPHC is not restricted as to the nationality of vessels it charters in any region, and will contract according to its own best interests. The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted. Interested owners can contact IPHC for more information on charter specifications and to obtain tender forms. Sealed tenders must be received at the IPHC office in Seattle **no later than 12:00 noon (Pacific Daylight Time) on Monday, 7 May 2018**. Interested parties should contact IPHC Administration at secretariat@iphc.int or (206) 634-1838 for bid and contract information and/or Josep Planas (ext. 7687) for technical/scientific questions.

Due to the short notice nature of this notification, it is posted to the IPHC website only, and no paper copy has been mailed out.

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