



IPHC Fishery Regulations:

Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut - IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E (Sect. 28) – unguided sector bag limit

PREPARED BY: PER ODEGAARD (FISHING VESSEL OWNERS' ASSOCIATION) (15 DECEMBER 2025)

Directed Commercial Recreational Subsistence Non-directed commercial All
All Regulatory Areas All Alaska Regulatory Areas All U.S. Regulatory Areas
2A 2B 2C 3A 3B 4A 4B 4CDE

PURPOSE

To propose unguided recreational sector Pacific halibut daily bag limit reduction from two (2) fish to one (1) fish for all IPHC Regulatory Areas in Alaska.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

This regulatory proposal document, along with the proposed regulatory language, have been prepared based on additional communication with the Fishing Vessel Owners' Association.

An assessment of the impacts of decreasing the unguided recreational bag limit in Alaska requires assistance from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Any information received regarding the effects of this proposal will be incorporated into subsequent revisions of this document.

PROPOSED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

This proposal revises the general daily bag limit applicable to the Alaska recreational fishery from two (2) fish to one (1) fish for the unguided sector.

The proposed regulatory language also decouples the general rule from both more restrictive and alternative limits and instead explicitly subordinates it to specified subsections and applicable Federal regulations. This approach is intended to preserve the separate regulatory framework applicable to the guided (charter) sector.

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- (1) In Convention waters in and off Alaska:^{8, 9}
 - (a) the recreational (sport) fishing season is from 1 February to 31 December;
 - (b) the daily bag limit is ~~two~~ one (1) Pacific halibut of any size per day per person ~~unless a more restrictive bag limit applies in Commission regulations or except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this Section and in~~ Federal regulations at 50 CFR 300.65;

[...]

⁸ NOAA Fisheries could implement more restrictive regulations for the recreational (sport) fishery or components of it, therefore, anglers are advised to check the current Federal or State regulations prior to fishing.

⁹ Under regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries at 50 CFR 300.66(u), it is unlawful for any person to be a charter vessel guide of a charter vessel on which one or more charter vessel anglers are catching and retaining Pacific halibut in both IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A during one charter vessel fishing trip.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** regulatory proposal IPHC-2026-AM102-PropC1 that proposes unguided recreational sector Pacific halibut daily bag limit reduction from two (2) fish to one (1) fish for all IPHC Regulatory Areas in Alaska.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter from the Fishing Vessel Owner's Association.

**FISHING VESSEL OWNERS' ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED**

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Director David Wilson
International Pacific Halibut Commission
2320 W. Commodore Way, Suite 300
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December 15, 2025

RE: Proposal of regulatory changes for 2026

Director Wilson,

The members of the Fishing Vessel Owners' Association (FVOA) of Seattle request that the Commission consider amending the sports unguided bag limit from 2 fish to 1 fish for all IPHC regulatory areas off Alaska for the 2026 season. We request the Commission attempt to determine how much additional poundage is caught with a 2 fish bag limit versus a 1 fish bag limit. Due to the continued decline of the halibut resource, FVOA members are expecting reduced commercial harvest limits for 2026 along with reduction to the guided sports industry. It is time that all harvesting sectors share in rebuilding the halibut resource.

Signed,

Per Odegaard

Per Odegaard
Fishing Vessel Owners Association