

# INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

## FISHERY REGULATIONS

2026

### INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC



### HALIBUT COMMISSION

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#### BIBLIOGRAPHIC ENTRY

IPHC 2026. International Pacific Halibut Commission Fishery Regulations (2026). *IPHC-2026-FISHR26*, 21 pp.

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INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC  
HALIBUT COMMISSION

*IPHC Fishery Regulations (2026)*

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For Canada: The Canada Gazette and the Conditions of Licence

For the USA: The Federal Register



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## **1. Short Title**

These Regulations may be cited as the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Fishery Regulations (2026).

## **2. Application**

- (1) These Regulations apply to persons and vessels fishing for Pacific halibut in, or possessing Pacific halibut taken from, the maritime area as defined in Section 3.
- (2) Sections 3 to 8 and 29 apply generally to all Pacific halibut fishing.
- (3) Sections 9 to 22 apply to commercial fishing for Pacific halibut.
- (4) Section 23 applies to Indigenous fisheries in British Columbia.
- (5) Section 24 applies to customary and traditional fishing in Alaska.
- (6) Sections 25 to 28 apply to recreational (also called sport) fishing for Pacific halibut.
- (7) These Regulations do not apply to fishing operations authorized or conducted by the Commission for research purposes.

## **3. Definitions**

- (1) In these Regulations,
  - (a) “authorized officer” means any State, Federal, or Provincial officer authorized to enforce these Regulations including, but not limited to, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries), Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT), United States Coast Guard (USCG), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Oregon State Police (OSP), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW);
  - (b) “authorized clearance personnel” means an authorized officer of the United States of America, an authorized representative of the Commission, or a designated fish processor;
  - (c) “authorized representative of the Commission” means any IPHC employee or contractor authorized to perform any task described in these Regulations.
  - (d) “charter vessel” outside of Alaska waters means a vessel used for hire in recreational (sport) fishing for Pacific halibut, but not including a vessel without a hired operator, and in Alaska waters means a vessel used while providing or receiving recreational (sport) fishing guide services for Pacific halibut;
  - (e) “commercial fishing” means fishing, the resulting catch of which is sold or bartered; or is intended to be sold or bartered, other than i) recreational (sport) fishing; ii) treaty Indian ceremonial and subsistence fishing as referred to in Section 23; iii) Indigenous groups fishing in British Columbia as referred to in Section 24; and iv) customary and traditional fishing as referred to in Section 25 and defined by and regulated pursuant to NOAA Fisheries regulations published at 50 CFR Part 300;
  - (f) “Commission” or “IPHC” means the International Pacific Halibut Commission;
  - (g) “daily bag limit” means the maximum number of Pacific halibut a person may take in any calendar day from Convention waters;
  - (h) “fishing” means the taking, harvesting, or catching of fish, or any activity that can reasonably be expected to result in the taking, harvesting, or catching of fish, including specifically the deployment of any amount or component part of gear anywhere in the maritime area;
  - (i) “fishing period limit” means the maximum amount of Pacific halibut that may be retained and landed by a vessel during one fishing period;
  - (j) “land” or “offload” with respect to Pacific halibut, means the removal of Pacific halibut from the catching vessel;
  - (k) “permit” means a Pacific halibut fishing license issued by NOAA Fisheries;
  - (l) “maritime area,” in respect of the fisheries jurisdiction of a Contracting Party, includes without distinction areas within and seaward of the territorial sea and internal waters of that Party;



- (m) “net weight” of a Pacific halibut means the weight of Pacific halibut that is without gills and entrails, head-off, washed, and without ice and slime. If a Pacific halibut is weighed with the head on or with ice and slime, the required conversion factors for calculating net weight are a 2 percent deduction for ice and slime and a 10 percent deduction for the head;
  - (n) “operator,” with respect to any vessel, means the owner and/or the master or other individual on board and in charge of that vessel;
  - (o) “overall length” of a vessel means the horizontal distance, rounded to the nearest foot, between the foremost part of the stem and the aftermost part of the stern (excluding bowsprits, rudders, outboard motor brackets, and similar fittings or attachments);
  - (p) “person” includes an individual, corporation, firm, or association;
  - (q) “regulatory area” means an IPHC Regulatory Area referred to in Section 4;
  - (r) “setline gear” means one or more stationary, buoyed, and anchored lines with hooks attached;
  - (s) “sport fishing” or “recreational fishing” means all fishing other than i) commercial fishing; ii) treaty Indian ceremonial and subsistence fishing as referred to in Section 23; iii) Indigenous groups fishing in British Columbia as referred to in Section 24; and iv) customary and traditional fishing as referred to in Section 25 and defined in and regulated pursuant to NOAA Fisheries regulations published in 50 CFR Part 300;
  - (t) “tender” means any vessel that buys or obtains fish directly from a catching vessel and transports it to a port of landing or fish processor;
  - (u) “total constant exploitation yield (TCEY)” means the mortality comprised of Pacific halibut from directed fisheries and that from non-directed fisheries greater than 26 inches (66 cm) in length;
  - (v) “VMS transmitter” means a NOAA Fisheries-approved vessel monitoring system transmitter that automatically determines a vessel’s position and transmits it to a NOAA Fisheries-approved communications service provider.<sup>1</sup>
- (2) In these Regulations, all bearings are true and all positions are determined by the most recent charts issued by the United States National Ocean Service or the Canadian Hydrographic Service.

<sup>1</sup> Call NOAA Enforcement Division, Alaska Region, at 907-586-7225 between the hours of 0800 and 1600 local time for a list of NOAA Fisheries-approved VMS transmitters and communications service providers.

#### **4. IPHC Regulatory Areas**

The following areas within the IPHC Convention waters shall be defined as IPHC Regulatory Areas for the purposes of the Convention (see [Figure 1](#)):

- (1) IPHC Regulatory Area 2A includes all waters off the states of California, Oregon, and Washington;
- (2) IPHC Regulatory Area 2B includes all waters off British Columbia;
- (3) IPHC Regulatory Area 2C includes all waters off Alaska that are east of a line running 340° true from Cape Spencer Light (58°11’56’’ N. latitude, 136°38’26’’ W. longitude) and south and east of a line running 205° true from said light;
- (4) IPHC Regulatory Area 3A includes all waters between Area 2C and a line extending from the most northerly point on Cape Akleik (57°41’15’’ N. latitude, 155°35’00’’ W. longitude) to Cape Ikolik (57°17’17’’ N. latitude, 154°47’18’’ W. longitude), then along the Kodiak Island coastline to Cape Trinity (56°44’50’’ N. latitude, 154°08’44’’ W. longitude), then 140° true;
- (5) IPHC Regulatory Area 3B includes all waters between Area 3A and a line extending 150° true from Cape Lutke (54°29’00’’ N. latitude, 164°20’00’’ W. longitude) and south of 54°49’00’’ N. latitude in Isanotski Strait;
- (6) IPHC Regulatory Area 4A includes all waters in the Gulf of Alaska west of Area 3B and in the Bering Sea west of the closed area defined in Section 10 that are east of 172°00’00’’ W. longitude and south of 56°20’00’’ N. latitude;
- (7) IPHC Regulatory Area 4B includes all waters in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska west of IPHC Regulatory Area 4A and south of 56°20’00’’ N. latitude;
- (8) IPHC Regulatory Area 4C includes all waters in the Bering Sea north of IPHC Regulatory Area 4A and north of the closed area defined in Section 10 which are east of 171°00’00’’ W. longitude, south of 58°00’00’’ N. latitude, and west of 168°00’00’’ W. longitude;



- (9) IPHC Regulatory Area 4D includes all waters in the Bering Sea north of IPHC Regulatory Areas 4A and 4B, north and west of IPHC Regulatory Area 4C, and west of 168°00'00'' W. longitude; and
- (10) IPHC Regulatory Area 4E includes all waters in the Bering Sea north and east of the closed area defined in Section 10, east of 168°00'00'' W. longitude, and south of 65°34'00'' N. latitude.

## 5. Mortality and Fishery Limits

- (1) The Commission has adopted the following distributed mortality (TCEY) limits:

IPHC Regulatory Area	Distributed mortality limits (TCEY) (net weight)	
	Tonnes (t)	Million Pounds (Mlb)
<b>Area 2A</b> (California, Oregon, and Washington)	748	1.65
<b>Area 2B</b> (British Columbia)	2,295	5.06
<b>Area 2C</b> (southeastern Alaska)	2,368	5.22
<b>Area 3A</b> (central Gulf of Alaska)	4,119	9.08
<b>Area 3B</b> (western Gulf of Alaska)	1,297	2.86
<b>Area 4A</b> (eastern Aleutians)	608	1.34
<b>Area 4B</b> (central and western Aleutians)	472	1.04
<b>Areas 4CDE</b> (Bering Sea)	1,397	3.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,304</b>	<b>29.33</b>

- (2) The fishery limits resulting from the IPHC-adopted distributed mortality (TCEY) limits and the existing Contracting Party catch sharing arrangements are as follows, recognizing that each Contracting Party may implement more restrictive limits:\*\*

IPHC Regulatory Area	Fishery limits (net weight)	
	Tonnes (t)	Million Pounds (Mlb)*
<b>Area 2A</b> (California, Oregon, and Washington)	<b>699</b>	<b>1.54</b>
Non-treaty directed commercial (south of Pt. Chehalis)	118	261,211*
Non-treaty incidental catch in salmon troll fishery	21	46,096*
Non-treaty incidental catch in sablefish fishery (north of Pt. Chehalis)	32	70,000*
Treaty Indian commercial	240	528,200*
Treaty Indian ceremonial and subsistence (year-round)	5	10,800*
Recreational – Washington**	130	286,356*
Recreational – Oregon**	135	297,297*
Recreational – California**	18	40,040*



IPHC Regulatory Area	Fishery limits (net weight)	
	Tonnes (t)	Million Pounds (Mlb)*
<b>Area 2B</b> (British Columbia) (combined commercial and recreational)	<b>1,923</b>	<b>4.24</b>
Commercial fishery***	1,637	3.61
Recreational fishery	290	0.64
<b>Area 2C</b> (southeastern Alaska) (combined commercial and guided recreational)	<b>1,615</b>	<b>3.56</b>
Commercial fishery (includes 2.81 Mlb landings and 0.10 Mlb discard mortality)	1,320	2.91
Guided recreational fishery (includes landings and discard mortality)	295	0.65
<b>Area 3A</b> (central Gulf of Alaska) (combined commercial and guided recreational)	<b>3,538</b>	<b>7.80</b>
Commercial fishery (includes 5.96 Mlb landings and 0.36 Mlb discard mortality)	2,867	6.32
Guided recreational fishery (includes landings and discard mortality)	667	1.47
<b>Area 3B</b> (western Gulf of Alaska)	<b>1,125</b>	<b>2.48</b>
<b>Area 4A</b> (eastern Aleutians)	<b>458</b>	<b>1.01</b>
<b>Area 4B</b> (central and western Aleutians)	<b>417</b>	<b>0.92</b>
<b>Areas 4CDE</b> (Bering Sea)	<b>739</b>	<b>1.63</b>
Area 4C (Pribilof Islands)	345	0.76
Area 4D (northwestern Bering Sea)	345	0.76
Area 4E (Bering Sea flats)	54	0.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,514</b>	<b>23.18</b>

\* Allocations resulting from the IPHC Regulatory Area 2A Catch Share Plan are listed in *pounds*.

\*\* In IPHC Regulatory Area 2A, the USA (NOAA Fisheries) may take in-season action to reallocate the recreational fishery limits between Washington, Oregon, and California after determining that such action will not result in exceeding the overall IPHC Regulatory Area 2A recreational fishery limit and that such action is consistent with any domestic catch sharing plan. Any such reallocation will be announced by the USA (NOAA Fisheries) and published in the Federal Register.

\*\*\* All Pacific halibut retained pursuant to Section 11(10) shall count against the IPHC Regulatory Area 2B commercial fishery limit and shall not exceed two percent (2%) of that limit.



## **6. In-Season Actions**

- (1) The Commission is authorized to establish or modify regulations during the season after determining that such action:
  - (a) will not result in exceeding the fishery limit established preseason for each IPHC Regulatory Area;
  - (b) is consistent with the Convention between Canada and the United States of America for the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the Northern Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea, and applicable domestic law of either Canada or the United States of America; and
  - (c) is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with any domestic catch sharing plans or other domestic allocation programs developed by the governments of Canada or the United States of America.
- (2) In-season actions may include, but are not limited to, establishment or modification of the following:
  - (a) closed areas;
  - (b) fishing periods;
  - (c) fishing period limits;
  - (d) gear restrictions;
  - (e) recreational (sport) bag limits;
  - (f) size limits; or
  - (g) vessel clearances.
- (3) In-season changes will be effective at the time and date specified by the Commission.
- (4) The Commission will announce in-season actions under this Section by providing notice to major Pacific halibut processors; Federal, State, United States of America treaty Indian, and Provincial fishery officials; and the media.
- (5) Notwithstanding paragraphs (3) and (4) of this Section, in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A the USA (NOAA Fisheries) may take in-season action to reallocate the recreational fishery limits between Washington, Oregon, and California after determining that such action will not result in exceeding the overall IPHC Regulatory Area 2A recreational fishery limit and that such action is consistent with any domestic catch sharing plan. Any such reallocation will be announced by the USA (NOAA Fisheries) and published in the Federal Register.

## **7. Careful Release of Pacific Halibut**

- (1) All Pacific halibut that are caught and are not retained shall be immediately released outboard of the roller and returned to the sea with a minimum of injury by:
  - (a) hook straightening;
  - (b) cutting the gangion near the hook; or
  - (c) carefully removing the hook by twisting it from the Pacific halibut with a gaff.
- (2) Except that paragraph (1) shall not prohibit the possession of Pacific halibut on board a vessel that has been brought aboard to be measured to determine if the applicable size limit of the Pacific halibut is met and, if not legal-sized, is promptly returned to the sea with a minimum of injury.

## **8. Retention of Tagged Pacific Halibut**

- (1) Nothing contained in these Regulations prohibits any vessel at any time from retaining and landing a Pacific halibut that bears a Commission external tag at the time of capture, if the Pacific halibut with the tag still attached is reported at the time of landing and made available for examination by an authorized representative of the Commission or by an authorized officer.
- (2) After examination and removal of the tag by an authorized representative of the Commission or an authorized officer, the Pacific halibut:
  - (a) may be retained for personal use; or
  - (b) may be sold only if the Pacific halibut is caught during commercial Pacific halibut fishing and complies with the other commercial fishing provisions of these Regulations.





- (3) Any Pacific halibut that bears a Commission external tag will not count against commercial fishing period limits, Individual Vessel Quota (IVQ), Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ), Community Development Quota (CDQ), or Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ), and are not subject to size limits in these regulations, but should still be recorded in the landing record.
- (4) Any Pacific halibut that bears a Commission external tag will not count against recreational (sport) daily bag limits or possession limits, may be retained outside of recreational (sport) fishing seasons, and are not subject to size limits in these regulations.
- (5) Any Pacific halibut that bears a Commission external tag will not count against daily bag limits, possession limits, or fishery limits in the fisheries described in Section 22(1)(c), Section 23, or Section 24.

## **9. Commercial Fishing Periods**

- (1) The fishing periods for each IPHC Regulatory Area apply where the fishery limits specified in Section 5 have not been taken.
- (2) Unless the Commission specifies otherwise, commercial fishing for Pacific halibut in all IPHC Regulatory Areas may begin no earlier in the year than 06:00 local time on 26 March.
- (3) All commercial fishing for Pacific halibut in all IPHC Regulatory Areas shall cease for the year at 23:59 local time on 7 December.
- (4) Regulations pertaining to the non-tribal directed commercial fishing<sup>2</sup> periods in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A will be promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and published in the Federal Register. This fishery will occur between the dates and times listed in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this Section.
- (5) Notwithstanding paragraph (4) of this Section, an incidental catch fishery<sup>3</sup> is authorized during the sablefish seasons in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A in accordance with regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries. This fishery will occur between the dates and times listed in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this Section.
- (6) Notwithstanding paragraph (4) of this Section, an incidental catch fishery is authorized during salmon troll seasons in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A in accordance with regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries. This fishery will occur between the dates and times listed in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this Section.

<sup>2</sup> The non-tribal directed commercial fishery is restricted to waters that are south of Point Chehalis, Washington, (46°53.30' N. latitude) under regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and published in the Federal Register.

<sup>3</sup> The incidental fishery during the directed, fixed gear sablefish season is restricted to waters that are north of Point Chehalis, Washington, (46°53.30' N. latitude) under regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries at 50 CFR 300.63. Landing restrictions for Pacific halibut retention in the fixed gear sablefish fishery can be found at 50 CFR 660.231.

## **10. Closed Area**

All waters in the Bering Sea north of 55°00'00'' N. latitude in Isanotski Strait that are enclosed by a line from Cape Sarichef Light (54°36'00'' N. latitude, 164°55'42'' W. longitude) to a point at 56°20'00'' N. latitude, 168°30'00'' W. longitude; thence to a point at 58°21'25'' N. latitude, 163°00'00'' W. longitude; thence to Stroganof Point (56°53'18'' N. latitude, 158°50'37'' W. longitude); and then along the northern coasts of the Alaska Peninsula and Unimak Island to the point of origin at Cape Sarichef Light are closed to Pacific halibut fishing and no person shall fish for Pacific halibut therein or have Pacific halibut in his/her possession while in those waters except in the course of a continuous transit across those waters. All waters in Isanotski Strait between 55°00'00'' N. latitude and 54°49'00'' N. latitude are closed to Pacific halibut fishing.

## **11. Closed Periods**

- (1) No person shall engage in fishing for Pacific halibut in any IPHC Regulatory Area other than during the fishing periods set out in Section 9 in respect of that area.
- (2) No person shall land or otherwise retain Pacific halibut caught outside a fishing period applicable to the IPHC Regulatory Area where the Pacific halibut was taken.
- (3) Subject to paragraphs (7), (8), (9), and (10) of Section 17, these Regulations do not prohibit fishing for any species of fish other than Pacific halibut during the closed periods.
- (4) Notwithstanding paragraph (3), no person shall have Pacific halibut in his/her possession while fishing for any other species of fish during the closed periods.
- (5) No vessel shall retrieve any Pacific halibut fishing gear during a closed period if the vessel has any Pacific halibut on board.



- (6) A vessel that has no Pacific halibut on board may retrieve any Pacific halibut fishing gear during the closed period after the operator notifies an authorized officer or an authorized representative of the Commission prior to that retrieval.
- (7) After retrieval of Pacific halibut gear in accordance with paragraph (6), the vessel shall submit to a hold inspection at the discretion of the authorized officer or an authorized representative of the Commission.
- (8) No person shall retain any Pacific halibut caught on gear retrieved in accordance with paragraph (6).
- (9) No person shall possess Pacific halibut on board a vessel in an IPHC Regulatory Area during a closed period unless that vessel is in continuous transit to or within a port in which that Pacific halibut may be lawfully sold.
- (10) Notwithstanding paragraphs (2), (4), (8), and (9) of this Section, in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B, a person may retain, possess, and land legal-sized Pacific halibut caught incidentally outside the commercial fishing period, provided that such retention:
  - (a) occurs only while fishing for species other than Pacific halibut using hook and line or trap gear authorized under regulations promulgated by Canada (DFO) and Conditions of Licence;
  - (b) occurs in accordance with regulations promulgated by Canada (DFO) and Conditions of Licence;
  - (c) does not result in total landings under this provision exceeding two percent (2%) of the IPHC Regulatory Area 2B commercial fishery limit specified in paragraph (2) of Section 5; and
  - (d) shall remain in effect through the end of the 2026/2027 closed period, unless extended by the Commission.

## **12. Application of Commercial Fishery Limits**

- (1) Notwithstanding the fishery limits described in Section 5, regulations pertaining to the division of the IPHC Regulatory Area 2A fishery limit between the non-tribal directed commercial fishery and the incidental catch fishery as described in paragraphs (5) and (6) of Section 9 will be promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and published in the Federal Register.
- (2) Notwithstanding the fishery limits described in Section 5, the IPHC Regulatory Area 2A non-tribal directed commercial fishery will close when NOAA Fisheries determines and announces in the Federal Register that the fishery limit has been or is projected to be reached, or on the date when fishing must cease as specified in Section 9, whichever is earlier.
- (3) Notwithstanding the fishery limits described in Section 5, the commercial fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B will close only when all Individual Vessel Quota (IVQ) and Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) assigned by DFO are taken, or on the date when fishing must cease as specified in Section 9, whichever is earlier.
- (4) Notwithstanding the fishery limits described in Section 5, IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E will each close only when all Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) and all Community Development Quota (CDQ) issued by NOAA Fisheries have been taken, or on the date when fishing must cease as specified in Section 9, whichever is earlier.
- (5) Notwithstanding the fishery limits described in Section 5, the total allowable catch of Pacific halibut that may be taken in the IPHC Regulatory Area 4E directed commercial fishery is equal to the combined annual fishery limits specified for the IPHC Regulatory Areas 4D and 4E CDQ fisheries and any IPHC Regulatory Area 4D IFQ received by transfer by a CDQ organization. The annual IPHC Regulatory Area 4D fishery limit will decrease by the equivalent amount of CDQ and IFQ received by transfer by a CDQ organization taken in IPHC Regulatory Area 4E in excess of the annual IPHC Regulatory Area 4E fishery limit.
- (6) Notwithstanding the fishery limits described in Section 5, the total allowable catch of Pacific halibut that may be taken in the IPHC Regulatory Area 4D directed commercial fishery is equal to the combined annual fishery limits specified for IPHC Regulatory Areas 4C and 4D. The annual IPHC Regulatory Area 4C fishery limit will decrease by the equivalent amount of Pacific halibut taken in IPHC Regulatory Area 4D in excess of the annual IPHC Regulatory Area 4D fishery limit.

## **13. Fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A**

- (1) No person shall fish for Pacific halibut from a vessel, nor land or retain Pacific halibut on board a vessel, used for commercial fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A, unless issued a permit valid for fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A by NOAA Fisheries according to 50 CFR 300 Subpart E.
- (2) It shall be unlawful for any vessel to retain more Pacific halibut than authorized by that vessel's permit in any fishing period for which a fishing period limit is announced by NOAA Fisheries in the Federal Register.
- (3) The operator of any vessel that fishes for Pacific halibut during a fishing period when fishing period limits are in effect must, upon commencing an offload of Pacific halibut to a commercial fish processor, completely offload all Pacific halibut on board said vessel to that processor and ensure that all Pacific halibut is weighed and reported on State fish tickets.



- (4) The operator of any vessel that fishes for Pacific halibut during a fishing period when fishing period limits are in effect must, upon commencing an offload of Pacific halibut other than to a commercial fish processor, completely offload all Pacific halibut on board said vessel and ensure that all Pacific halibut are weighed and reported on State fish tickets.
- (5) The provisions of paragraph (4) are not intended to prevent retail over-the-side sales to individual purchasers so long as all the Pacific halibut on board is ultimately offloaded and reported.
- (6) Fishing period limits in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A will be promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and published in the Federal Register and apply only to the non-tribal directed commercial Pacific halibut fishery referred to in paragraph (4) of Section 9.

#### **14. Fishing in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4D and 4E**

- (1) Section 14 applies only to any person fishing for, or any vessel that is used to fish for, IPHC Regulatory Area 4E Community Development Quota (CDQ) Pacific halibut, IPHC Regulatory Area 4D CDQ Pacific halibut, or IPHC Regulatory Area 4D Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) received by transfer by a CDQ organization provided that the total annual Pacific halibut catch of that person or vessel is landed at a port within IPHC Regulatory Areas 4E or 4D.
- (2) A person may retain Pacific halibut taken with setline gear that are smaller than the size limit specified in Section 18, provided that no person may sell or barter such Pacific halibut.
- (3) The manager of a CDQ organization that authorizes persons to harvest Pacific halibut in the IPHC Regulatory Area 4E or 4D CDQ fisheries or IFQ received by transfer by a CDQ organization must report to the Commission the total number and weight of undersized Pacific halibut taken and retained by such persons pursuant to paragraph (2) of this Section. This report, which shall include data and methodology used to collect the data, must be received by the Commission prior to 1 November of the year in which such Pacific halibut were harvested.

#### **15. Vessel Clearance in IPHC Regulatory Area 4**

- (1) The operator of any vessel that fishes for Pacific halibut in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4A, 4B, 4C, or 4D must obtain a vessel clearance before fishing in any of these areas, and before the landing of any Pacific halibut caught in any of these areas, unless specifically exempted in paragraphs (10), (13), (14), (15), or (16).
- (2) An operator obtaining a vessel clearance required by paragraph (1) must obtain the clearance in person from the authorized clearance personnel and sign the IPHC form documenting that a clearance was obtained, except that when the clearance is obtained via VHF radio referred to in paragraphs (5), (8), and (9), the authorized clearance personnel must sign the IPHC form documenting that the clearance was obtained.
- (3) The vessel clearance required under paragraph (1) prior to fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 4A may be obtained only at Nazan Bay on Atka Island, Dutch Harbor, or Akutan, Alaska, from the authorized clearance personnel.
- (4) The vessel clearance required under paragraph (1) prior to fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 4B may only be obtained at Nazan Bay on Atka Island or Adak, Alaska, from the authorized clearance personnel.
- (5) The vessel clearance required under paragraph (1) prior to fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 4C or 4D may be obtained only at St. Paul or St. George, Alaska, from the authorized clearance personnel by VHF radio and allowing the person contacted to confirm visually the identity of the vessel.
- (6) The vessel operator shall specify the specific regulatory area in which fishing will take place.
- (7) Before unloading any Pacific halibut caught in IPHC Regulatory Area 4A, a vessel operator may obtain the clearance required under paragraph (1) only in Dutch Harbor or Akutan, Alaska, by contacting the authorized clearance personnel.
- (8) Before unloading any Pacific halibut caught in IPHC Regulatory Area 4B, a vessel operator may obtain the clearance required under paragraph (1) only in Nazan Bay on Atka Island or Adak, by contacting the authorized clearance personnel by VHF radio or in person.
- (9) Before unloading any Pacific halibut caught in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4C and 4D, a vessel operator may obtain the clearance required under paragraph (1) only in St. Paul, St. George, Dutch Harbor, or Akutan, Alaska, either in person or by contacting the authorized clearance personnel. The clearances obtained in St. Paul or St. George, Alaska, can be obtained by VHF radio and allowing the person contacted to confirm visually the identity of the vessel.
- (10) Any vessel operator who complies with the requirements in Section 16 for possessing Pacific halibut on board a vessel that was caught in more than one regulatory area in IPHC Regulatory Area 4 is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1) of this Section, provided that:



- (a) the operator of the vessel obtains a vessel clearance prior to fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 4 in either Dutch Harbor, Akutan, St. Paul, St. George, Adak, or Nazan Bay on Atka Island by contacting the authorized clearance personnel. The clearance obtained in St. Paul, St. George, Adak, or Nazan Bay on Atka Island can be obtained by VHF radio and allowing the person contacted to confirm visually the identity of the vessel. This clearance will list the areas in which the vessel will fish; and
  - (b) before unloading any Pacific halibut from IPHC Regulatory Area 4, the vessel operator obtains a vessel clearance from Dutch Harbor, Akutan, St. Paul, St. George, Adak, or Nazan Bay on Atka Island by contacting the authorized clearance personnel. The clearance obtained in St. Paul or St. George can be obtained by VHF radio and allowing the person contacted to confirm visually the identity of the vessel. The clearance obtained in Adak or Nazan Bay on Atka Island can be obtained by VHF radio.
- (11) Vessel clearances shall be obtained between 0600 and 1800 local time.
  - (12) No Pacific halibut shall be on board the vessel at the time of the clearances required prior to fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 4.
  - (13) Any vessel that is used to fish for Pacific halibut only in IPHC Regulatory Area 4A and lands its total annual Pacific halibut catch at a port within IPHC Regulatory Area 4A is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1).
  - (14) Any vessel that is used to fish for Pacific halibut only in IPHC Regulatory Area 4B and lands its total annual Pacific halibut catch at a port within IPHC Regulatory Area 4B is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1).
  - (15) Any vessel that is used to fish for Pacific halibut only in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4C or 4D or 4E and lands its total annual Pacific halibut catch at a port within IPHC Regulatory Areas 4C, 4D, 4E, or the closed area defined in Section 10, is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1).
  - (16) Any vessel that carries a NOAA Fisheries observer, a NOAA Fisheries electronic monitoring system, or a transmitting VMS transmitter while fishing for Pacific halibut in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4A, 4B, 4C, or 4D and until all Pacific halibut caught in any of these IPHC Regulatory Areas is landed, is exempt from the clearance requirements of paragraph (1) of this Section, provided that:
    - (a) the operator of the vessel complies with NOAA Fisheries' observer or electronic monitoring regulations published at 50 CFR Subpart E, or vessel monitoring system regulations published at 50 CFR 679.28(f)(3), (4) and (5); and
    - (b) the operator of the vessel notifies NOAA Fisheries Office for Law Enforcement at 800-304-4846 (select option 1 to speak to an Enforcement Data Clerk) between the hours of 0600 and 0000 (midnight) local time within 72 hours before fishing for Pacific halibut in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4A, 4B, 4C, or 4D and receives a VMS confirmation number.

## **16. Fishing Multiple Regulatory Areas**

- (1) Except as provided in this Section, no person shall possess at the same time on board a vessel Pacific halibut caught in more than one IPHC Regulatory Area.
- (2) Pacific halibut caught in more than one of the IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, or 4E may be possessed on board a vessel at the same time only if:
  - (a) authorized by NOAA Fisheries regulations published at 50 CFR Section 679.7(f)(4); and
  - (b) the operator of the vessel identifies the regulatory area in which each Pacific halibut on board was caught by separating Pacific halibut from different areas in the hold, tagging Pacific halibut, or by other means.

## **17. Fishing Gear**

- (1) No person shall fish for Pacific halibut using any gear other than hook and line gear,
  - (a) except that a person may retain Pacific halibut taken with longline or single trap gear if such retention is authorized by DFO as defined by Pacific Fishery Regulations and Conditions of Licence; or
  - (b) except that a person may retain Pacific halibut taken with longline or single pot gear if such retention is authorized by NOAA Fisheries regulations published at 50 CFR Part 679.
- (2) No person shall possess Pacific halibut taken with any gear other than hook and line gear,



- (a) except that a person may possess Pacific halibut taken with longline or single trap gear if such retention is authorized by DFO as defined by Pacific Fishery Regulations and Conditions of Licence; or
  - (b) except that a person may possess Pacific halibut taken with longline or single pot gear if such possession is authorized by NOAA Fisheries regulations published at 50 CFR Part 679.
- (3) No person shall possess Pacific halibut while on board a vessel carrying any trawl nets.
- (4) All gear marker buoys carried on board or used by any United States of America vessel used for Pacific halibut fishing shall be marked with one of the following:
  - (a) the vessel's State license number; or
  - (b) the vessel's registration number.
- (5) The markings specified in paragraph (4) shall be in characters at least four inches in height and one-half inch in width in a contrasting color visible above the water and shall be maintained in legible condition.
- (6) All gear marker buoys carried on board or used by a Canadian vessel used for Pacific halibut fishing shall be:
  - (a) floating and visible on the surface of the water; and
  - (b) legibly marked with the identification plate number of the vessel engaged in commercial fishing from which that setline is being operated.
- (7) No person on board a vessel used to fish for any species of fish anywhere in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A during the 72-hour period immediately before the fishing period for the non-tribal directed commercial fishery shall catch or possess Pacific halibut anywhere in those waters during that Pacific halibut fishing period unless, prior to the start of the Pacific halibut fishing period, the vessel has removed its gear from the water and has either:
  - (a) made a landing and completely offloaded its catch of other fish; or
  - (b) submitted to a hold inspection by an authorized officer.
- (8) No vessel used to fish for any species of fish anywhere in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A during the 72-hour period immediately before the fishing period for the non-tribal directed commercial fishery may be used to catch or possess Pacific halibut anywhere in those waters during that Pacific halibut fishing period unless, prior to the start of the Pacific halibut fishing period, the vessel has removed its gear from the water and has either:
  - (a) made a landing and completely offloaded its catch of other fish; or
  - (b) submitted to a hold inspection by an authorized officer.
- (9) No person on board a vessel used to fish for any species of fish anywhere in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, or 4E during the 72-hour period immediately before the opening of the Pacific halibut fishing season shall catch or possess Pacific halibut anywhere in those areas until the vessel has removed all of its gear from the water and has either:
  - (a) made a landing and completely offloaded its entire catch of other fish; or
  - (b) submitted to a hold inspection by an authorized officer.
- (10) No vessel used to fish for any species of fish anywhere in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, or 4E during the 72-hour period immediately before the opening of the Pacific halibut fishing season may be used to catch or possess Pacific halibut anywhere in those areas until the vessel has removed all of its gear from the water and has either:
  - (a) made a landing and completely offloaded its entire catch of other fish; or
  - (b) submitted to a hold inspection by an authorized officer.
- (11) Notwithstanding any other provision in these Regulations, a person may retain, possess and dispose of Pacific halibut taken with trawl gear only as authorized by Prohibited Species Donation regulations of NOAA Fisheries.

## **18. Size Limits**

- (1) No person shall take or possess any Pacific halibut that:
  - (a) with the head on, is less than 32 inches (81.3 cm) as measured in a straight line, passing over the pectoral fin from the tip of the lower jaw with the mouth closed, to the extreme end of the middle of the tail, as illustrated in [Figure 2](#); or





- (b) with the head removed, is less than 24 inches (61.0 cm) as measured from the base of the pectoral fin at its most anterior point to the extreme end of the middle of the tail, as illustrated in [Figure 2](#).
- (2) No person on board a vessel fishing for, or tendering, Pacific halibut in any IPHC Regulatory Area shall possess any Pacific halibut that has had its head removed, except that Pacific halibut frozen at sea with its head removed may be possessed on board a vessel by persons in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E if authorized by Federal regulations.
- (3) The size limit in paragraph (1)(b) will not be applied to any Pacific halibut that has had its head removed after the operator has landed the Pacific halibut.

## 19. Logs

- (1) The operator of any U.S. vessel fishing for Pacific halibut that has an overall length of 26 feet (7.9 meters) or greater shall maintain an accurate log of Pacific halibut fishing operations.
- (2) The operator of a vessel fishing in waters in and off Alaska must use one of the following logbooks:
  - (a) IPHC Pacific halibut logbook (or logbook previously provided by IPHC) or IPHC-approved electronic equivalent;
  - (b) catcher vessel longline and pot gear Daily Fishing Logbook, or catcher/processor longline and pot gear Daily Cumulative Production Logbook, in electronic or paper form, provided or approved by NOAA Fisheries;
  - (c) hook-and-line logbook provided by Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association; or
  - (d) Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) longline-pot logbook.
- (3) The operator of a vessel fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A must use either:
  - (a) IPHC Pacific halibut logbook (or logbook previously provided by IPHC) or IPHC-approved electronic equivalent;
  - (b) Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Fixed Gear Logbook; or
  - (c) Pacific Coast Groundfish non-trawl logbook provided by NOAA Fisheries.
- (4) The logbooks referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3) must include the following information:
  - (a) the name of the vessel and the State (ADFG, WDFW, ODFW, or CDFW) or Tribal ID number;
  - (b) the date(s) upon which the fishing gear is set or retrieved;
  - (c) the latitude and longitude coordinates for each set;
  - (d) the number of skates deployed or retrieved, and number of skates lost; and
  - (e) the total weight or number of Pacific halibut retained for each set.
- (5) The logbooks referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3) shall be:
  - (a) maintained on board the vessel;
  - (b) updated not later than 24 hours after 0000 (midnight) local time for each day fished and prior to the offloading or sale of Pacific halibut taken during that fishing trip;
  - (c) retained for a period of two years by the owner or operator of the vessel;
  - (d) open to inspection by an authorized officer or an authorized representative of the Commission upon demand;
  - (e) kept on board the vessel when engaged in Pacific halibut fishing, during transits to port of landing, and until the offloading of all Pacific halibut is completed; and
  - (f) submitted to the Commission within 30 days of the season closing date if not previously collected by an authorized representative of the Commission or otherwise made available to the Commission.
- (6) The log referred to in paragraph (1) does not apply to the incidental Pacific halibut fishery during the salmon troll season in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A defined in paragraph (6) of Section 9.
- (7) The operator of any Canadian vessel fishing for Pacific halibut, or retaining Pacific halibut caught incidentally pursuant to Section 11(10), shall maintain an accurate record in the British Columbia Integrated Groundfish Fishing Log.
- (8) The log referred to in paragraph (7) must include the following information:
  - (a) the name of the vessel and the DFO vessel registration number;



- (b) the date(s) upon which the fishing gear is set and retrieved;
  - (c) the latitude and longitude coordinates for each set;
  - (d) the number of skates deployed or retrieved, and number of skates lost; and
  - (e) the total weight or number of Pacific halibut retained for each set.
- (9) The log referred to in paragraph (7) shall be:
- (a) maintained on board the vessel;
  - (b) retained for a period of two years by the owner or operator of the vessel;
  - (c) open to inspection by an authorized officer or an authorized representative of the Commission upon demand;
  - (d) kept on board the vessel when engaged in Pacific halibut fishing, during transits to port of landing, and until the offloading of all Pacific halibut is completed;
  - (e) submitted to the DFO within seven days of offloading; and
  - (f) submitted to the Commission within seven days of the final offload if not previously collected by an authorized representative of the Commission.
- (10) No person shall make a false entry in a log referred to in this Section.
- (11) Writing in a log referred to in this Section shall be clear and legible.

## **20. Receipt and Possession of Pacific Halibut**

- (1) No person shall receive Pacific halibut caught in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A from a United States of America vessel that does not have on board the permit required by Section 13(1).
- (2) No person shall possess on board a vessel a Pacific halibut other than whole or with gills and entrails removed, except that this paragraph shall not prohibit the possession on board a vessel of:
  - (a) Pacific halibut cheeks cut from Pacific halibut caught by persons authorized to process the Pacific halibut on board in accordance with NOAA Fisheries regulations published at 50 CFR Part 679;
  - (b) fillets from Pacific halibut offloaded in accordance with this Section that are possessed on board the harvesting vessel in the port of landing up to 1800 local time on the calendar day following the offload;<sup>4</sup> and
  - (c) Pacific halibut with their heads removed in accordance with Section 18.
- (3) No person shall offload Pacific halibut from a vessel unless the gills and entrails have been removed prior to offloading.<sup>5</sup>
- (4) It shall be the responsibility of a vessel operator who lands Pacific halibut to continuously and completely offload at a single offload site all Pacific halibut on board the vessel.
- (5) A registered buyer (as that term is defined in regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and codified at 50 CFR Part 679) who receives Pacific halibut harvested in Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) and Community Development Quota (CDQ) fisheries in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E, directly from the vessel operator that harvested such Pacific halibut must weigh all the Pacific halibut received and record the following information on Federal catch reports: date of offload; name of vessel; vessel number (State, Tribal or Federal, not IPHC vessel number); scale weight obtained at the time of offloading, including the scale weight (in pounds) of Pacific halibut purchased by the registered buyer, the scale weight (in pounds) of Pacific halibut offloaded in excess of the IFQ or CDQ, the scale weight of Pacific halibut (in pounds) retained for personal use or for future sale, and the scale weight (in pounds) of Pacific halibut discarded as unfit for human consumption. All Pacific halibut harvested in IFQ or CDQ fisheries in Areas IPHC Regulatory 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E, must be weighed with the head on and the head-on weight must be recorded on Federal catch reports as specified in this paragraph, unless the Pacific halibut is frozen at sea and exempt from the head-on landing requirement at Section 18(2).
- (6) The first recipient, commercial fish processor, or buyer in the United States of America who purchases or receives Pacific halibut directly from the vessel operator that harvested such Pacific halibut must weigh and record all Pacific halibut received and record the following information on State fish tickets: the date of offload; vessel number (State or Federal, not IPHC vessel number) or Tribal ID number; total weight obtained at the time of offload including the weight (in pounds) of Pacific halibut purchased; the weight (in pounds) of Pacific halibut offloaded in excess of the IFQ, CDQ, or fishing period limits; the weight of Pacific halibut (in pounds) retained for personal use or for future sale; and the weight (in pounds) of Pacific



halibut discarded as unfit for human consumption. All Pacific halibut harvested in fisheries in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2A, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E must be weighed with the head on and the head-on weight must be recorded on State fish tickets as specified in this paragraph, unless the Pacific halibut is frozen at sea and exempt from the head-on landing requirement at Section 18(2).

- (7) For Pacific halibut landings made in Alaska, the requirements as listed in paragraphs (5) and (6) can be met by recording the information in the Interagency Electronic Reporting Systems, eLandings, in accordance with NOAA Fisheries regulation published at 50 CFR Part 679.
- (8) The master or operator of a Canadian vessel that was engaged in Pacific halibut fishing must weigh and record all Pacific halibut on board said vessel at the time offloading commences and record on Provincial fish tickets or Federal catch reports: the date; locality; name of vessel; the name(s) of the person(s) from whom the Pacific halibut was purchased; and the scale weight obtained at the time of offloading of all Pacific halibut on board the vessel including the pounds purchased, pounds in excess of Individual Vessel Quota (IVQ) or Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ), pounds retained for personal use, and pounds discarded as unfit for human consumption. All Pacific halibut must be weighed with the head on and the head-on weight must be recorded on the Provincial fish tickets or Federal catch reports as specified in this paragraph, unless the Pacific halibut is frozen at sea and exempt from the head-on landing requirement at Section 18(2).
- (9) No person shall make a false entry on a State or Provincial fish ticket or a Federal catch or landing report referred to in paragraphs (5), (6), and (8) of this Section.
- (10) A copy of the fish tickets or catch reports referred to in paragraphs (5), (6), and (8) shall be:
  - (a) retained by the person making them for a period of three years from the date the fish tickets or catch reports are made; and
  - (b) open to inspection by an authorized officer or an authorized representative of the Commission.
- (11) No person shall possess any Pacific halibut taken or retained in contravention of these Regulations.
- (12) When Pacific halibut are landed to other than a commercial fish processor, the records required by paragraph (6) shall be maintained by the operator of the vessel from which that Pacific halibut was caught, in compliance with paragraph (10).
- (13) No person shall tag Pacific halibut unless the tagging is authorized by IPHC or by a Federal or State agency.

<sup>4</sup> DFO has more restrictive regulations; therefore, Section 20 paragraph (2)(b) does not apply to fish caught in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B or landed in British Columbia.

<sup>5</sup> DFO did not adopt this regulation; therefore, Section 20 paragraph (3) does not apply to fish caught in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B.

## **21. Supervision of Unloading and Weighing**

- (1) The unloading and weighing of Pacific halibut may be subject to the supervision of authorized officers to assure the fulfillment of the provisions of these Regulations.
- (2) The unloading and weighing of Pacific halibut may be subject to sampling by an authorized representative of the Commission.

## **22. Fishing by United States Indian Tribes**

- (1) Pacific halibut fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area Subarea 2A-1 by members of United States treaty Indian tribes located in the State of Washington shall be regulated under regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and published in the Federal Register:
  - (a) Subarea 2A-1 includes the usual and accustomed fishing areas for Pacific Coast treaty tribes off the coast of Washington and all inland marine waters of Washington north of Point Chehalis (46°53.30' N. lat.), including Puget Sound. Boundaries of a tribe's fishing area may be revised as ordered by a United States Federal court;
  - (b) Section 13(1) does not apply to commercial fishing for Pacific halibut in Subarea 2A-1 by Indian tribes; and
  - (c) ceremonial and subsistence fishing for Pacific halibut in Subarea 2A-1 is permitted with hook and line gear from 1 January through 31 December.
- (2) In IPHC Regulatory Area 2C, the Metlakatla Indian Community has been authorized by the United States Government to conduct a commercial Pacific halibut fishery within the Annette Islands Reserve. Fishing periods for this fishery are announced by the Metlakatla Indian Community and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Landings in this fishery are accounted with the commercial landings for IPHC Regulatory Area 2C.





- (3) Section 7 (careful release of Pacific halibut), Section 17 (fishing gear), except paragraphs (7) and (8) of Section 17, Section 18 (size limits), Section 19 (logs), and Section 20 (receipt and possession of Pacific halibut) apply to commercial fishing for Pacific halibut by Indian tribes.
- (4) Regulations in paragraph (3) of this Section that apply to State fish tickets apply to Tribal tickets that are authorized by WDFW and ADFG.
- (5) Commercial fishing for Pacific halibut is permitted with hook and line gear between the dates specified in Section 9 paragraphs (2) and (3), or until the applicable fishery limit specified in Section 5 is taken, whichever occurs first.

### **23. Indigenous Groups Fishing for Food, Social and Ceremonial Purposes in British Columbia**

- (1) Fishing for Pacific halibut for food, social and ceremonial purposes by Indigenous groups in IPHC Regulatory Area 2B shall be governed by the *Fisheries Act* of Canada and regulations as amended from time to time.

### **24. Customary and Traditional Fishing in Alaska**

- (1) Customary and traditional fishing for Pacific halibut in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E shall be governed pursuant to regulations promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and published in 50 CFR Part 300.
- (2) Customary and traditional fishing is authorized from 1 January through 31 December.

### **25. Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—General**

- (1) No person shall engage in recreational (sport) fishing for Pacific halibut using gear other than a single line with no more than two hooks attached; or a spear.
- (2) Any size limit promulgated under IPHC or domestic regulations shall be measured in a straight line passing over the pectoral fin from the tip of the lower jaw with the mouth closed, to the extreme end of the middle of the tail as depicted in [Figure 2](#).
- (3) Any Pacific halibut brought aboard a vessel and not immediately returned to the sea with a minimum of injury will be included in the daily bag limit of the person catching the Pacific halibut.
- (4) No person may possess Pacific halibut on a vessel while fishing in a closed area.
- (5) No Pacific halibut caught by recreational (sport) fishing shall be offered for sale, sold, traded, or bartered.
- (6) No Pacific halibut caught in recreational (sport) fishing shall be possessed on board a vessel when other fish or shellfish aboard said vessel are destined for commercial use, sale, trade, or barter.
- (7) The operator of a charter vessel shall be liable for any violations of these Regulations committed by an angler on board said vessel. In Alaska, the charter vessel guide, as defined in 50 CFR 300.61 and referred to in 50 CFR 300.65, 300.66, and 300.67, shall be liable for any violation of these Regulations committed by an angler on board a charter vessel.

### **26. Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Area 2A**

- (1) The Commission shall determine and announce closing dates to the public for any area in which the fishery limits promulgated by NOAA Fisheries are estimated to have been taken.
- (2) When the Commission has determined that a subquota under paragraph (8) of this Section is estimated to have been taken, and has announced a date on which the season will close, no person shall recreational (sport) fish for Pacific halibut in that area after that date for the rest of the year, unless a reopening of that area for recreational (sport) Pacific halibut fishing is scheduled in accordance with the Catch Sharing Plan for IPHC Regulatory Area 2A, or announced by the Commission.
- (3) No person shall fish for Pacific halibut from a vessel, nor land or retain Pacific halibut on board a vessel, used as a charter vessel in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A, unless issued a permit valid for fishing in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A by NOAA Fisheries according to 50 CFR 300 Subpart E.
- (4) In California, Oregon, or Washington, no person shall fillet, mutilate, or otherwise disfigure a Pacific halibut in any manner that prevents the determination of minimum size or the number of fish caught, possessed, or landed.
- (5) The possession limit on a vessel for Pacific halibut in the waters off the coast of Washington is the same as the daily bag limit. The possession limit for Pacific halibut on land in Washington is two daily bag limits.



- (6) The possession limit on a vessel for Pacific halibut caught in the waters off the coast of Oregon is the same as the daily bag limit. The possession limit for Pacific halibut on land in Oregon is three daily bag limits.
- (7) The possession limit on a vessel for Pacific halibut caught in the waters off the coast of California is one daily bag limit. The possession limit for Pacific halibut on land in California is one daily bag limit.
- (8) In Convention waters of the Washington Puget Sound and the U.S. Convention waters in the Strait of Juan de Fuca subarea, the recreational (sport) fishing season opens on the first Thursday in April and runs through 30 June, seven days per week. NOAA Fisheries may modify these dates in-season. The daily bag limit is one Pacific halibut of any size per person. The Washington Puget Sound and the U.S. Convention waters in the Strait of Juan de Fuca subarea is defined in 50 CFR 300.63(c)(5)(i)(A).
- (9) In Convention waters off California the recreational (sport) fishing season is from 1 April through 15 November, seven days per week, in the Northern California Coast subarea and from 1 April to 31 December, seven days per week, in the South of Point Arena subarea. NOAA Fisheries may modify these dates in-season. The daily bag limit is one Pacific halibut of any size per person. The California subareas are defined in 50 CFR 300.63(c)(5)(iii).
- (10) Additional regulations describing fishing periods, fishery limits, fishing dates, and daily bag limits are promulgated by NOAA Fisheries and published in the Federal Register.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 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 and State regulations prior to fishing.

## **27. Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Area 2B**

- (1) In all waters off British Columbia:<sup>7,8</sup>
  - (a) the recreational (sport) fishing season will open on 1 February;
  - (b) the recreational (sport) fishing season will close when the recreational (sport) fishery limit allocated by DFO is taken, or 31 December, whichever is earlier; and
  - (c) the daily bag limit is two (2) Pacific halibut of any size per day, per person, and may be increased to a daily bag limit of three (3) Pacific halibut per day, per person on or after 1 August. This provision shall remain in effect through 2026, unless extended by a vote of the Commission.
- (2) In British Columbia, no person shall fillet, mutilate, or otherwise disfigure a Pacific halibut in any manner that prevents the determination of minimum size or the number of fish caught, possessed, or landed.
- (3) The possession limit for Pacific halibut in the waters off the coast of British Columbia is three Pacific halibut.<sup>7,8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> DFO could implement more restrictive regulations for the recreational (sport) fishery, therefore anglers are advised to check the current Federal or Provincial regulations prior to fishing.

<sup>8</sup> For regulations on the experimental recreational fishery implemented by DFO check the current Federal or Provincial regulations.

## **28. Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E**

- (1) In Convention waters in and off Alaska:<sup>9, 10</sup>
  - (a) the recreational (sport) fishing season is from 1 February to 31 December;
  - (b) the daily bag limit is two Pacific halibut of any size per day per person unless a more restrictive bag limit applies in Commission regulations or Federal regulations at 50 CFR 300.65;
  - (c) no person may possess more than two daily bag limits;
  - (d) no person shall possess on board a vessel, including charter vessels and pleasure craft used for fishing, Pacific halibut that have been filleted, mutilated, or otherwise disfigured in any manner, except that each Pacific halibut may be cut into no more than 2 ventral pieces, 2 dorsal pieces, and 2 cheek pieces, with a patch of skin on each piece, naturally attached. Either one dorsal piece or one ventral piece from one Pacific halibut on board may be consumed;
  - (e) Pacific halibut in excess of the possession limit in paragraph (1)(c) of this Section may be possessed on a vessel that does not contain recreational (sport) fishing gear, fishing rods, hand lines, or gaffs;



- (f) Pacific halibut harvested on a charter vessel fishing trip in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C or 3A must be retained on board the charter vessel on which the Pacific halibut was caught until the end of the charter vessel fishing trip as defined at 50 CFR 300.61;
- (g) guided angler fish (GAF), as described at 50 CFR 300.65, may be used to allow a charter vessel angler to harvest additional Pacific halibut up to the limits in place for unguided anglers, and are exempt from the requirements in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this Section;
- (h) if there is an annual limit on the number of Pacific halibut that may be retained by a charter vessel angler as defined at 50 CFR 300.61, for purposes of enforcing the annual limit, each charter vessel angler must:
  - (1) maintain a nontransferable harvest record in the angler's possession if retaining a Pacific halibut for which an annual limit has been established. Such harvest record must be maintained either on the angler's State of Alaska recreational (sport) fishing license, an ADFG approved electronic harvest record, or on a Sport Fishing Harvest Record Card obtained, without charge, from ADFG offices, the ADFG website, or fishing license vendors;
  - (2) immediately upon retaining a Pacific halibut for which an annual limit has been established, permanently and legibly record the date, location (IPHC Regulatory Area), and species of the catch (Pacific halibut) on the harvest record; and
  - (3) record the information required by paragraph 1(h)(2) on any duplicate or additional recreational (sport) fishing license issued to the angler, duplicate electronic harvest record, or any duplicate or additional Sport Fishing Harvest Record Card obtained by the angler for all Pacific halibut previously retained during that year that were subject to the harvest record reporting requirements of this Section; and
- (i) in IPHC Regulatory 3A:
  - (1) a "charter halibut permit," as defined at 50 CFR 300.61, may only be used for one charter vessel fishing trip in which Pacific halibut are caught and retained per calendar day;
  - (2) a "charter vessel," as defined at 50 CFR 300.61 and in Section 3(d), may only be used for one charter vessel fishing trip in which Pacific halibut are caught and retained per calendar day; and
  - (3) for purposes of subsections (1) and (2) of this paragraph, a "charter vessel fishing trip" is defined as the time period between: (a) the first time Pacific halibut are caught and retained on a charter vessel by a charter vessel angler (as defined at 50 CFR 300.61); and (b) whichever comes first: 2359 (Alaska local time) on the same calendar day that the charter vessel fishing trip began; when any charter vessel angler is offloaded from the charter vessel; or when Pacific halibut are offloaded from the charter vessel.
- (2) For guided recreational (sport) fishing (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) in IPHC Regulatory Area 2C:
  - (a) no person on board a charter vessel (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) shall catch and retain more than one Pacific halibut per calendar day;
  - (b) no person on board a charter vessel (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) shall catch and retain any Pacific halibut that with head on is greater than 34 inches (86.4 cm) and less than 80 inches (203.2 cm) as measured in a straight line, passing over the pectoral fin from the tip of the lower jaw with mouth closed, to the extreme end of the middle of the tail; and
  - (c) no person on board a charter vessel (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65 and defined in Section 3(d)) may catch and retain Pacific halibut the following Thursdays in 2026: 18 June through 10 September.
- (3) For guided recreational (sport) fishing (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) in IPHC Regulatory Area 3A:
  - (a) no person on board a charter vessel (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65 and defined in Section 3(d)) shall catch and retain more than two Pacific halibut per calendar day;
  - (b) at least one of the retained Pacific halibut must have a head-on length of no more than 27 inches (68.6 cm) as measured in a straight line, passing over the pectoral fin from the tip of the lower jaw with mouth closed, to the extreme end of



the middle of the tail. If a person recreational (sport) fishing on a charter vessel in IPHC Regulatory Area 3A retains only one Pacific halibut in a calendar day, that Pacific halibut may be of any length; and

- (c) no person on board a charter vessel (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65 and defined in Section 3(d)) may catch and retain Pacific halibut on any Wednesday, or on the following Tuesdays, in 2026: 2 June through 25 August.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

## **29. Previous Regulations Superseded**

These Regulations shall supersede all previous regulations of the Commission, and these Regulations shall be effective each succeeding year until superseded.

Published by the International Pacific Halibut Commission, 4 February 2026

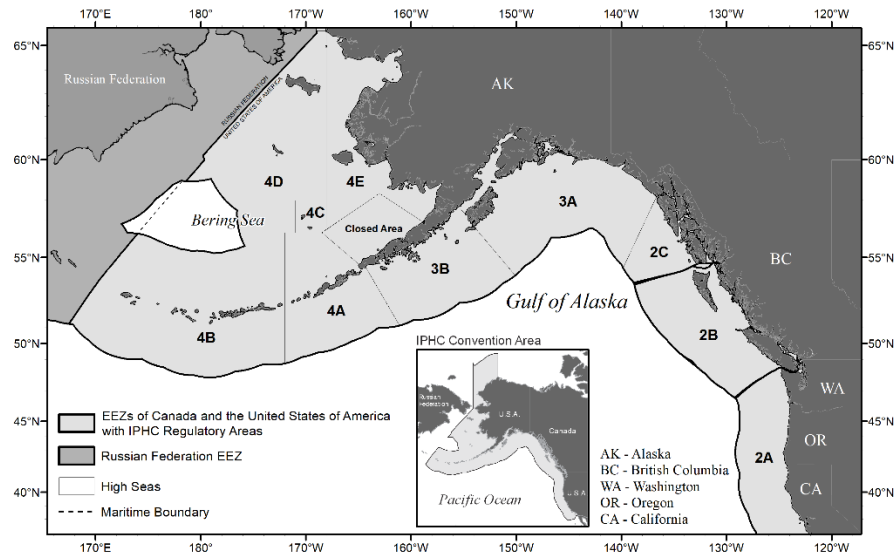


Figure 1. IPHC Regulatory Areas for the Pacific halibut fishery.

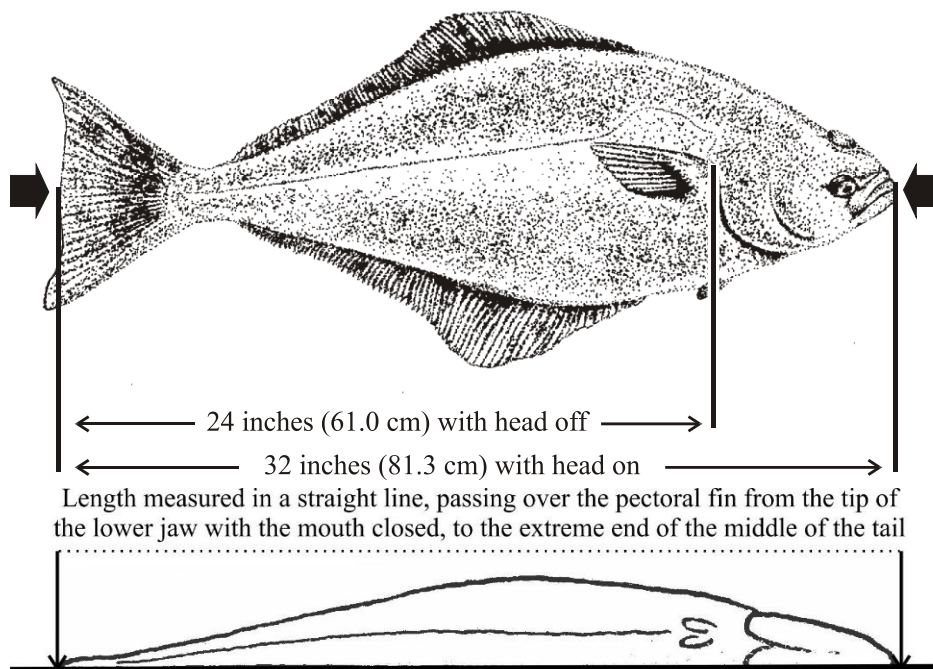


Figure 2. Minimum commercial size.