



2017 Regulatory Proposals

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Agenda Item 7

IPHC-2017-AM093-10 Rev_1

IPHC-2017-AM093-PropA-P

Regulatory Proposals *

- **Each Fall** –
IPHC solicits regulatory proposals from IPHC staff, agencies, and stakeholders
- **Interim Meeting** –
Commissioners review
- **Annual Meeting** –
Commissioners review and decide which to approve

To Whom it May Concern -

Send in your ideas for
regulatory changes by
October 31!

Best fishes -



* Not to be confused with **Catch Limit Proposals** which are accepted between the Interim Meeting and 31 Dec each year.
(see IPHC-2017-AM093-PropQ)



Regulatory Proposals

Proposals available on IPHC's Annual Meeting website under documents IPHC-2017-AM093-PropA through PropP.

<http://www.iphc.int/meetings-and-events/annual-meeting/documents.html>

- 
- ***IPHC Staff (2)***
 - ***Agencies (1)***
 - ***Stakeholders (13)***



IPHC Staff Proposals

PropA – Head-on landed weight requirement

- *Commercial fishery*
- *Coastwide*
(Area 2A already requires head-on)
- ***Purpose: Improve estimate of total removals***
- *Variance in where heads cut among regions and ports*
(2013 study showed range of 9-18%)
- *Head-off halibut – may cause 2-3% underestimate of total removals*
- *While landings records show ~70% of halibut reported in head-off condition, most fish are actually delivered to the processor with the head attached (head-on)*
- *Conversions applied within the landing record system would remain 10% for heads and 2% for ice and slime (unwashed).*
- *Proposal includes removing 24” head-off minimum size limit*

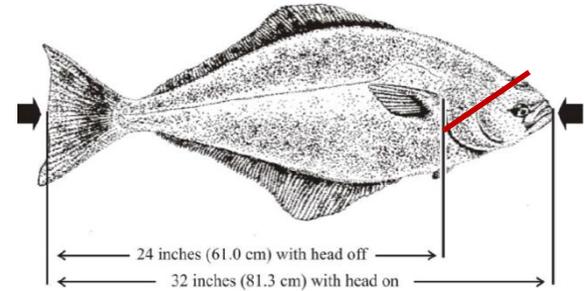
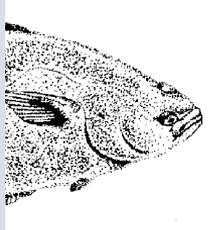
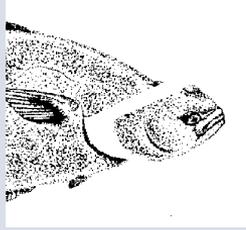
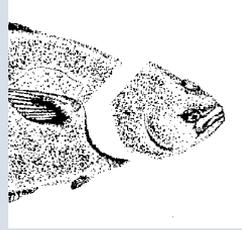


Figure 2. Minimum commercial size.



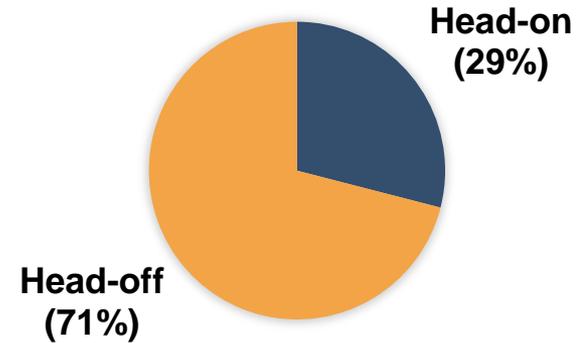
EXAMPLE			
Landed weight in pounds (dressed, washed)	10,000	10,000	10,000
	Weighed and reported head-on	Headed by plant Weighed and reported head-off	
			
	Landing receipt system applies 10% deduction	Head is 9% of weight	Head is 18% of weight
Reported net weight in pounds (deducted from quota)	9,000	9,100	8,200



How widespread is this concern?

- 71% of halibut reported head-off and 29% reported head-on.
- While landings records show 71% of halibut reported in head-off condition, most fishermen actually delivered fish to the processor with the head attached (head-on).
- Processor cuts head and reports head-off weight.
- **May cause 2-3% underestimate of total removals.**

REPORTED CONDITION



IPHC Staff Proposals

PropB – Remove IPHC Closed Area

- *Commercial fishery*
- *Alaska*
- *Purpose: No scientific basis for retaining closed area in its current form, whereby only directed fishery is prohibited from fishing within the area.*
- *No new fish – Area 4CDE catch limits already include Pacific halibut from closed area.*

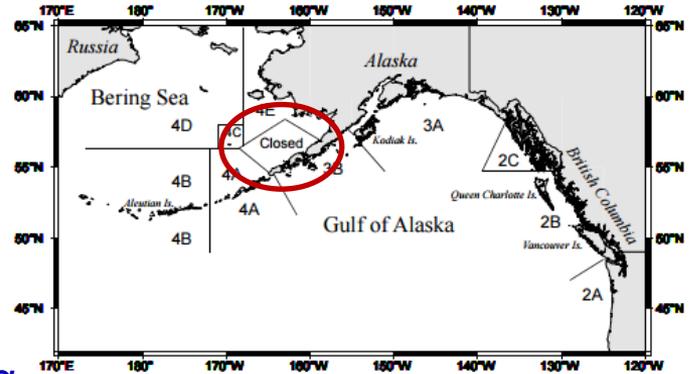


Figure 1. Regulatory areas for the Pacific halibut fishery.



IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

IPHC-2017-AM093-INF03 –

Provides additional background information on PropB to remove the closed area:

- 1) *Past considerations*
- 2) *History of boundaries*
- 3) *Nursery grounds*
- 4) *Other nearby closed areas*
- 5) *Bycatch*
- 6) *Impacts of allowing directed Pacific halibut fishing*

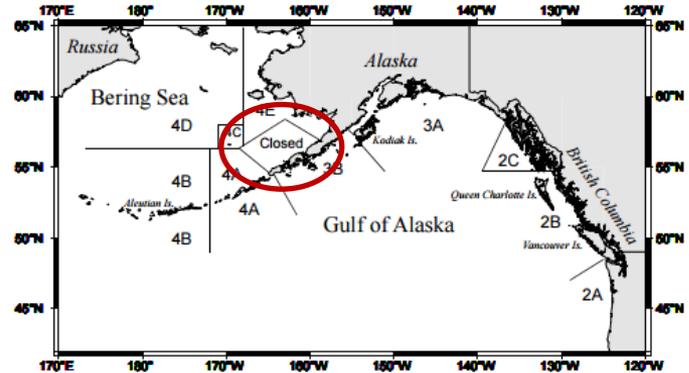


Figure 1. Regulatory areas for the Pacific halibut fishery.



IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

1) *Past considerations*

- IPHC has closed areas to protect halibut nursery grounds and subsequently reopened them.
 - *Two areas closed in 1932 (Canadian and SE Alaskan waters)*
 - *Reopened in 1960 after surveys showed older and larger fish in the area.*
- IPHC Closed Area in the Bering Sea
 - *Created in 1967 to protect juvenile halibut from foreign fishing*
→ *worked in the late 1960s-70s and bycatch reduced*
 - *No longer worked in the 1980s after foreign fishing fleets were excluded and US vessels were again allowed to fish in Closed Area (except directed commercial halibut fishery).*
 - *Reduced in size in 1990 because survey suggested that relatively few juveniles caught with longlines.*



IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

1) *Past considerations (con't)*

- After the Closed Area was reduced in size in 1990, the Commission requested a review of the Closed Area (Trumble 1998). The paper states the Closed Area:
 - 1) Does not reduce halibut bycatch mortality,
 - 2) Provides little biological benefit to the halibut resource, and
 - 3) Does not protect nursery grounds because fisheries that catch juvenile halibut are fishing in the area.
- In addition, the paper refers to the Closed Area as a possible buffer for uncertainty in the stock assessment and management of halibut; however, uncertainty greatly reduced since 1998.



IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

1) *Past considerations (con't)*

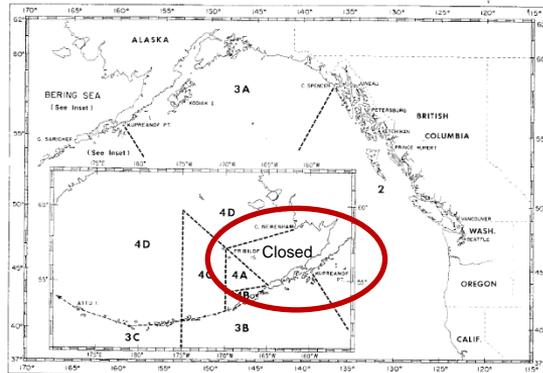
- Between 2011-2013, Commission reviewed the purpose of the Closed Area and considered removing it.
 - Discussed at IPHC's 2011 Interim Meeting and 2012 Annual Meeting
 - Letter sent to North Pacific Fishery Management Council
 - Response to IPHC
 - Discussed at IPHC's 2012 Interim Meeting and 2013 Annual Meeting
 - Commissioners did not approve the proposal, noting
“Following some discussion, the Commission decided that although this may be considered in the future, opening this area is not a high priority issue at this time.”



IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

2) History of boundaries

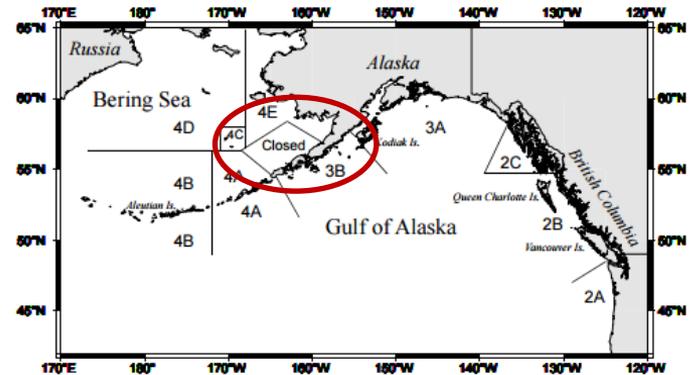
- Before 1967, considered Area 4E
- Closed Area created in 1967
- Reduced in size in 1990



Pacific Coast of North America showing the 1967 regulatory areas as defined by the International Pacific Halibut Commission

1967-
1989

1990-
2016



IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

3) *Nursery ground*

- No scientific basis that the Closed Area is a nursery ground of any significance, relative to any other grounds, for Pacific halibut.
- Concentrations of young Pacific halibut exist throughout much of the range of the population from the Bering Sea to at least as far south as British Columbia.
- IPHC-2017-AM093-INF03 provides more information and citations on nursery grounds



IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

4) *Other nearby closed areas*

- There are at least 11 closed areas for other non-halibut fisheries located within or near the IPHC's Closed Area.
- IPHC-2017-AM093-INF03 provides maps

5) *Bycatch*

- Several fisheries operate in the Closed Area, including groundfish trawl (bottom and pelagic), groundfish hook-and-line, and groundfish pot gear.
- Most of these fisheries catch halibut (adults and juveniles) as bycatch.
- Half of the bycatch in Area 4CDE was from the Closed Area.
- Almost all of the bycatch is under 32 inches (U32) for Area 4CDE including the closed area (97% in 2015).

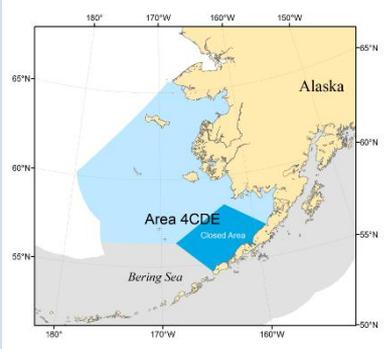
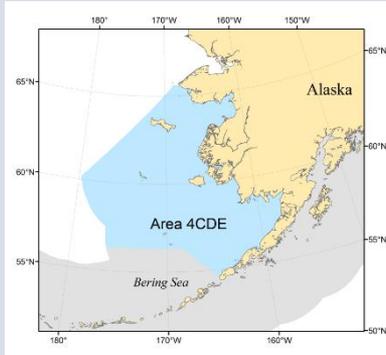


IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

6) Impacts of allowing directed Pacific halibut fishing

- No “new fish” available to the directed fishery.
- The halibut stock in the Closed Area already included in the stock assessment, which treats Regulatory Areas 4CDE and the Closed Area as a single unit.
- The overall harvest advice for Area 4CDE also includes the Closed Area → no change in total catch available to directed fishery by opening this area.
- Based on survey results, fishing in this area will likely encounter similar numbers and sizes of Pacific halibut as are found in Area 4CDE with comparable ocean and bottom characteristics.
 - *2015 survey in closed area showed ~30% catch was U32 (similar to the rate in 4CDE)*
- The primary impact of this change on the directed fishery revolves around who from Area 4CDE would be permitted to fish in this area if it were opened, a matter for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC).



	With Defined Closed Area CURRENT	Without Defined Closed Area PROPOSED
Area 4CDE Bottom Area	219,000 square nautical miles	219,000 square nautical miles
Area 4CDE 2016 Survey O32 WPUE	14.1 lb/skate	14.1 lb/skate
Area 4CDE 2017 Apportionment Proportion	12.6 %	12.6 %
Area 4CDE 2017 Blue Line Catch Limit	1.55 Mlb	1.55 Mlb
Area (light blue) available for directed commercial Pacific halibut fishing in Area 4CDE		



IPHC Staff Proposals - PropB (con't)

Summary

- No scientific basis for closed area
- No new fish – closed area fish already in Area 4CDE catch limits
- Data shows minimal bycatch of juvenile halibut expected from directed halibut longline fishery, compared to other fisheries in the closed area.
- No longer needed to buffer against uncertainty.
- NPFMC would need to consider which Area 4CDE commercial halibut fishermen can fish in the area.



Agency Proposals

Prop C – Fishing in multiple regulatory areas (NMFS)

- *Commercial*
- *Alaska*
- *Harmonize regulations*
Revise IPHC regulations
(Section 18) to refer to
NMFS regulations
(50 CFR 679.7(f)(4))

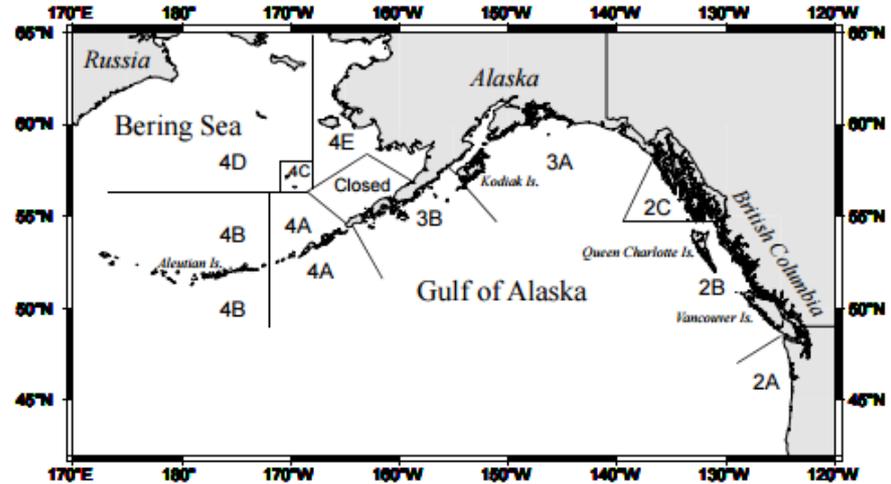


Figure 1. Regulatory areas for the Pacific halibut fishery.



Stakeholder Proposals

Paper #	Organization	Sector/Area	Proposal	IPHC Secretariat Recommendation
PropD	James Whitethorn, West Bros. Group	All	Upgrade the US-Canada Treaty	Refer to 2 nd performance review (Agenda Item 10.7, Paper IPHC-2017-AM093-18)
PropE	James Whitethorn, West Bros. Group	All	Drop the Blue Line	N/A as regulatory proposal, discussed under Agenda Item 5 on Harvest Decision Table
PropF	James Whitethorn, West Bros. Group	All	Drop the IPHC setline survey	Consider disapproving
PropG	James Whitethorn, West Bros. Group	All, Area 4	Closure of the Nursery Area	Defer to Council



Stakeholder Proposals

Paper #	Organization	Sector/Area	Proposal	IPHC Secretariat Recommendation
PropH	Paul Ewing, Eagle Charters	Sport (Charter, Private) AK	Non-resident, self-guided sport same regulations as charter fishery, other than need for a CHP	Defer to Council
PropI	James S. Kearns, Self	Sport (Charter, Private), AK	Unguided sport same standards as CSP sectors	Defer to Council
PropJ	James Lee Shirk, Recreational Fisherman	Sport (Charter, Private), AK	Elimination of law requiring skin to be left on halibut	Consider disapproving
PropK	Capt. Steven Riehemann, Boat Owner	Sport (Charter, Private), AK	Allow filleted halibut in sport fishery	Consider disapproving



Stakeholder Proposals

Paper #	Organization	Sector/Area	Proposal	IPHC Secretariat Recommendation
PropL	Mel Erickson, Self	Sport (Charter), 3A	Charter Boat Trip Limits 3A – trips/season	Defer to Council
PropM	Mel Erickson, Self	Sport (Charter), 3A	Charter Boat Trip Limits 3A – trips/week	Defer to Council
PropN	Mel Erickson, Self	Sport (Charter), 3A	Guided Anglers 3A Daily	Defer to Council
PropO	Phil Wyman, ALFA	Commercial	Clarify pot gear requirements	Defer Part 1 to NMFS; Consider disapproving Part 2
PropP	Peter Thompson, Self	Commercial	Size Limit Clarification	If PropA not approved, consider approval



Catch Limit Proposals

IPHC-2017-AM093-PropQ

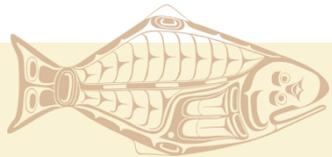
on catch limit proposals from stakeholders will be considered as part of 2017 catch limit deliberations under Agenda Item 7.4 on Thursday.



Additional Proposals

Other proposals will be presented this week on:

- Fishing season dates from advisory bodies
- Area 2A directed commercial fishery potential opening dates from agency reports
- Domestic government catch sharing plans from agency reports
- Area 2C & 3A charter management measures from agency reports



Recommendation/s

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IPHC-2017-AM093-10 Rev_1 which provides the Commission with an opportunity to consider the regulatory proposals received for 2017, detailed in papers IPHC-2017-AM093-PropA through PropQ, and provides IPHC Secretariat recommendations for action on each proposal.
- 2) **DIRECT** the IPHC Secretariat to prepare the draft IPHC Regulations for 2017 based on the decisions of the AM093, for review and final approval by the Commission.



