

REGULATORY PROPOSAL 2018
Clarify Head-On Weight Requirement in Alaska Commercial Fisheries

SUBMITTED BY: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
(Glenn Merrill, NOAA Fisheries, Alaska Region)

29 OCTOBER 2017

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

For IPHC Regulatory Area(s): All AK Regulatory Areas

Beginning in 2017, all commercial Pacific halibut must be landed and weighed with their heads attached (head-on) for data reporting purposes. The head-on requirement is intended to improve the estimates of the weight of landed halibut. In 2017, section 13 of IPHC regulations were modified to require that halibut be landed head-on. Section 13 also specified that those head-on halibut will be subject to a 32-inch minimum size limit, with an exception for vessels that freeze halibut at sea. Those vessels may deliver their frozen, head-off halibut shoreside with a 24- inch minimum size limit.

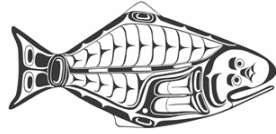
While section 13 of IPHC regulations clearly requires all commercial halibut to be landed with the head on, IPHC regulations could be clarified to specify the head-on weighing and reporting requirements for persons that purchase or receive halibut directly from a vessel operator. Therefore, the NMFS Alaska Region proposes that section 17 of IPHC Regulations be clarified to specify that 1) all commercial halibut landed in Alaska regulatory areas must be weighed with the head on, and 2) the head-on weight must be reported in the applicable catch report.

SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

17. Receipt and Possession of Halibut

...

(5) A registered buyer (as that term is defined in regulations promulgated by NMFS and codified at 50 CFR part 679) who receives halibut harvested in IFQ and CDQ fisheries in Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E, directly from the vessel operator that harvested such halibut must weigh all the halibut received with the head on 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 with the head on obtained at the time of offloading, including the scale weight (in pounds) of halibut purchased by the registered buyer, the scale weight (in pounds) of halibut offloaded in excess of the IFQ or CDQ, the scale weight of halibut (in pounds) retained for personal use or for future sale, and the scale weight (in pounds) of halibut discarded as unfit for human consumption.

(6) The first recipient, commercial fish processor, or buyer in the United States who purchases or receives halibut directly from the vessel operator that harvested such halibut must weigh and record all 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 halibut purchased; the weight (in pounds) of halibut offloaded in excess of the IFQ, CDQ, or fishing period limits; the weight of halibut (in pounds) retained for personal use or for future sale; and the weight (in pounds) of halibut discarded as unfit for human consumption. All halibut harvested in IFQ and CDQ fisheries in Areas 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.

...