



REGULATORY PROPOSAL 2018
Revision to the Method Used to Measure Length of Halibut

SUBMITTED BY:
RICHARD YAMADA
ALASKA CHARTER ASSOCIATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
25 OCTOBER 2017

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

For IPHC Regulatory Area(s): All Regulatory Areas

Regulation 25 (and elsewhere in the regulations that describe how the length of a halibut should be measured) states, "(2) Any size limit promulgated under IPHC or NMFS 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". It is a common practice for a boat captain to slide a halibut over a ridged metal ruler or between a pair of measured markings on the vessel or ice chest to determine whether a halibut is within the current regulations for retention. The need for a flexible measuring device that can measure over the body of a halibut, as current regulations imply, is cumbersome as it would not only need to be durable, but also easy to clean, which most consumer tape measures are not. With current maximum size restrictions, the difference between a measurement over the body and a flat measurement under the body could be the basis for a violation. A measurement taken under the body, where a halibut could be quickly slid over the measuring device up to a stop coinciding with the beginning of the measuring device would provide less harm to a halibut if it had to be released. This practice is also a common protocol when measuring halibut lengths for scientific research purposes as well as a common practice in the commercial halibut fishery.

SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

Amend current regulations replacing "over the pectoral fin" with "under the fish". This would then read, "Any size limit promulgated under IPHC or NMFS regulations shall be measured in a straight line under the fish from the tip of the lower jaw with the mouth closed, to the extreme end of the middle of the tail".