

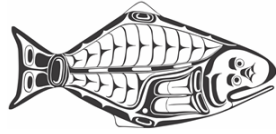
REGULATORY PROPOSAL 2018
Status Quo Harvest Measures for Guided Anglers in Area 3A

SUBMITTED BY:
RICHARD YAMADA
ALASKA CHARTER ASSOCIATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
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EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

For IPHC Regulatory Area(s): 3A

The guided recreational fishery in Alaska came under the management of a Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) in 2014. The previous ten years were managed under a GH (Guideline Harvest Level). The GH had a suite of harvest measures regulators could use to control guided angler harvest, however the US regulatory process was lengthy, resulting in a delay of harvest measure implementation. This resulted in Area 2C overharvesting its GH allocation from the very first year of implementation and every year thereafter. In comparison, Area 3A left over four million pounds of un-harvested fish in the water and rarely went over its allocation. Under the CSP, with the IPHC involved in adopting harvest measures, Area 2C has remained very close to its annual allocation, while Area 3A has been over its allocation from the beginning. One may argue that initial allocations were insufficient, but a contributing factor may also have been an inadequate harvest history under certain management measures to accurately estimate harvest removals. Analysts had a history of angler behavior in Area 2C under a one fish of a maximum size limit before the CSP and could estimate projected harvest for Area 2C with relative accuracy. However, Area 3A never experienced a restrictive harvest measure until the implementation of the CSP. A harvest result that falls within plus-or-minus 10% of a harvest projection should be considered sufficiently accurate, given the variables with which these estimates have to be made. Analysts had no history on what angler effort and fishing selectivity would be on a second fish of only 28 inches, or an annual limit of four fish. Added to this has been days of the week closures and possibly a reverse slot limit on the first fish. This array of harvest measures makes it difficult to determine exactly which harvest measure did or did not reduce harvest. The recreational fishery, which is difficult to manage to a pound of fish, needs flexibility in achieving its harvest goals. In Area 3A, more time is needed to determine the full impact of current harvest measures before adding more variables.



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SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

Regulation 28 (3) For guided sport fishing (as referred to in 50 CFR 300.65) in Regulatory Area 3A:

- (a) To be established at IPHC 2018 Annual Meeting
- (b) – (g) Status Quo (Remain the same as 2017 regulations)