



**IPHC Fishery Regulation Proposal:**

**Recreational (Sport) Fishing for Pacific Halibut—IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E (Sect. 29) - Onboard consumption in IPHC Regulatory Area 2C**

**SUBMITTED BY: TIM COOPER, RECREATIONAL FISHERMAN (8 DECEMBER 2022)**

All  Directed Commercial  Recreational  Subsistence  Non-directed commercial

All Regulatory Areas  All U.S. Regulatory Areas  All Alaska Regulatory Areas

2A  2B  2C  3A  3B  4A  4B  4C  4D  4E

**PURPOSE**

To propose adding flexibility to existing recreational (sport) Pacific halibut fishing regulations in IPHC Regulatory Area 2C and allow limited consumption of Pacific halibut on board of unguided recreational vessels.

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

I would like to see a change to the rules for area 2C that would allow for unguided sport catch and consumption of Pacific halibut while living on a boat. As a recreational boater that cruises Alaska waters during the summer months while living on my boat, I cannot have any Pacific halibut on my boat for consumption and still be legal without buying it and having proof of purchase. I would like to see some allowance that would allow me and other live aboard cruisers the ability to catch, possess and consume Pacific halibut while cruising Alaska waters. The Alaska area regulations seem to be much tougher to meet than the requirements stated than in area 2A or 2B. If I interpret the area 2A regulation correctly: I can do whatever I want with the meat as long as I don't destroy the carcass and have it available for inspection.

As noted in the NOAA FAQ below, there is no exception for frozen Pacific halibut today. If there was an exception for properly marked frozen Pacific halibut, that would also allow live aboard cruisers the ability to enjoy the fishery. I don't know what the right wording might be that is better left to the Commission. I cannot imagine that there would be any significant change in the catch numbers. As I follow other cruisers on the internet and Youtube, it is clear that this regulation isn't well known due to all the people I see catching and consuming Pacific halibut. I would like to catch a fish and enjoy eating it without breaking the law. Area 2A: 27. (3) 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. Area 2C: 1. (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; From NOAA regulation summary and FAQ: 6. If I catch Pacific

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halibut and freeze the fillets onboard my boat, does that halibut count toward my daily bag limit and possession limit? Generally, yes.

As noted in the regulations summary above, Pacific halibut on a vessel may be filleted into 2 ventral pieces, 2 dorsal pieces, and 2 cheek pieces, with a patch of skin left on each piece. Each piece may be frozen intact on a vessel, but they are included in the daily bag limit and possession limit. The regulations do not make any exception for frozen fish or fish preserved in any other manner. However, as also noted in the regulations summary above, Pacific halibut may be possessed on a vessel in excess of the daily bag limit and possession limit if there is no sport fishing gear, fishing rods, hand lines, or gaffs onboard. Among other things, this exception helps persons who wish to transport halibut from one location to another using a vessel. 7. Can I eat any sport-caught Pacific halibut while I'm on my boat? No. Eating halibut onboard a vessel in Alaska waters is not allowed because it necessarily involves mutilating or disfiguring Pacific halibut other than in a manner allowed by the regulations. The IPHC regulations are specific with respect to the condition in which halibut may be retained onboard a vessel. Please refer to the regulations and the filleting Pacific halibut summary above.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** fishery regulation proposal IPHC-2023-AM099-PropC3, which adds flexibility to existing recreational (sport) Pacific halibut fishing regulations in IPHC Regulatory Area 2C and allows limited consumption of Pacific halibut on board of unguided recreational vessels.

## APPENDICES

[Appendix A](#): Suggested Regulatory Language.

### APPENDIX A

#### SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE

The proponent deferred development of suggested regulatory language to the Commission should it wish to adopt the proposal.