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**Draft: Report of the IPHC Secretariat (2018)**

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## 1. PURPOSE

To provide the Commission with an update on the activities of the IPHC Secretariat in 2018 (as of 23 October 2018).

## 2. STAFFING IMPROVEMENTS DURING 2018

Full time regular				
FT Arrivals	Type	Hire Date	Status	Position Title
Caroline Robinson	Full time regular	27 June 2018	Active	Fisheries Data Coordinator (Recreational, Subsistence, & Data Entry)
FT Change				
Edward Henry	Full time regular	16 May 2012	Active (promotion 1 July 2018)	Old: Survey Coordinator (Bait) New: Fisheries Data Coordinator (Bycatch)
Lara Erikson	Full time regular	24 Sept 2001	Active (promotion 1 August 2018)	Old: Fisheries Data Manager New: Branch Manager, Fisheries Statistics and Services
FT Departure				
Jamie Goen	Full time regular	27 June 2016	Departed: 30 April 2018	Branch Manager, Fisheries Statistics and Services

Temporary positons				
Temp/contract	Type	Hire Date	Status	Position Title
Anna Simeon	Temporary full time (2-yr contract ending 28 February 2020)	1 March 2018	Active	Biological Science Laboratory Technician (new position)
Suzanne Dodds	Temporary full time (3.5 month contract)	16 May 2018	Departed: 27 August 2018	Undergraduate Intern
Steven Berukoff	Temporary full-time 2-yr contract ending in October 2020	22 October 2018	Active	MSE Programmer

### Current recruitment activities:

Position Title	Reason for vacancy	Status
Survey Coordinator (Gear and Bait)	Vacated by Edward Henry	Hiring action in progress
Fisheries Data Manager	Vacated by Lara Erikson	Hiring action in progress
MSE Researcher	New temporary position (2 years)	Hiring action in progress

### 3. IPHC MERIT SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2018

The IPHC funds several Merit Scholarships to support university, technical college, and other post-secondary education for students from Canada and the USA connected to the Pacific halibut fishery. Generally, a single new scholarship valued at US\$4000 per year is awarded every two years. The scholarships are renewable annually for the normal four-year period of undergraduate education, subject to maintenance of satisfactory academic performance. A Scholarship Committee of industry and Commission representatives reviews applications and determines recipients based on academic qualifications, career goals, and relationship to the Pacific halibut industry.

The recipient of the 2018 IPHC Merit Scholarship is **Kaia Dahl** of Petersburg, Alaska, who began her studies at Greenville College in Greenville, Illinois this fall.

The list of current recipients and their expected years of receipt are provided below. Note that in 2016 the IPHC Merit Scholarship shifted from an award of US\$2000 per year for four years, with a new recipient selected each year, to an award of US\$4000 per year for four years, with a new recipient selected every other year.

Name	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Shalie Dahl</b> (Petersburg, AK, USA)	\$2000	\$2000	\$2000	\$2000	-	-	-
<b>Ysabel Echeverio</b> (Stevensville, MT, USA)	-	\$4000	\$4000	\$4000	\$4000	-	-
<b>Kaia Dahl</b> (Petersburg, AK, USA)	-	-	-	\$4000	\$4000	\$4000	\$4000

### 4. MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION AND SUBSIDIARY BODIES DURING 2018

Meetings	No.	Date	Location
Annual Meeting (AM)	94 <sup>th</sup>	22-26 Jan	Portland, USA
Conference Board (CB)	88 <sup>th</sup>	23-24 Jan	Portland, USA
Processor Advisory Board (PAB)	23 <sup>rd</sup>	23-24 Jan	Portland, USA
Finance and Administration Committee (FAC)	94 <sup>th</sup>	22, 25 Jan	Portland, USA
Research Advisory Board (RAB)	19 <sup>th</sup>	28 Feb	Seattle, USA
Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB)	10 <sup>th</sup>	9-11 May	Seattle, USA
Scientific Review Board (SRB)	11 <sup>th</sup>	20-21 June	Seattle, USA
Scientific Review Board (SRB)	12 <sup>th</sup>	26-28 Sept	Seattle, USA
Work Meeting (WM)	--	20-21 Sept	Bellingham, USA
Management Strategy Advisory Board (MSAB)	11 <sup>th</sup>	25-26 Oct	Seattle, USA
Interim Meeting (IM)	94 <sup>th</sup>	28-29 Nov	Seattle, USA

## 5. IPHC FISHERY REGULATIONS (2018)

In 2018, the Commission adopted **six (6)** fishery regulations in accordance with Article III of the Convention, as follows:

### 1) **IPHC Pacific halibut fishery regulations, Section 8. Fishing periods**

IPHC-2018-AM094-R, para. 49: *The Commission **ADOPTED** fishing periods for 2017 as provided below, thereby superseding Section 8 of the IPHC halibut fishery regulations:*

- a) *IPHC Regulatory Area 2A (Non-Treaty Direct Commercial): 27 Jun, 11 July, 25 July, 8 August, 22 August, 5 September, 19 September.*
- b) *IPHC Canadian and U.S.A. quota-share fisheries: Opening: 24 March – Closing date: 7 November.*

### 2) **IPHC Pacific halibut fishery regulations, various sections – minor amendments**

IPHC-2018-AM094-R, para. 52: *The Commission **NOTED** and **ADOPTED** regulatory proposal IPHC-2018-AM094-PropA4 which proposed amendments to ensure clarity and consistency in the IPHC Fishery Regulations [with amendments].*

### 3) **IPHC Pacific halibut fishery regulations, Section 7. Fishing in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4E and 4D, and Section 11. Commercial Catch Limits**

IPHC-2018-AM094-R, para. 55: *The Commission **NOTED** and **ADOPTED** regulatory proposal IPHC-2018-AM094-PropB1 Rev\_1, which proposed IPHC Regulation changes to allow the use of leased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) by Community Development Quota (CDQ) organizations in IPHC Regulatory Areas 4B, 4C, 4D and 4E.*

### 4) **IPHC Pacific halibut fishery regulations, Section 28. Sport Fishing for Pacific Halibut – IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E**

IPHC-2018-AM094-R, para. 56: *The Commission **NOTED** and **ADOPTED** regulatory proposal IPHC-2018-AM094-PropB2, which proposed a clarification to the IPHC Regulations regarding retention of Pacific halibut caught in the recreational charter fisheries in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A.*

### 5) **IPHC Pacific halibut fishery regulations, Section 28. Sport Fishing for Pacific Halibut – IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E**

IPHC-2018-AM094-R, para. 63: *The Commission **ADOPTED** the text proposed in IPHC-2018-AM094-23, as modified during the AM094, in response to stakeholder proposal IPHC-2018-AM094-PropC5, which proposed a clarification to the IPHC Regulations regarding filleting of Pacific halibut caught recreationally in Alaska.*

### 6) **IPHC Pacific halibut fishery regulations, Section 19. Fishing Gear**

IPHC-2018-AM094-R, para. 66: *The Commission **ADOPTED** the text proposed in IPHC-2018-AM094-23 in response to stakeholder proposal IPHC-2018-AM094-C13,*

*which proposed a modification to the IPHC Regulations to allow retention of Pacific halibut taken in long-line or single pot gear in the directed Pacific halibut fishery in Alaska, where such gear is permitted by domestic regulation.*

## **6. INTERACTIONS WITH CONTRACTING PARTIES**

### **6.1. CANADA**

#### **6.1.1. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)**

##### **a) Areas of conservation concern**

The IPHC Secretariat worked with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to clarify restrictions on the IPHC fishery-independent setline survey (FISS) in and near areas of conservation concern, in particular the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs), both for the standard grid of FISS stations fished each year and for the expansion stations fished in 2018.

#### **6.1.2. Halibut Advisory Board (HAB)**

- b) The Executive Director participates as a HAB member, with other Secretariat staff in support. This relationship is expected to continue into the future given the HAB's contributions to the Canadian decision-making process.

### **5.2 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

#### **5.2.1 North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC)**

##### **a) Abundance-Based Management of Pacific halibut bycatch (ABM)**

The NPFMC's Abundance-Based Management Working Group (ABMWG) continued its work from 2017, with participation of the IPHC Secretariat. The IPHC submitted a letter to the NPFMC in early 2018 ([IPHC to NPFMC 17 January 2018](#)), commenting on the ABMWG's work to date and providing input to its further development. The NPFMC replied to the IPHC's letter in March ([NPFMC to IPHC 6 March 2018](#)), which was noted by the IPHC ([IPHC to NPFMC 29 March 2018](#)).

At its April 2018 meeting, the NPFMC reviewed a discussion paper prepared by the ABMWG and drafted a suite of alternatives for abundance-based Pacific halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) limits for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) groundfish fisheries, for preliminary analysis. This preliminary analysis was presented to the NPFMC at its October 2018 meeting, and the NPFMC adopted a number of revisions and clarifications to the alternatives to be examined ([Council motion C6](#)).

The Commission has supported the development of ABM due to its potential effect on the directed Pacific halibut fisheries, and may wish to provide further input to the NPFMC regarding the process, particularly with respect to the ABMWG timeline and the resources dedicated to the task.

## 5.2.2 Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC)

### a) IPHC Regulatory Area 2A Catch Sharing Plans / in-season management / IPHC data

The IPHC Secretariat collaborated with NMFS and State agencies to conduct in-season management of the various fisheries identified in the IPHC Regulatory Area 2A Catch Sharing Plan. Date and possession restrictions have been adjusted in season among the various fisheries to meet identified fishery needs while attaining and remaining within the applicable catch limit. Estimates for 2018 will be presented during the IPHC Interim Meeting Agenda Item 5 on fishery statistics (see paper IPHC-2018-IM094-05).

### b) Commercial derby fisheries

In 2017, the IPHC Secretariat initiated discussion with the PFMC, as well as with NOAA Fisheries and the relevant State agencies, regarding the management of the directed commercial Pacific halibut fishery in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A, with the goal of moving away from its current derby-style management. The IPHC Secretariat noted concerns over safety and discards, as well as limitations on fishers and processor flexibility. Although no changes to the non-tribal directed Pacific halibut fishery were proposed, the PFMC asked the States and the IPHC to continue investigating options that would move the fishery away from a derby-style fishery. The PFMC reviewed the analysis and alternatives in September 2017 ([Agenda Item G.1.a, IPHC Report 1](#)) and November 2017 ([Agenda Item E.1, Attachment 3](#)), with a view toward continuing the discussion during 2018 for possible changes in 2019. No changes were suggested to the IPHC for the 2018 fishery.

The IPHC Secretariat submitted letters to the PFMC for its June 2018 meeting ([Informational Report 2](#)) and September 2018 meeting (Agenda Item J.1), indicating its expectation that a proposal to change the length of the fishing period for the non-treaty directed commercial Pacific halibut fishery in IPHC Regulatory Area 2A will be considered by the IPHC during its 2018-19 meeting cycle, for potential implementation in 2019. The IPHC asked the PFMC to consider this potential change in the course of its regular review of the Pacific halibut fishery and its Catch Sharing Plan during its September and November 2018 meetings. The IPHC Secretariat attended the September meeting and will attend the November meeting. Recommendations from the PFMC would then be considered by the IPHC as it reviews the proposal ([IPHC-2018-IM094-PropA2](#)) at the 94<sup>th</sup> Interim Meeting (IM094) and the 95<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting (AM095) in January 2019.

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## 7. IPHC COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

### 7.1. *IPHC Website*

We have received positive reviews for the new IPHC website (<http://iphc.int/>), launched on 15 December 2017 as the culmination of a year-long project by the IPHC Secretariat.

The IPHC Secretariat will continue to develop different ways to publish data and statistics for our stakeholders, focusing particularly on the addition of timely and useful visual displays such as our interactive maps and our online fishery-independent setline survey (FISS) data query. New developments to be presented at the IM094, including FISS pages and catch tables.

### 7.2. *Annual Report*

The 2017 Annual Report is available for download from the IPHC website at the following link: <http://iphc.int/library/documents/category/annual-reports>. We are now using an accelerated production timeline for the IPHC Annual Report, thereby ensuring users of the report receive the summary information as close to the relevant year as possible. Continued feedback on the content, format and presentation of the Annual Report is welcome.

### 7.3. *Report of Assessment and Research Activities (RARA)*

The IPHC [Report of Assessment and Research Activities \(RARA\)](#) was intended to supply progress reports on current projects and monitoring that are underway at the IPHC. In past years, this document included fishery information, monitoring activities, stock assessment, and research reports about the previous year's activities, which are now provided as detailed papers for the Annual Meeting. This allows us to update our documents in real time as data become available, ensuring that Commissioners and stakeholders have access to the most recent information possible for the decision-making process at the Annual Meeting. We are in the process of integrating this remaining RARA material into the new [IPHC Science and Research](#) pages of the website, where it can be updated in near real time, thus eliminating the need for future compendiums of this nature. The RARA will be continued in an abbreviated format in 2019, with the discontinuation of the RARA subsequent to the 95<sup>th</sup> Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting (AM095).

### 7.4. *News Releases and News Bulletins*

The IPHC Secretariat is developing a news bulletin format to report stories and features of interest to the Pacific halibut community. News releases will continue to be used as necessary for some announcements.

In addition, the IPHC Secretariat is moving to fully electronic information distribution. News releases, news bulletins, and similar information will be posted on the IPHC website and distributed via email. As such, stakeholders are encouraged to request that their email addresses be added to IPHC distribution lists at the following link: <https://iphc.int/form/news-letter>. Hard copies of news releases and similar bulletins will be discontinued during 2019.

## 8. IPHC PUBLICATIONS IN 2018

### 8.1. Published peer-reviewed journal papers

- Drinan DP, **Loher T** & Hauser L (2018) Identification of genomic regions associated with sex in Pacific halibut. *Journal of Heredity* 109(3):326-332.
- Hershberger PK, Gregg JL & **Dykstra CL** (2018) High-prevalence and low-intensity *Ichthyophonus* infections in Pacific halibut. *Journal of Aquatic Animal Health* 30:13-19.
- LeBris A, Fisher JAD, Murphy HM, Galbraith PS, Castonguay M, **Loher T** & Robert D (2018) Migration patterns and putative spawning habitats of Atlantic halibut (*Hippoglossus hippoglossus*) in the Gulf of St. Lawrence revealed by geolocation of pop-up satellite archival tags. *ICES Journal of Marine Science* 1(1):135-147.
- Loher T** & **Soderlund E** (2018) Connectivity between Pacific halibut *Hippoglossus stenolepis* residing in the Salish Sea and the offshore population, demonstrated by pop-up archival tagging. *Journal of Sea Research*. doi: 10.1016/j.seares.2018.09.007.
- Monnahan CC & **Stewart IJ** (2018) The effect of hook spacing on longline catch rates: implications for catch rate standardization. *Fisheries Research*. 198: 150-158.
- Nielsen JK, Rose CS, Lindstrom T, **Loher T**, Drobny P, Seitz AC, Courtney MB & Gauvin J (2018) Characterizing activity and detecting bycatch mortality of Pacific halibut with accelerometer Pop-up Satellite Archival Tags. *Animal Biotelemetry* 6:10. doi: 10.101186/s40317-018-0154-2

### 8.2. In press peer-reviewed journal papers

- Kuriyama PT, Branch TA, **Hicks AC**, Harms JH & Hamel OS (2018) Investigating three sources of bias in hook-and-line surveys: survey design, gear saturation, and multispecies interactions. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*. *In press*.
- Stewart IJ** & **Hicks AC** (2018) Inter-annual stability from ensemble modelling. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*. *In press*.

### 8.3. Submitted peer-review journal papers

- Loher T**, Martin GB, Geernaert TO & Wischniowski S (*In review*) The importance of geographic trending and scale for inferring fish origins from otolith chemistry in spatially-undersampled populations: *Hippoglossus stenolepis* in the eastern North Pacific. *Marine and Freshwater Research*
- Broell F, **Loher T**, Seitz AC, Taggart C & Nielsen JK (*In review*) Solar illumination affects activity and dive characteristics in a large demersal flatfish during the summer foraging period. *Ecosphere*
- Rose CS, Nielsen JK, Gauvin J, Loher T, Sethi S, Seitz AC, Courtney MB & Drobny P (*In review*) Pacific halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*) survivals after release from trawl catches through expedited sorting: deploying advanced tags in quantity (160) reveals patterns in survival outcomes. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*.



**9. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Commission:

- 1) **NOTE** paper IPHC-2018-IM094-04 which provides the Commission with a draft update on additional activities of the IPHC Secretariat in 2018, not detailed in other papers before the Commission.

**APPENDICES**

None