

News Release



P.O. Box 95009, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98145-2009

March 21, 2001

CHARTER ANNOUNCEMENT

IPHC REQUESTS BIDS FOR 2001 SPECIAL EXPERIMENT CHARTERS

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) is seeking commercial longline vessels to conduct setline research experiments on Pacific halibut in the Gulf of Alaska during May-August 2001. These operations will be in addition to the Commission's assessment surveys, which also occur during this period. Vessels will operate from Homer or Seward, Alaska, and will conduct fishing in the nearby waters of Area 3A. Limited retention of rockfish and Pacific cod bycatch may be allowed. Revenue from sales of bycatch, if any, will be shared between the vessel and IPHC. The vessel will be responsible for gear, fuel and other vessel expenses, and the IPHC will pay for ice, bait, and communications.

The 2001 IPHC special research will involve two projects. The first, to be conducted in late May, will catch and deliver approximately 150 live halibut into Seward, Alaska, for a tag-shedding study. Fish must be delivered after each day's fishing, and it is expected that 2 to 3 fishing days will be required. The successful bidder must have a hold that can be flooded with seawater, and have the capability to circulate fresh seawater into the hold while running. The second charter, to be conducted in late August or early September, will be a chalky fish study. The vessel will catch approximately 100 halibut in the Barren Island region, and deliver the fish into Seward or Homer, Alaska. Scheduling flexibility is desirable on this trip, in order to fish during times when chalky halibut are present. Each of the two projects is expected to involve about 3 total fishing days, although design constraints may make the total charter period as long as 6 to 7 days.

The IPHC will consider only those vessels with captains and crews that have halibut fishing experience. Vessels must have suitable accommodations for two Commission employees (including women) in addition to an experienced captain and crew, capable of fishing up to 40 skates of gear per day. Vessels will supply setline gear with 16/0 circle hooks, and all associated equipment normally required for commercial halibut fishing. The IPHC will evaluate proposals based on (1) total bid amount, in the form of either a lump sum payment, or daily-rate bids, (2) the experience and production of captain and crew with halibut fishing, (3) the characteristics and safety features of the vessel, and (4) IPHC operating costs. Preference may be given to vessels with local knowledge of fishing grounds, with previous live delivery experience, or with flexible schedules.

The Commission is not restricted as to nationality of the vessels it charters for operation in any area. Vessels need not be licensed for halibut fishing in Canada or the U. S. to be eligible. The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted and the Commission will contract according to its own best interests.

Interested owners can contact IPHC for further information on charter specifications and to obtain tender forms. Sealed tenders must be received at the IPHC office in Seattle no later than 12:00 noon on April 30, 2001. Interested parties should contact Steve Kaimmer (ext. 210), or Kelly Van Wormer (ext. 202).

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