



News Release

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Charter Announcement: IPHC Requests Vessel Bids for Southeast Alaska Juvenile Halibut Collection

The International Pacific Halibut Commission is seeking a vessel to conduct sampling using small-scale trawls near Sitka, Alaska, during late summer of 2002. The vessel chartered need not be a trawler, as it has been demonstrated that the nets to be used can be fished from a variety of other types of fishing vessels. However, the Captain and crew must have some experience fishing trawl gear. The charter is expected to require ~3 days of fishing. While the specific charter dates are flexible, the work must be conducted between August and early October.

The purpose of the charter is to collect juvenile halibut (age-1; <30cm fork length) for studies of nursery use and juvenile migration. A total of 50-100 halibut will be collected from Shelikof Bay, located on the western side of Kruzof Island, southeast Alaska. Juvenile halibut will be retained, sacrificed, and shipped to Seattle for further analysis. Non-target bycatch will be returned to the water as quickly as possible. Sampling will involve fishing a small otter trawl with a single towing warp in 40-100 ft. of water depth, over relatively smooth bottom. The trawls will be shrimp "try-nets": ~25 ft. headrope and body length, with a tickler chain along the footrope, and wooden otter doors of ~30 lbs. each. Bridle length is 60 ft., with bridles attached to a single towing warp; try nets do not need to be deployed with separate port and starboard towing lines. Operations will be conducted only during daylight hours, with the vessel returning to port (Sitka) at the conclusion of each day's work. Sampling nets will be provided by IPHC.

Vessel owners interested in the charter are asked to submit a bid based a lump sum payment for the completion of sampling at the site, including crew and fuel expenses. Vessels bidding for charter must have adequate deck space for two Commission employees and one additional crewmember, and appropriate winch systems for deployment and retrieval of small trawl gear. A vessel description and brief statement regarding the master's experience in fishing trawl gear is required, along with a vessel photo that shows the layout of the deck and mechanical equipment. Vessels need not be licensed for halibut fishing to be eligible. The Commission is not restricted as to nationality of the vessels it charters as long as customs regulations are followed. The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted and the Commission will contract according to its own best interests. The IPHC will evaluate bids based on (1) the experience of captain and crew with trawl fishing, (2) the characteristics and safety features of the vessel, (3) the dates on which the vessel is available for charter, and (4) IPHC operating costs.

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For a copy of the charter specifications and bid forms, contact the IPHC offices or download from the IPHC web site. For additional information, please contact Tim Loher ((206) 634-1838 ext. 212). Bids must be received at the IPHC office **in Seattle by 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Daylight Time) on Friday, July 5th, 2002.**

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