

News Release



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

March 19, 2004

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 the summer of 2004. 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 about 6 days of fishing. While the specific charter dates are flexible, the charter must be conducted either between May 28 and June 30, or between August 9 and September 24.

The purpose of the charter is to collect juvenile halibut (age-1; <30cm fork length) for studies of nursery use and juvenile migration. Halibut will be collected from Shelikof Bay, on Kruzof Island, southeast Alaska. Juvenile halibut will be retained, sacrificed, and shipped to Seattle for analysis. Non-target bycatch will be returned to the water as quickly as possible. Sampling will involve fishing an otter trawl 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, and wooden otter doors of about 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. Nets will be provided by IPHC. Fishing will be conducted only during daylight hours. Some experimental camera-aided work is anticipated. IPHC staff will contact the winning bidder to discuss the feasibility of such work aboard the vessel.

Vessel owners interested in the charters are asked to submit a bid based upon fixed daily rates, including crew and fuel expenses. Vessels must have appropriate winch systems for deployment and retrieval of small trawl gear, and one crewmember must always be available to assist Commission employees in their work. Vessel description and a 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, but the vessel is responsible for compliance with all customs regulations. 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) experience of captain and crew with trawl fishing, (2) characteristics and safety features of the vessel, (3) dates on which the vessel is available for charter, and (4) IPHC operating costs.

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 (ext. 212). Bids must be received at the IPHC office **in Seattle by 4:00 p.m. (Pacific Daylight Time) on Friday, April 23, 2004.**

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