

## *News Release*



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

July 25, 2005

### **2005 Halibut Landing Report No. 6**

#### **Puget Sound and Strait of Juan de Fuca (east of the Sekiu River) Sport Halibut Fishery to Close July 31 as Scheduled**

The Puget Sound and Strait of Juan de Fuca sport halibut fishery east of Low Point closed on June 20. Sport halibut fishing west of Low Point to the Sekiu River closes on July 31. The combined projected harvest for the season is 64,800 pounds. Using the results of in-season creel surveys to estimate the catch per angler-trip in combination with a post-season telephone survey of marine anglers to estimate effort, a catch estimate for Puget Sound will be calculated this fall.

#### **North Washington Coast Sport Halibut Fishery Closed for Season**

Catch estimates through June 18 for the north Washington coast sport halibut fishery (Sekiu River to the Queets River) indicate that the harvest is 108,149 pounds, or 7,288 pounds short of the 115,437 pound catch limit. Insufficient quota remains for a full day of fishing, so the north Washington coast sport halibut fishery is closed for the remainder of 2005.

#### **South Washington Coast Sport Halibut Season Changes Open Days and Restricts Areas**

Catch estimates through May 30 for the south Washington coast sport halibut fishery (Queets River to Leadbetter Point) indicate that the catch limit was exceeded by 4,403 pounds and is therefore closed. However, under flexible management provisions in the Catch Sharing Plan, the nearshore sport halibut fishery was re-opened for Fridays and Saturdays beginning July 15-16. Approximately 2,400 pounds are available to be landed and allows bottomfish sport anglers the opportunity to retain an incidentally caught halibut. The nearshore fishery is bound by the area south of the Queets River to 47° 00' N. latitude and east of 124° 40' W. longitude. The area will be open until the catch limit is reached or September 30, 2005, whichever comes first. The daily bag and possession limit is one fish, with no size limit.

#### **Columbia River Area Closed June 12 for Remainder of 2005**

The preliminary catch estimate for the Columbia River sport halibut fishery (Leadbetter Point to Cape Falcon) through June 12 is 14,521 pounds exceeding the catch limit by 774 pounds. Therefore, the Columbia River sport halibut fishery will remain closed for the remainder of 2005.

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All-Depth Sport Halibut Fishing from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain Open July 28-30

The spring all-depth season will continue on through Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 28, 29 and 30. There are nearly 17,000 pounds remaining from the spring fishery. The summer all-depth fishery will begin on Friday, August 5, with a catch limit of 57,791 pounds. Subsequent openings will be announced pending evaluation of the catch. Unlike previous years, there is no minimum size limit. The daily bag limit is one fish and the possession limit is one fish at sea and two fish on land. Halibut sport fishing continues to be open inside the 40-fathom curve from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain. This fishery is open seven days a week and the same length, bag and possession limits as in the all-depth fishery apply. Details on catch and regulations for all Oregon sub-areas can be found at <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/mrp/>

Southern Oregon – California Open through October 31, 2005

The sport halibut fishery south of Humbug Mountain opened on May 1 and will remain open through October 31, 2005. This fishery is open seven days a week with a one halibut bag and possession limit. There is no minimum size limit. The projected catch at season's end is 7,984 pounds.

For further information on Area 2A halibut fishing call the NMFS hotline (1-800-662-9825).

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