

News Release



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

February 12, 2008

WANTED: LONGLINERS INTERESTED IN CHARTER WORK WITH THE IPHC!

Charter Announcement:

IPHC Requests Bids for 2008 Stock Assessment and Experimental Fishing Charters

The International Pacific Halibut Commission is seeking commercial longline vessels to conduct survey and experimental fishing in 2008.

2008 Setline Stock Assessment Survey:

The purpose of the setline survey is to collect standardized data used for halibut stock assessment. This information is used to study aspects of the halibut resource such as growth, distribution, area-wide biomass, age composition, sexual maturity, and relative abundance of other species. The 2008 setline survey will cover 30 regions, from the southern Oregon border to the northern Bering Sea including the Aleutian Islands (including the Eastern Bering Sea shelf). Survey vessels will fish five skates of standardized gear at each station. The survey has been designed so that the average vessel can fish 3 stations per day (a maximum of 4 per day will be permitted). Most regions require 11 - 19 fishing days plus additional days for running, loading and offloading gear and fish, foul weather days etc. Depending on the region, total charter duration can be expected to be 18 - 38 days. Vessels are encouraged to bid for multiple areas. Survey fishing must be completed between May 26th and August 31st 2008.

The Commission requests bids for multi-year contracts (mutually renewable on an annual basis for 3 years) for charter regions falling in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2B, 2C, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B and 4D. The Commission requests bids for single year contracts in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2A, and for charters on the Eastern Bering Sea shelf.

For the setline survey charters, information such as age, sex, maturity, length, location, and CPUE will be collected from all halibut captured. Legal-sized halibut from all skates and some bycatch will be retained and sold by the IPHC to offset some charter expenses.

2008 Area 2B Swivel and Tagging Experiment:

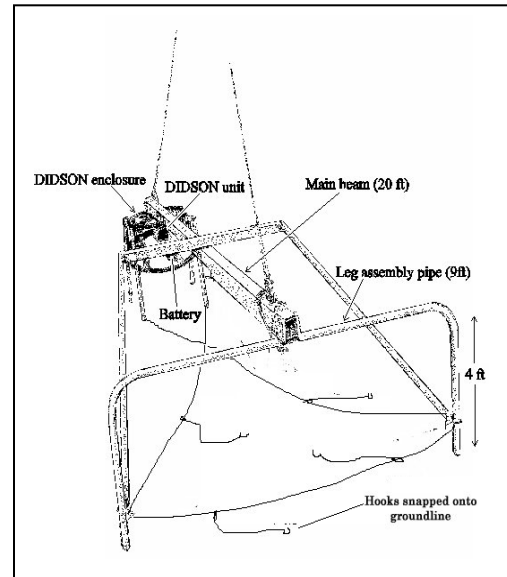
This charter will have two goals. The first goal is to conduct a comparison of the relative fishing power of gear with swivels compared with the standard IPHC survey gear. We would expect to fish at a rate of either 2 or 3 sets of eight skates per day. We expect to fish approximately equal amounts of gear in each of three fishing areas, with a minimum of 96 skates per region. The expected fishing areas are subsets of IPHC survey regions Charlotte, St. James, and Vancouver. The second goal is to scan with an ultrasound and tag approximately 60 halibut with electronic archival tags in each of the three experimental regions. Data from future tag recoveries will be used to better establish the timing of seasonal migration and active spawning in Area 2B. This

charter involves fishing both a 'conventional' nylon gangion gear as well as Perlon gear with swivels, which is typically fished with snap-on gangions. The vessel may be either tub or snap rigged, but will have to detail how they intend to fish both gear types on a single set.

Rockfish will be sold from this charter, but none of the proceeds from rockfish sales will go to the vessel. Very little halibut will be sold, probably less than 40-60 fish overall. The fishing will take place in late summer or early fall (mid August into September).

2008 Area 3A Hook Observation Experiment:

The 2008 Hook Observation Experiment will take place in IPHC Area 3A (central Gulf of Alaska) in late summer or early fall. The purpose of this experiment is to investigate the hooking behavior of Pacific halibut using Dual-frequency Identification Sonar (DIDSON) technology. The goal of the experiment is to estimate hook selectivity by observing halibut hook attacks and subsequent captures. This charter will deploy and retrieve a 500 lb, 7-meter frame containing a DIDSON scanning sonar unit in Area 3A, viewing baited fish hooks secured to one end. This will be set like a fish trap, with a buoyed-off 0.41 inch diameter electromechanical cable supplied by the Commission. The vessel will be expected to supply a large line hauler capable of 1700 pounds line pull, or possibly a large drum for handling the electromechanical cable. The



equipment will be deployed at various locations, likely in depths of 80 to 100 fathoms near the shelf edge in the vicinity of Kodiak, Seward, or Homer, between the hours of 6 a.m. and 8 p.m., making as many as 10 deployments per day. The experiment will be comprised of two trips divided by a break; each trip will include six (6) gear fishing days. Weather or other logistics may require an earlier or later break, but overall we will expect a total of twelve (12) fishing days for the charter. The charter will begin and end at a port mutually agreeable to the successful bidder and the IPHC. Very little halibut will be sold, probably less than 40-60 fish overall.

Vessel owners interested in surveys or the experimental charters are invited to submit bids based upon standard IPHC contract structure. Bids will be accepted based upon a lump sum payment for the completion of a region. Vessels may bid up to three regions. **Charter Specifications and Vessel Tender Forms for the above projects may be requested from the Commission or downloaded from the IPHC web site (www.iphc.washington.edu).**

Vessels need not be licensed for halibut fishing in Canada or the U.S. to be eligible. The Commission is not restricted as to nationality of the vessels it charters for operation in any area as long as customs regulations are followed. The IPHC will consider only those vessels with captains and crews that have halibut fishing experience. Stock assessment surveys in Areas 2B, 2C, and part of Area 3A along with the gear experiment all require three Commission employees to conduct the work and all other charter areas must have adequate deck space and suitable accommodations for two Commission employees (including women). For both the setline survey and for the swivel experiment, the vessels must supply **conventional fixed-hook setline gear** built to Commission Standards (see Charter Specifications) as well

as all associated equipment normally required for commercial halibut fishing. For the swivel experiment the vessel must also supply **swivel gear as described in the experiment specifications**. For the DIDSON experiment the vessel must supply **all gear necessary for deploying and retrieving the camera gear, including an appropriate line hauler or drum winch, anchors, buoy floats and flags**.

The IPHC will evaluate bids based on (1) the experience of captain and crew with halibut fishing, (2) the characteristics and safety features of the vessel, (3) vessel's availability, and (4) IPHC operating costs. The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted and the Commission will contract according to its own best interests.

For further information please contact Claude Dykstra (ext. 213), Tracee Geernaert (ext. 208), or Heather Gilroy (ext. 206) for information concerning surveys, or Steve Kaimmer (ext. 210) for information concerning the Swivel-Tagging and DIDSON experiments. Bids must be received at the IPHC office **in Seattle by 12:00 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) on Wednesday, March 12th, 2008**.

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