

News Release



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International Pacific Halibut Commission Receives Major Grant to Monitor Ocean Conditions from Oregon to the Bering Sea

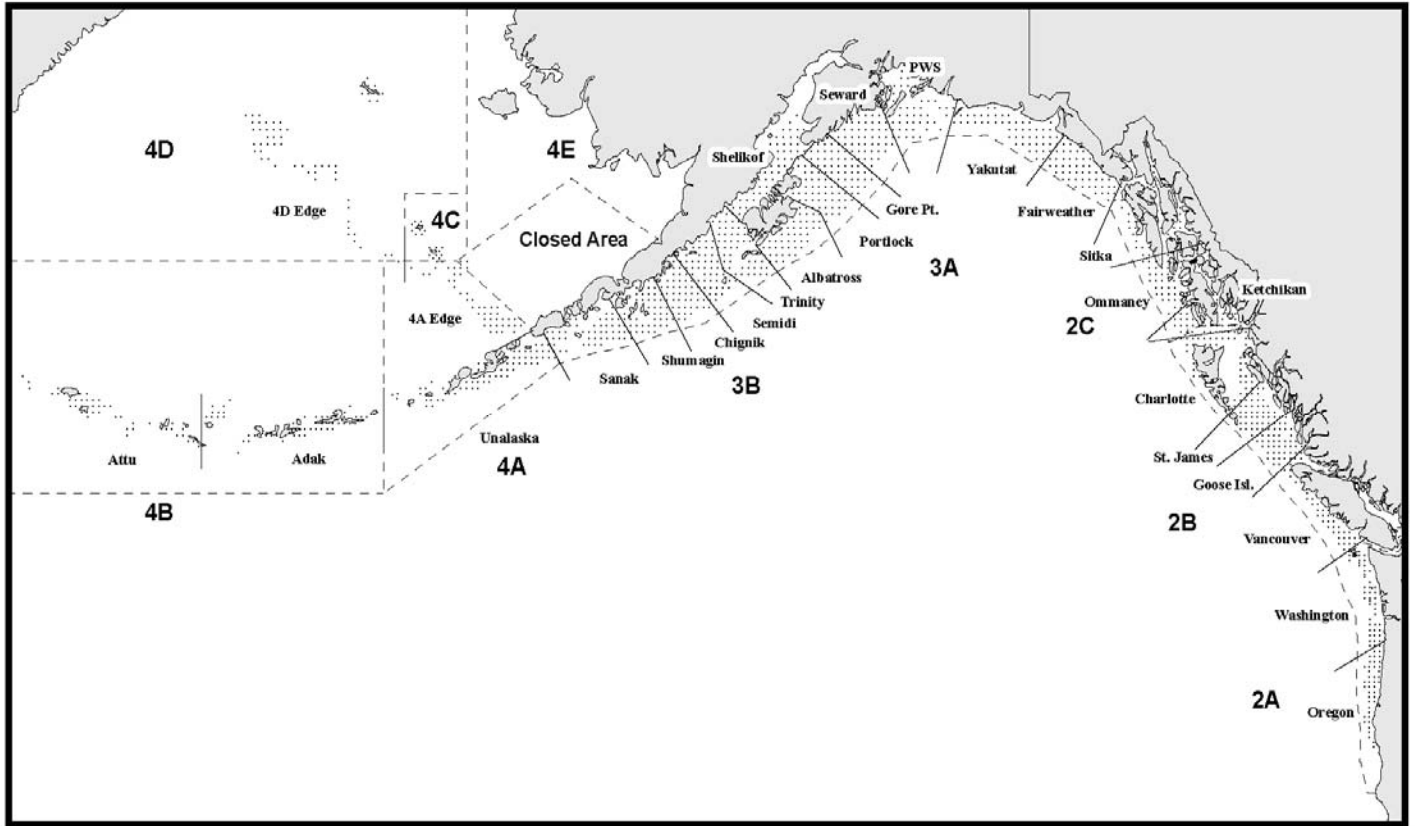
The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) is pleased to announce receipt of a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to monitor ocean conditions. The IPHC conducts an annual survey of the Pacific halibut stock from Oregon through the northern Bering Sea and western Aleutian Islands. This survey occupies more than 1200 fishing stations every year, using chartered commercial fishing vessels. The \$0.5 million grant will allow the Commission to equip all of the survey vessels with water-column profilers to be deployed at each of these stations. The profilers will collect data on salinity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, ocean acidity (pH), and fluorescence (chlorophyll), throughout the water column, which will provide a unique and valuable annual snapshot of oceanic conditions above the continental shelf over most of the northeast Pacific Ocean. These data will benefit not only IPHC research but also provide a major comprehensive data set on ocean conditions for use by all researchers in the north Pacific Ocean, through the National Ocean Data Center. Implementation of the full data collection process will begin with the 2009 IPHC survey program.

The grant is the result of combined efforts by IPHC researchers Dr. Steven Hare and Lauri Sadorus, in cooperation with Dr. Phyllis Stabeno of the NOAA Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory. IPHC Executive Director Dr. Bruce Leaman commented, "This is a tremendous opportunity for partnership between the IPHC and NOAA in the establishment of a long-term data set that will benefit all researchers and allow us to improve our understanding of significant events and changes in the ocean environment. The longer-term effects of ocean warming and acidification as well as the increasing frequency of hypoxic zones in the ocean are strong determinants in the population dynamics of halibut and other marine species. Data collected under this grant will be paired with observations of species abundance at each IPHC survey station, providing a rich data set to improve our understanding of these influences. We are very excited to receive the support of NOAA in this program."

The International Pacific Halibut Commission is a joint United States – Canada commission established in 1923 for the management of sustainable yield from Pacific halibut stocks in the northeast Pacific Ocean.

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International Pacific Halibut Commission Regulatory Areas and survey stations (dots) in the northeast Pacific Ocean.