

## *News Release*



2320 W. COMMODORE WAY, SUITE 300, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, 98199-1287

February 27, 2012

### **Charter Announcement: IPHC Requests Vessel Bids for Hook Modification Charter**

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) is seeking a vessel to collect underwater observations of fish hooking behavior on modified hooks using a light-weight drop camera during the late spring or early summer of 2012 in southeastern Alaska (Area 2C). The vessel chartered need not be a longliner, although it will need to have a pot or longline hauler to deploy and retrieve a camera frame. Captain and crew must have some experience fishing for halibut and rockfish in the chartering area. The charter is expected to last for 10-14 days. While the specific charter dates are flexible, we are expecting to conduct this trip during late May or early June.

The purpose of the charter is to deploy a lightweight (approx. 100 pounds) drop camera and frame to observe baited circle hooks attached to the camera frame and to record the interactions of halibut and two rockfish species (Yelloweye and Quillback) with those hooks. The hooks will be modified in an attempt to reduce the rockfish hooking success.

Fish which are successfully hooked will be retrieved, measured, and released. Rockfish will be released immediately after measurement at either 50 or 100 feet using an adjustable hydrostatic release mechanism. Because all fish will be released, no fish will be sold, and no fish monies will be available from this charter.

The vessel must be a minimum of 48 feet LOA with a crew size of at least two including the captain. Prior to departure from the loading port, the vessel crew must construct a welded frame using rebar for the camera (rough design will be provided) as part of the deliverables for this research. The frame will hold a camera focused on a single baited hook. This gear will be deployed using the vessel's hauler to a depth of up to 200 feet. A separate cable will be deployed to carry a video signal from the camera to the vessel deck. Hook attacks will be monitored and recorded using equipment supplied by the IPHC.

Hook modifications will be performed on site, and will be iterative, depending on the success of previous modifications. IPHC staff will provide the necessary equipment for all hook modifications. This current project is to determine whether such hook modifications can effectively reduce rockfish catches while having little effect on halibut catch.

We anticipate having to travel throughout southeast Alaska in order to encounter concentrations of the target species which will allow capturing multiple specimens in a day, and it may be necessary to travel during the night from one area to another. The current plan is to fish in southern areas for Quillbacks and to fish in more outside areas for Yelloweye and halibut. The entire charter will require up to ten gear deployment days.

...cont'd

Vessel owners are asked to submit a bid based upon a lump sum for the charter, including frame construction, crew and fuel expenses. Vessels must have appropriate equipment for deployment and retrieval of the camera frame, and one crewmember must always be available to assist Commission employees in their work. We are expecting only one IPHC employee, but room should be available for two if necessary. The vessel will be expected to have welding equipment on board suitable to repair, modify, or build new camera frames during the course of the charter. Vessel description and brief statement regarding the master's experience fishing for halibut and rockfish is required, along with a photo or drawing showing the layout of the deck and mechanical equipment. The IPHC may require an inspection of the vessel by IPHC staff or an appointed representative prior to awarding the charter. 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 fishing for halibut and rockfish in the study area, (2) characteristics and safety features of the vessel, (3) dates on which the vessel is available for charter, and (4) IPHC operating costs.

For further information, please contact Steve Kaimmer ((206) 634-1838 ext. 7668) or Claude Dykstra (ext. 7662). Bids must be received at the IPHC office **in Seattle by 12 noon (Pacific Daylight Time) on Friday, March 16, 2012.**

**-END-**

Bruce M. Leaman, Executive Director  
Phone: (206) 634-1838  
Fax: (206) 632-2983  
Web: [www.iphc.int](http://www.iphc.int)