

News Release



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

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IPHC Requests Bids for 2016 Standardized Stock Assessment Charters

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) is seeking longline vessels to conduct survey fishing in 2016. 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, biomass, age composition, sexual maturity, and relative abundance of other species. Legal-sized halibut from all skates and some bycatch will be retained, sampled for biological data, and sold by the IPHC to reduce charter expenses. The 2016 setline survey will cover 29 regions, from Oregon to the northern Bering Sea including the Aleutian Islands. The 2016 fishing effort includes an expansion into the northern 4D Edge. All regions are open for single year bids. Vessels will fish 6 skates of gear at each station following standard survey protocol. A maximum of 4 stations will be permitted per day. Most regions require 12 - 22 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 20 - 35 days. Vessels are encouraged to bid for multiple areas, and may be awarded up to three regions. Survey fishing must be completed between May 29th and August 31st, 2016.

Vessels need not be licensed for halibut fishing in Canada or the U.S. to be eligible. The IPHC 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. Most areas require vessels that have adequate deck space and suitable accommodations for two to three Commission employees (who may be women). 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. Interested vessel owners are invited to submit bids based upon standard IPHC contract structure.

The IPHC may require an inspection of the vessel by IPHC staff prior to awarding the charter. Bids will be evaluated 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 Anna Henry (ext. 7668), Tracee Geernaert (ext. 7665), or Heather Gilroy (ext. 7666) at (206) 634-1838.

Charter Specifications and Vessel Tender Forms for this project may be requested from the Commission or downloaded from the IPHC web site (www.iphc.int). **Bids must be received at the IPHC office in Seattle by 12:00 p.m. (Pacific Daylight Time) on Monday, March 14th, 2016.**

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