

**ADVISORY PANEL**  
**Motions and Rationale**  
**January 28- 31, 2019 - Anchorage, AK**

**C1 Charter Halibut in 3A**

**AP Motion**

The AP recommends the Council make the following recommendations for Area 3A charter halibut allocations, as provided by the Charter Halibut Management Committee:

- For all allocations, unless otherwise specified: a daily bag limit of 2 halibut; an annual limit of 4 halibut per charter angler; Wednesdays closed to halibut retention all year; 1 trip per halibut charter vessel per day; and 1 trip per charter halibut permit per day.
- If the allocation is less than 2.014 M/lbs but greater than or equal to 1.695 M/lb: a daily bag limit of 2 halibut with one fish of any size and one fish less than or equal to 26 inches; adjust the number of Tuesdays closed to halibut retention such that the projected removals achieve the allocation (Table 1, page 15 of the Supplemental Analysis; the Tuesdays closed to halibut retention are specified in Table 22, pg. 38 of the December 3 analysis).
- If the allocation is less than 1.695 M/lb but greater than or equal to 1.588 M/lb. (proposed to achieve allocation for status quo TCEY = 1.66 M/lb.): a daily bag limit of 2 halibut with one fish of any size and one fish less than or equal to 26 inches; all Tuesdays closed to halibut retention; adjust the number of Thursdays closed to halibut retention to a maximum of four Thursday closures such that the projected removals achieve the allocation (Table 5, page 19 of the January 23 Supplemental Analysis; Thursdays closed to halibut retention are specified in Table 4; page 18 of the Supplemental Analysis).
- If the allocation is less than 1.588 M/lb (proposed to achieve allocation between 1.588 M/lb. and reference TCEY = 1.24 M/lb.): all Tuesdays are closed to halibut retention; a daily bag limit of 1 halibut, with a reverse (protected) slot limit; the upper limit of the reverse slot limit is fixed at 80 inches and the lower end of the reverse slot limit is adjusted such that the projected removals achieve the allocation, beginning at 58 inches (Appendix Table A5-o, page 75, last column, of the Supplemental Analysis).

The AP also recommends to the Council the clarifying notes to Area 2C management measures that accompany IPHC Proposal B-1 for the 2020 Annual IPHC Meeting (IPHC-2020-AM096-PropB1). The notes read as follows.

1. If the Area 2C catch limit is from 0.772 to 1.001 million pounds, it is the intention of the NPFMC to maintain an upper size limit of halibut at O80 and a lower size limit of halibut

at or above U40. If possible, under the catch limit, the U40 size limit will be adjusted upward until the catch limit is achieved (Table 6 of the analysis).

2. If the catch limit in Area 2C is from 0.658 to 0.771 million pounds, the NPFMC recommends maintaining the U40/O80 size limit, then progressively reducing the number of days when halibut may be retained by establishing closures on Wednesdays, beginning on 9 September and working consecutively toward the beginning of the season with a maximum of all Wednesdays closed (Table 10-A1 of the analysis).
3. If the catch limit in Area 2C is from 0.646 to 0.656 million pounds, the NPFMC recommends a U40/O80 size limit, an annual limit of 4 halibut for all charter anglers, and a closure of between fourteen and all Wednesdays, beginning on 9 September and working consecutively toward the beginning of the season (Table 14-A1 of the analysis).
4. If the catch limit in Area 2C is from 0.636 to 0.645 million pounds, the NPFMC recommends a U41/O80 size limit, an annual limit of 3 halibut for all charter anglers, and a closure of between fourteen and all Wednesdays, beginning on 9 September and working consecutively toward the beginning of the season (Table 16-A1 of the analysis).  
If the catch limit in Area 2C is from 0.615 to 0.636 million pounds, the NPFMC recommends a U40/O80 size limit, an annual limit of 3 halibut for all charter anglers, and a closure of between thirteen and all Wednesdays, beginning on 9 September and working consecutively toward the beginning of the season (Table 16-A1 of the analysis).
5. If the catch limit in Area 2C is less than 0.615 million pounds, the NPFMC recommends a closure of all Wednesdays for the entire season, an annual limit of 3 halibut for all charter anglers, and an adjustment of the lower size limit until the catch limit is achieved. The expected harvest under these measures with a lower size limit of U39 is 0.599 million pounds (Table 16-A1 of the analysis).

*Motion passed 20-0*

*Rationale:*

- *The Area 3A allocation recommendations are intended to meet mandated IPHC harvest levels and are the result of unprecedented outreach and deliberation amongst many charter operators and Charter Committee members from coastal communities all over Alaska.*
- *In considering Charter Halibut Measures, it is important to assess the challenges being faced by the sector, which are encapsulated in the following statements by Area 3A and 2C charter halibut representatives:*

*For 3A: "In the eyes of the Charter Halibut Committee and a majority of the charter industry we view the one halibut reverse slot limit as the "nuclear option" that would have disastrous consequences to the 3A charter industry and coastal communities in Southcentral Alaska. Therefore, though we have made recommendations below this level to fulfill our obligation as a committee, we cannot willingly accept a harvest*

*below 1.588 m/lb. We have heard from many local businesses that closing the halibut fishery beyond 2 days per week or instituting an entirely new management scenario (e.g., reverse slot limit) will force closures of some charter businesses as well as starving many support related businesses such as launch services, restaurants, processors, boat repair facilities, and others.”*

*For Area 2C: “Area 2C representatives of the committee note that, especially under low abundance, CSP sport allocations do not adequately fund the 2C charter industry. Halibut are essential to the fishing opportunity Southeast businesses offer to attract and keep customers. As a direct result of restrictive guided halibut limits, 2C operators are now losing repeat business and struggling to interest new business. Effects are magnified in front season bookings, where halibut are one of few target fish available. Southeast guided anglers are now reduced to one halibut per day under 38” and face season-long Wednesday closures combined with annual limits to maintain a similar size fish for 2020. The 2C reverse slot has led to an average charter halibut of 31” (9.6 net pounds)- an inch below the legal-sized retainable fish in the commercial fleet. It has also triggered a spike in releases, resulting in deductions in allocation up to 8% or 60,000 pounds (3A release mortality runs 1%). Council review of the CSP is scheduled for 2021. We ask Council members to reexamine allocative relationships between sectors, especially with respect to viability thresholds of the charter fleet at low abundance. The RQE offers no immediate allocation relief, and at best, slow recovery over an extended period when finally implemented.”*