

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke
Executive Director



DATE: November 30, 1988

SUBJECT: Halibut Management

ACTION REQUIRED

- (a) Approve allocative proposals for management of halibut in Regulatory Areas 4B (Aleutian Islands) and 4C (Pribilof Islands).
- (b) Review necessity of annual halibut amendment cycle.
- (c) Establish objectives for allocation.

BACKGROUND

(a) Allocative Proposals for Halibut Management

At the September meeting the Council forwarded two management proposals to the Halibut Management Team for analysis. The first proposal requested a series of short openings in Area 4B, within a catch limit of 500,000 pounds, before the usual later season openings established by the International Pacific Halibut Commission. This proposal was submitted by the Atka Fishermen's Association. The second proposal, submitted by two associations in the Pribilof Islands, requested that the existing trip limit of 10,000 pounds applicable during the first half of the season be extended to apply until 80% of the area catch limit is taken.

Both of these proposed management actions have allocative effects and are correctly addressed by the North Pacific Council. The early season openings in Area 4B, however, could also be implemented by the IPHC for conservation (primarily non-allocative) reasons if they chose to do so.

The Council is scheduled to take final action on these proposals at this meeting. As shown in C-3(a), the proposals, if approved, will be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for action about December 20.

A final environmental assessment/regulatory impact review was sent to you earlier and discusses the anticipated effects of these management actions. Item C-3(b) has comments received on the proposals.

(b) Annual Halibut Cycle

Regarding the halibut amendment cycle, the Halibut Team reviewed the need for annual consideration of allocative proposals and does not believe it is necessary. Given the compressed nature of the current amendment cycle and the importance of properly analyzing allocative measures, the Council may want to revise the halibut amendment cycle to accept allocative proposals only every other year thus allowing more time for analysis.

(c) Allocation Objectives

The Halibut Team has expressed concern regarding the Council's intent in considering allocative proposals. Currently there are general goals relating to allocation of the halibut resource off Alaska (Item C-3(c)), but the team thinks that more explicit objectives would help them evaluate the efficacy or desirability of various regulatory proposals. The Team requests that proposals be evaluated with regard to Council policy prior to analysis, perhaps at the level of the Halibut Regulatory Advisory Group (RAAG), in order to eliminate those that are inconsistent or may not warrant further attention and to provide a specific focus for analysis of those that the Council wishes to consider.

NPFMC'S HALIBUT REGULATION SCHEDULE

- Step 1 August 15 Publically announce cycle for halibut regulations and release a call for regulatory proposals (except for proposals specifically dealing with harvest quotas).
- Step 2 September 15 Deadline for receiving regulatory proposals. Initial review by management team (MT).
- Step 3 September 17 Halibut RAAG (regulatory amendment advisory group, similar to PAAG for groundfish plan amendment review) reviews proposals and team recommendations:
- Step 4 September 23 At the September Council meeting the Council reviews recommendations of the Halibut RAAG and team, and drops or approves regulatory proposals, and possibly adds proposals of their own.
- Step 5 October 15 MT submits a Notice of Availability (NOA). NOA is published in the Federal Register for 30-45 days of public comment.
- Step 6 December 8-9 At the December Council meeting the Council reviews public comments, further MT analyses, comments from IPHC, and takes final action on regulatory proposals. IPHC is notified of Council action and asked to consider any changes in their regulations that might be needed to implement Council measures.
- Step 7 December 20 Send final package to Secretary of Commerce for action. SOC reviews, approves/disapproves/amends, and publishes a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) in 30 days.
- Step 8 January 23 NPRM 30-day comment period begins. IPHC meets late January (1/24-27/89), can comment to SOC on Council actions. Bio/conservation regs they develop will be implemented at approximately the same time as Council regs -- mid-April.
- Step 9 February 24 SOC prepares a Final Rule Making package (FRM).
- Step 10 March 10 FRM is published in the Federal Register.
- Step 11 April 10 Regulations become effective; published in IPHC regulatory package.

INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HALIBUT COMMISSION

ANDER
LE, B.C.
N. BROCK
WA, ONT.
ARD ELIASON
SITKA, AK
BERT W. MC VEY
JUNEAU, AK
GEORGE A. WADE
SEATTLE, WA
JARY T. WILLIAMSON
SURREY, B.C.

ESTABLISHED BY A CONVENTION BETWEEN CANADA
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AGENDA C-3(b)
DECEMBER 1988

FAX:
(206) 632-2983

November 29, 1988

John G. Peterson, Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

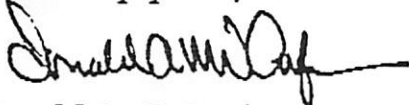
Dear John:

The IPHC held an interim meeting November 22, 1988; one of the topics discussed was the season structure for Area 4B. The Commission has asked me to relay to you its intent for the 1989 season regarding this area.

In 1988 the 2.0 million pound quota was not attained. The catch was 1.6 million pounds. In order to insure the catch limit is attained in 1989 and to spread fishing effort over a longer period of time, the Commission has asked the staff to develop a 1989 season structure to solve these problems. The staff has been instructed to include openings earlier in the season to accomplish this. While these openings will allow anyone to fish during this time, it will allow the local fishermen in Area 4B the opportunity to increase their fishing time.

We understand the Council is considering this option as well in order to allocate more halibut to local fishermen. We believe the season we are preparing will accomplish this, hence, to avoid possible conflict in regulations we suggest you defer the 1989 4B halibut season to IPHC.

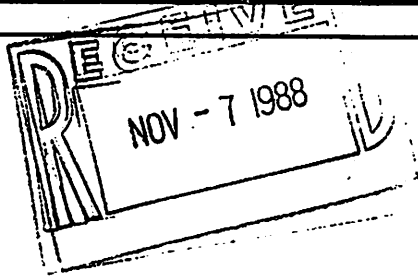
Sincerely yours,



Donald A. McCaughy
Director

DAM:ps

Atka Village Council



ATKA RURAL BRANCH ATKA, ALASKA 99502
(907) 839-2233

November 1, 1988

John Peterson, Chairman
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

RE: Atka Fishermen's Association Proposal

Dear Mr. Peterson:

The Atka IRA Council supports the proposal which was presented to NPFMC by the Atka Fishermen's Association.

The Atka IRA Council has been working with the Atka Fishermen's Association to develop a local economy based upon bottom fisheries. Acceptance of AFA's proposal is a crucial component of Atka's overall economic development plans.

We urge the NPFMC to act favorably on AFA's proposal.

Sincerely,

ATKA IRA COUNCIL

Greg GoTodoff
Greg GoTodoff
President

JD/

cc: Atka Fishermen's Association

CITY OF ATKA

NOV - 7 1988

November 3, 1988

John Peterson, Chairman
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
P.O. Box 103136
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

RE: Atka Fishermen's Association
Proposed 1989 Halibut Openings for Area 4B

Dear Mr. Peterson:

The City of Atka supports the proposal of the Atka Fishermen's Association which requests additional halibut openings during 1989 in Area 4B.

The City of Atka is newly incorporated. It is our intention to work with other local organizations on local economic development in the community. The existence of additional fishing days would assist the community in developing a local economic base.

We urge the NPFMC to approve the Atka Fishermen's Association proposal.

Sincerely,

CITY OF ATKA

Moses L. Dirks

Moses L. Dirks
Mayor

JD/

cc: Atka Fishermen's Association

CITY OF ATKA

RESOLUTION 88-105

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE ATKA FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL.

WHEREAS, the Atka Fishermen's Association has been working to get halibut openings in Area 4B which would allow local fishermen to compete with fishermen from outside of Atka for a fair share of the halibut quota set for the area; and

WHEREAS, the Atka Fishermen's Association has submitted a proposal to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council requesting that additional halibut fishing days spread out over a period of time be allocated to Area 4B

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The City of Atka supports the proposal submitted to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council by the Atka Fishermen's Association.

DATED this 3rd day of November, 1988 at Atka, Alaska.

Moses L. Dicks
Mayor

Michael E. Suetz
Council member

Dennis A. Goldoff
Council member

Larry Pentz
Council member

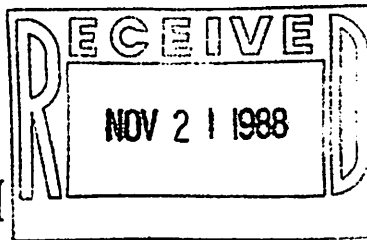
Juvenal Prokhoroff
Council member

Michael Svirgoff
Council member

ATTEST:

Julie Dicks
City Administrator

ATXAM CORPORATION



ATKA RURAL BRANCH, ATKA, ALASKA 99502 (907) 839-2237

November 2, 1988

John Peterson, Chairman
 North Pacific Fishery Management Council
 P.O. Box 103136
 Anchorage, Alaska 99510

ACTION	ROUTE TO	INITIAL
	Exec. Dir.	
	Deputy Dir.	
	Admin. Off.	
cc: DL	Exec. Sec.	[Signature]
	Staff Asst. 1	
	Staff Asst. 2	
	Staff Asst. 3	
	Economist	
	Sec./Dir.	
	Sec./Typist	

Dear Mr. Peterson:

The ATXAM CORPORATION, the ANCSA Village Corporation.

Supports the ATKA FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION proposed halibut opening for Area 4B in which they requested a series of short opening within a catch limit of 500,000 pounds, prior to a regularly scheduled opening of the area by the International Pacific Halibut Commission

ATXAM CORPORATION urges the NPFMC to approve the Atka Fishermen's Association proposal.

Sincerely,

ATXAM CORPORATION

Lawrence Prokopeuff
 Lawrence Prokopeuff
 President

cc: Atka Fishermen's Association

**FISHING VESSEL OWNERS' ASSOCIATION
INCORPORATED**

ROOM 232, C-3 BUILDING • FISHERMEN'S TERMINAL
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98119

SINCE 1914

November 30, 1988

Chairman John Peterson
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
P. O. Box 103136
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter is to express the Fishing Vessel Owners' Association's comments regarding the Regulatory Impact Revisions on Halibut Management Proposals. The F.V.O.A. will not support either of the two proposals. The reasons are indicated below.

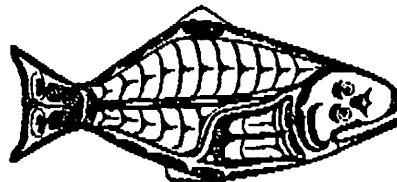
I. Western Aleutians including Atka Island (500,000 lb. allocation)

(a) The 4B area is approximately 470 miles in length running from Amutka Pass to Attu Island. The Atka fleet consists of approximately 20 to 25 skiffs that fish within 50 miles of Atka. There is no logical reason to provide such a large area for operations when there is no likelihood the locals will fish anywhere else but within close range of Atka. Even with the additional fishing time provided in 4B, Atka residents chose not to participate leaving some quota still left in 1988.

(b) At the September Council meeting, Atka representatives suggested that they had secured Japanese financing of a larger vessel (seiner size) to fish out of Atka. If the real request for 500,000 lbs. is to subsidize this one vessel's operation, this is grossly unfair to the local skiff fishermen and a gross violation of the national standards that suggest no entity should be allowed to acquire excessive fishing rights or privileges.

(c) This allocation clearly provides the local fishermen an allocation of federal resources that is unfair and unjust. The proposed allocation would provide the local fishermen a 500% increase over their 1988 landings.

(d) There is no evidence of the need request by Atka. The locals had almost three (3) times the fishing time as they had in 1987 or 1986 and landed 36,000 pounds.



Chairman John Peterson
Page 2
November 30, 1988

(e) This proposal would allow a special treatment to locals that would allow them a special allocation plus the right to fish in the regular quotas openings for the presumably remaining 1,500,000 lbs of the 4B quota.

(f) The Council staff has drafted the report trying to minimize the importance of area 4B to the non-resident. The report shows the non-resident harvest being about 2.1% of all areas; however, not all fishermen fish in 4B. Of the 4-5,000 permitted halibut fishermen, 20 to 50 non-local vessels fish in 4B. This area is extremely important to those vessels and the crews employed on them. The percentage of income dependency is significant to them.

(g) The quota in 4B is not large and can be exceeded easily. The loss of 500,000 lbs from area 4B will put additional management burdens on the Halibut Commission to regulate the non-local fleet.

II. 4C Extend Application of 10,000 lb. Trip Limit

(a) This regulation is nothing more than a land grab. The 4C residents currently have protectionist regulations that provide them with 70% of the 4C quota. Additional trip limit requirements are clearly unnecessary.

(b) The RIR suggests that non-local fishermen do not have an import dependency on 4C. The report suggests that the non-resident fishermen's harvest is only .3% of all areas. There are about 10 to 15 non-local vessels that participate in the 4C fishery and the fishery is very important to them. It represents 20 to 30 percent of their total income base, a significant amount.

In conclusion, the Fishing Vessel Owners' Association is opposed to further protectionist regulations without some overall comprehensive limited entry plan for halibut. The RIR speaks very little of the economic impact on the non-locals who have historically fished in 4B and 4C for several generations.

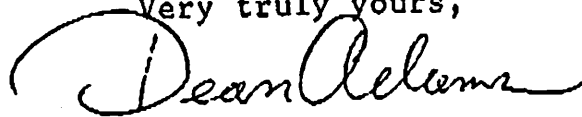
The proposal made by the Atkas and Pribilovians are basically limited entry requests by the local fishermen who do not want to compete with the non-locals. Until there is a uniform limited entry proposal for halibut, their proposal unfairly allocates a national resource.

Perhaps the Council should require any resident vessels in area 4 to clear through Juneau or Sitka, if they want to fish in area 3, the Gulf of Alaska.

Chairman John Peterson
Page 3
November 30, 1988

Both proposals are clearly in violation of the national standards. Lastly, the report by the Council was dated November 16. The public really did not get it until the week of the 20th leaving very little time for comment.

Very truly yours,



Dean Adams
President

RDA:cb

GOALS

In developing regulations for the halibut fishery the Council will be guided by the following halibut management goals:

1. Promote conservation while providing for rational and optimal socioeconomic use of the resource.
2. Base management actions upon the best scientific data available.
3. Promote economic stability, growth, and self-sufficiency in maritime communities.
4. In accordance with goals 1 and 3, promote efficient use of fishery resources with due consideration for existing social and economic structures.
5. Assure that any resource allocation is fair and equitable to the fishermen concerned without assigning an excessive share of the privileges to any one fisherman or other entity.
6. Adopt allocative measures that are flexible enough to account for unpredictable variations in resource and industry and are based upon the rights and obligations in existing federal law.

PRELIMINARY

IPHC Staff Proposal for 1989
Area 4B Seasons

*May 12 (1 day)

*June 12 (2 days)

July 10 (3 days)

July 26 (2 days)

Aug. 9 (3 days)

*Aug. 25 (1 day)

*Sept. 8 -- (cleanup)

*Areas 2C, 3A-3B also open

November 1, 1988

North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
Box 3136 DT
Anchorage, Alaska 99150

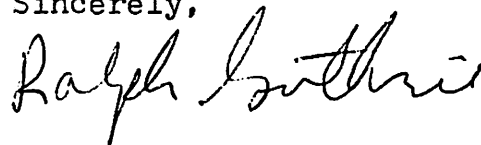
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DEC - 3 1988

To whom it may concern,

It has become increasingly apparent the halibut fishery cannot continue as it is. Too many fish are dumped on the market at one time. The intensity of the opening lends itself to piss-poor handling and care of the fish. Last, but not least, bigger boats set too much gear in order to ensure large deliveries and much of the set gear is left on the grounds, because either their carrying capacity is filled before all the gear is hauled, or they lack time to retrieve the gear, or lose it due to inexperience. I am not in favor of rewarding this type of behavior.

I am in favor of a share quota system, but on a sensible proportion and not the joke that was administered to us this year. The current system rewards the people who seem to produce all the problems you folks are trying to correct. Rational management is something you are going to have work at. The boat quota system you dispensed last year left things just as they have been.

Sincerely,



Ralph Guthrie
Box 595
Petersburg, Alaska 99803

enclosure

copy: International Halibut Commission

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
AND
REGULATORY IMPACT REVIEW/INITIAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS
OF
MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS
FOR THE
HALIBUT FISHERY OFF ALASKA

Submitted by the
North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Prepared by the Halibut Management Team
and Staff of the
North Pacific Fishery Management Council

November 16, 1988

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	Proposed Regulatory Amendments.....	1
1.2	Purpose of the Document.....	2
1.3	Structure of the Document.....	2
2.0	ALLOCATION IN REGULATORY AREA 4B.....	3
2.1	Alternative 1 - Status quo in Area 4B.....	3
2.2	Alternative 2 - Increase number of early-season openings, with 500,000 lb. preliminary catch limit....	4
3.0	ALLOCATION IN REGULATORY AREA 4C.....	9
3.1	Alternative 1 - Status quo in Area 4C.....	9
3.2	Alternative 2 - Extended application of 10,000 lb. trip limit.....	10
4.0	CHANGES TO THE REGULATIONS.....	15
4.1	Area 4B Alternative 1 - Status quo.....	15
4.2	Area 4B Alternative 2 - Early season openings.....	15
4.3	Area 4C Alternative 1 - Status quo.....	15
4.4	Area 4C Alternative 2 - Extend 10,000 lb. trip limit.....	15
5.0	EFFECTS ON ENDANGERED SPECIES AND ON THE ALASKA COASTAL ZONE.....	16
6.0	FINDINGS OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.....	16
7.0	LIST OF PREPARERS.....	17
7.1	Halibut Management Team.....	17
7.2	Other Preparers.....	17
8.0	COORDINATION WITH OTHERS.....	17

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council has established an annual cycle for considering public proposals to amend regulations for the halibut fishery off Alaska. Pursuant to the Northern Pacific Halibut Act of 1982 and responding to a request from the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Council will consider allocative or socioeconomic regulations. Biological or conservation-based regulatory measures are under the purview of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC).

The Council solicited amendment proposals in July 1988, and received 21 which were then reviewed and evaluated by the Council's Halibut Management Team (MT) and Halibut Regulatory Amendment Advisory Group (RAAG). At its September meeting, the Council reviewed the recommendations of the Halibut MT and RAAG, and decided to consider, during this amendment cycle, two proposals concerning Regulatory Areas 4B (western Aleutians, including Atka Island) and 4C (Pribilof Islands). Because of the allocative implications of these proposals, it was determined that the Council had at least partial responsibility for their consideration.

1.1 Proposed Regulatory Amendments

The two amendment proposals approved by the Council for further analysis and public review constitute modifications of the status quo for Regulatory Areas 4B and 4C:

- (a) Western Aleutians, including Atka Island - institute a series of 1- and 2-day openings during June and July, constrained by a 500,000 lb. preliminary catch limit (taken from the overall Area 4B catch limit).
- (b) Pribilof Islands - extend the current 10,000 lb. trip limit to cover the first 80% of the Area 4C catch limit, retaining vessel clearance requirements as in the past.

In addition to the above proposals, this analysis also examines the status quo regulations. Although the alternatives examined here generally have allocative implications, it is conceivable that the IPHC could adopt them for conservation reasons. Assuming that the IPHC remains responsible for determining boundaries of regulatory areas, total catch limits, specific dates of fishing periods, and other conservation-based management measures, this analysis focuses upon the following management measures as they relate to allocation in Areas 4B and 4C: number and length of fishing periods, vessel clearance and hold inspection requirements, and trip limits.

1.2 Purpose of the Document

This environmental assessment (EA) and regulatory impact review (RIR) provides background information and assessments necessary for the Secretary of Commerce to determine that proposed regulatory actions are consistent with the Northern Pacific Halibut Act, the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and other applicable federal law, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), and Executive Order 12291.

1.2.1 Environmental Assessment

The specific purpose of an EA is to analyze the potential impacts of proposed actions, and reasonable alternatives, on the quality of the human environment. If the action is determined not to be significant, then the EA will result in findings of no significant impact (FONSI); this EA would then be the final environmental document required by NEPA. If, however, a FONSI cannot be made, then a more detailed environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared.

1.2.2 Regulatory Impact Review

The purpose of a RIR is to analyze several socioeconomic aspects of proposed regulatory actions, to assure that such actions enhance the public welfare in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The RIR also serves as a basis for determining whether the proposed regulations are "major" under criteria provided by E.O. 12291 and whether they will have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities in reference to the RFA.

1.3 Structure of the Document

This document combines the EA/RIR for each of the two proposals into Chapters 2 (Allocation in Regulatory Area 4B) and 3 (Allocation in Regulatory Area 4C). Within each chapter the proposals are discussed in general terms, then specifically regarding environmental concerns, and finally in socioeconomic terms. Chapter 4 presents draft regulatory language necessary to implement the proposals.

2.0 ALLOCATION IN REGULATORY AREA 4B

Regulatory Area 4B includes all waters in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska west of longitude 172°00'00" W. and south of latitude 56°20'00" N. It incorporates the waters surrounding the western Aleutian Islands, including Atka Island.

2.1 Alternative 1 - Status Quo in Area 4B

Existing regulations for Area 4B were established by the IPHC. The status quo regulations require non-local fishermen to obtain a vessel clearance and hold inspection in Dutch Harbor or Akutan before each opening (a non-local fishermen is defined for Area 4B as one who does not land his entire annual halibut catch within Areas 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E, or the closed area). Existing regulations also limit the season to a series of four one-day openings (one opening apiece in May, June, September, and October), a single three-day opening (in August), and a single nine-day opening (in September).

Environmental impacts of continuing the current management practices are considered insignificant, since the existing regulations were established by the IPHC specifically for conservation purposes. The IPHC has been extremely effective in keeping catches within the prescribed limit in Area 4B (Table 1). The last year in which the Area 4B catch exceeded the limit was 1984, when the overage was only 4,000 lbs. (0.4% of the catch limit). In 1988, catch fell short of the limit by 396,000 lbs., despite the existence a relatively length season.

Table 1. Recent history of Area 4B halibut fishery.

Year:	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984
Catch (1000's of lbs.)					
Local Fishermen:	36	29	8	72	47
Non-Local Fishermen:	1,568	1,472	253	1,164	1,057
Total:	1,604	1,501	261	1,236	1,104
Catch Limit (1000's of lbs.):	2,000	1,750	1,700	1,300	1,100
Season Length (days):	16	6	6	16	14

Note: Data for 1988 is preliminary.

Economic impacts of the status quo center on the allocative impacts of one-day openings combined with the vessel clearance requirement.

Under current regulations, some non-local fishermen may be dissuaded from participating in the fishery by the requirement to obtain clearance in Dutch Harbor, and by the short length of most openings. To the extent that this occurs, the catch is redistributed from non-local to local fishermen. In addition to this redistribution of revenue, some increase in operating costs is imposed on non-local fishermen by the vessel clearance requirement.

2.2 Alternative 2 - Increase Number of Early-Season Openings,
with 500,000 lb. preliminary catch limit

This alternative was proposed by the Atka Fishermen's Association (AFA). In addition to an August fishery of unspecified length, the AFA proposal calls for a specific schedule of early-season openings in the 1989 Area 4B halibut fishery. Although the analysis presented in this document assumes that the Council will defer specification of opening dates to the IPHC, the following AFA-proposed schedule of additional openings was assumed in this analysis:

June 3- 4 (24 hours)	July 8- 9 (24 hours)
June 9-11 (48 hours)	July 14-16 (48 hours)
June 17-18 (24 hours)	July 22-23 (24 hours)
June 24-25 (24 hours)	July 29-30 (24 hours)

The AFA proposal also suggests that the combined early-season openings be constrained by a catch limit of 500,000 lbs., to be taken off the top of whatever overall catch limit the IPHC sets for Area 4B. In this analysis, it is assumed that the 1989 catch limit for Area 4B will be 2 million lbs.

To understand the need (or lack thereof) for Council action on this alternative, it is helpful to review the history of recent attempts to shift the Area 4B catch distribution in favor of local fishermen. Last year, the AFA brought a proposal to the Council calling for an exclusive registration sub-area (defined roughly as the waters within three miles of Atka Island), with a "24 hours on, 48 hours off" pattern of openings. The Council rejected this proposal, which was then re-submitted to the IPHC along with another proposal from the halibut Conference Board calling for six one-day openings constrained by a 3,000 lb. trip limit. Both of these proposals were rejected by the IPHC on the grounds that their effects would have been primarily allocative in nature.

Although the current AFA proposal is clearly motivated by allocative concerns, it is not so clear that its actual effects would be primarily allocative. For example, it is noteworthy that the current AFA proposal deals only with additional openings, calling for neither an exclusive registration area nor a 3,000 lb. trip limit. Since the current season structure resulted in an underharvest in 1988, the IPHC might find the AFA's proposal to be

justified in order to achieve full utilization of the resource. Therefore, the IPHC might well look favorably on this proposal, although such a decision could also depend on the proposal's level of support within the industry.

As with Alternative 1, negative environmental impacts of this alternative are considered insignificant. The overall catch limit would remain the same, and the additional early-season openings are not projected to result in significant impairment of the IPHC's ability to effect an appropriate closure. Because of the additional openings, this alternative may enhance the IPHC's ability to achieve full utilization of the resource.

The principal economic impact of this alternative should be to redistribute the catch in favor of local fishermen. The regulations proposed in Alternative 2 consist largely of an extension of the current early-season pattern of one-day openings. Thus, if current regulations have been successful in redistributing the catch to local fishermen, Alternative 2 should enhance this redistribution. Although the proposal does not mention the vessel clearance requirement, it is assumed here that such a requirement would be retained under this alternative.

Precise estimates of the likely economic impact of this alternative are difficult to derive. This is due to the fact that fishing effort in this fishery is highly variable, and may not always be determined simply by the timing or length of halibut openings. For example, effort in this fishery may also be affected by the timing of sablefish openings in the Bering Sea or Aleutian regions. Table 2 shows how catch and effort varied during the 1988 season in Area 4B.

As Table 2 indicates, the daily catch rates of both local and non-local fishermen vary considerably, due largely to differences in participation rates. Thus, the additional catch accruing to local fishermen as a result of an increased number of early-season openings is difficult to predict. Not only must possible variation in local catch rates be considered, but total local catch will also depend on the catch rates exhibited by non-local fishermen. Table 3 shows the total catches accruing to local and non-local fishermen under six different catch rate scenarios.

Table 2. Catch and effort during 1988 season in Area 4B.

Cumulative:

	Through 7/31		Through 9/8		Through 10/4	
	Loc.	Non-Loc.	Loc.	Non-Loc.	Loc.	Non-Loc.
Catch (C)	9440	1086	31874	474560	36235	1567729
Days Open (DO)	2	2	6	6	16	16
C/DO	4720	543	5312	79093	2265	97983
Boat-Days Open (BDO)	22	98	66	294	176	784
C/BDO	429	11	483	1614	206	2000
Boat-Days Fished (BDF)	11	1	42	67	48	355
CPUE=C/BDF	858	1086	759	7083	755	4416
Participation=BDF/BDO	0.500	0.010	0.636	0.228	0.324	0.453

By Opening:

	6/20-6/21		8/4-8/7		9/7-9/8		9/16-9/25	
	Loc.	Non-Loc.	Loc.	Non-Loc.	Loc.	Non-Loc.	Loc.	Non-Loc.
C	9440	1086	18778	441600	3656	0	4361	1125043
DO	1	1	3	3	1	1	9	9
C/DO	9440	1086	6259	147200	3656	0	485	125005
BDO	11	49	33	147	11	49	99	441
C/BDO	858	22	569	3004	332	0	44	2551
BDF	11	1	22	66	9	0	6	288
CPUE	858	1086	854	6691	406	0	727	3906
BDF/BDO	1.000	0.020	0.667	0.449	0.818	0.000	0.061	0.653

- Notes:
- 1) "Loc." = local fishermen; "Non-Loc." = non-local.
 - 2) "Boat-days open" measures the potential number of fishable boat days during the time period. It is computed as "days open" times the number of boats participating during the season (11 local, 49 non-local).
 - 3) "Boat-days fished" measures the number of individual boat-days actually fished during the time period. During multi-day openings, data for "boat-days fished" are approximate only.
 - 4) No fishing took place during the openings held on 5/23-5/24 and 10/3-10/4.
 - 5) The small non-local catch listed under the 6/20-6/21 opening was taken by a single vessel operating out of Adak which made no other trips during the season.

Table 3. Catch impact scenarios for Alternative 2 in Area 4B.

Local Catch Rate	Non-Local Catch Rate	Days Open (Single)	Days Open (Multiple)	Local Catch	Non-Local Catch
2,265	97,983	10	16	58,890	1,567,728
2,265	147,200	10	13	52,095	1,913,600
4,720	97,983	10	16	122,720	1,567,728
4,720	147,200	10	12	103,840	1,766,400
9,440	97,983	9	16	236,000	1,567,728
9,440	147,200	10	12	207,680	1,766,400

- Notes:
- 1) The three local catch rates used in this table correspond to the 1988 total-season average, the 1988 early-season average, and the 1988 single-opening high, respectively.
 - 2) The two non-local catch rates correspond to the 1988 whole season average and the 1988 single-opening high, respectively.
 - 3) Non-local catch rates are presumed to hold only during multiple-day openings, falling to zero during single-day openings.
 - 4) Catch rates are given in lbs./day; catch in lbs.
 - 5) Season lengths are based on the assumption that the 1989 season will contain a post-July pattern of openings identical to that observed in 1988.

By comparing results from Tables 2 and 3, Table 4 gives some idea of the possible range of local harvest impacts resulting from this alternative. For example, if local fishermen fish each opening at a rate equal to their 1988 total-season average (2,265 lbs./day) while non-local fishermen fish each multiple-day opening at a rate equal to their 1988 single-opening high (147,200 lbs./day), this alternative would add only 15,860 lbs. (44%) to the local catch. At the opposite extreme, if local fishermen fish each opening at a rate equal to their 1988 single-opening high (9,440 lbs./day) while non-local fishermen fish each multiple-day opening at a rate equal to their 1988 total-season average (97,983 lbs./day), this alternative would add 199,765 lbs. (551%) to the local catch. These harvest impacts can be translated into revenue impacts by calculating the product of catch and ex-vessel price. Assuming an Atka ex-vessel price of \$1.00 per lb., the range of revenue increases accruing to local fishermen would be \$15,860 to \$199,765.

Table 4. Range of likely impacts in Area 4B (Alternative 2).

	1988 (Actual)		1989 (Projected)		Percent Change
	Catch	% of Total	Catch	% of Total	
Most Favorable Local Impact					
Local	36235	2.3	236000	13.1	+551.3
Non-Local	1567729	97.7	1567728	86.9	0.0
Total	1603964	100.0	1803728	100.0	+12.5
Least Favorable Local Impact					
Local	36235	2.3	52095	2.7	+43.8
Non-Local	1567729	97.7	1913600	97.3	+22.1
Total	1603964	100.0	1965695	100.0	+22.6

- Notes: 1) Catch is given in lbs.
 2) The "most favorable local impact" scenario corresponds to the "least favorable non-local impact" scenario, and the "least favorable local impact" scenario corresponds to the "most favorable non-local impact" scenario.

The possible range of non-local economic impacts resulting from this alternative may not be quite as broad, assuming that non-local fishermen do not choose to participate in single-day openings. Table 4 indicates that the impact of this alternative on non-local catches might range from no change to an increase of 345,871 lbs. (22%). Assuming a Dutch Harbor ex-vessel price of \$1.20 per lb., the range of revenue increases accruing to non-local fishermen would be \$0 to \$415,045. Thus, Alternative 2 appears to be a "win-win" situation for the local and non-local fleets, a result made possible by the current underharvest in Area 4B. If this were not the case (i.e. if local fishermen were projected to gain at the expense of non-local fishermen), it might be appropriate to consider this alternative in terms of its relative effects on the respective fleets' total incomes. In this light, it is instructive to note that in 1988, 100% of the halibut catch taken by local fishermen came from within Area 4B, whereas the 4B catch taken by non-local fishermen amounted to only 2.1% of the all-areas (i.e. coastwide) halibut catch limit.

3.0 ALLOCATION IN REGULATORY AREA 4C

Regulatory Area 4C consists of a small portion of the Bering Sea surrounding the Pribilof Islands. Specifically, Area 4C includes all waters in the Bering Sea north of latitude 56°20'00" N. and north of the closed area which are east of longitude 171°00'00" W., south of latitude 58°00'00" N., and west of longitude 168°00'00" W.

3.1 Alternative 1 - Status Quo in Area 4C

Current regulations in Area 4C call for a 10,000 lb. trip limit to be applied to the first 50% of the catch limit, and a 20,000 lb. trip limit for the remainder. The status quo regulations also require non-local fishermen to obtain a vessel clearance and hold inspection in Dutch Harbor or Akutan prior to each opening (a non-local fishermen is defined in the case of Area 4C as one who does not land his entire annual halibut catch within Area 4C). These regulations are in place because of action taken by the Council in 1987. No change in regulations is anticipated unless recommended by the Council. It is assumed in this analysis that the current 700,000 lb. catch limit will be retained during 1989.

As in the case of Area 4B, the environmental impacts of continuing the current management practices are considered insignificant. Although the current regulations have been in effect for only one year, the available evidence indicates that they have not impaired the IPHC's ability to control the total harvest effectively. For example, although the catch limit was exceeded by 278,000 lbs. (46.3%) in 1987, the 1988 catch (taken under the new regulations) was kept within 5,000 lbs. (0.7%) of the limit (Table 5).

Table 5. Recent history of Area 4C halibut fishery.

Year:	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984
Catch (1000's of lbs.)					
Local Fishermen:	480	263	121	270	250
Non-Local Fishermen:	215	615	565	350	330
Total:	695	878	686	620	580
Catch Limit (1000's of lbs.):	700	600	600	600	600
Season Length (days):	17	6	18	24	33

Economic impacts of the current regulations consist largely of redistributing the catch in favor of local fishermen. For example,

local fishermen took only 16% of the Area 4C catch in 1986 and 30% in 1987, whereas they took 69% in 1988 under the current regulatory regime (Table 5). However, it is not clear that the entire amount of this redistribution can be attributed to current regulations. For example, the regulations governing the early part of the season remained essentially unchanged between 1987 and 1988, yet the catch by non-local fishermen declined from 130,888 lbs. during the first three openings in 1987 to 5,638 lbs. during the first three openings in 1988 (a 95.7% decrease). Similarly, the participation rate among non-local fishermen during the first half of the season declined from 32.5% in 1987 to 14.3% in 1988 (Table 6). In addition to possible distributional effects, another economic impact of current regulations is an increase in operating costs imposed on non-local fishermen by the vessel clearance requirement.

3.2 Alternative 2 - Extended application of 10,000 lb. trip limit

Alternative 2 was proposed by the Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association and the St. George Fishermen. This proposal calls for imposing a 10,000 lb. trip limit for the first 80% of the catch, and retaining the current vessel clearance and hold inspection requirements. The late-season 20,000 lb. trip limit is not addressed under this proposal.

Environmental impacts from this alternative are expected to be insignificant. Although the behavior of the non-local fleet has proven to be somewhat unpredictable, it is unlikely that this alternative by itself will cause the fleet to behave in a manner that would diminish the IPHC's ability to control the overall harvest effectively.

By extending the current 10,000 lb. trip limit to cover the first 80% of the catch, the main economic impact of this alternative should be to redistribute the catch further in favor of local fishermen. Table 7 shows the harvest impacts corresponding to eight different scenarios regarding fleet behavior in 1989 under Alternative 2. As noted in the discussion of Alternative 1, however, the behavior of the non-local fleet in 1988 was difficult to attribute entirely to regulatory changes. Therefore, predictions regarding the economic impact of this or other alternatives should be taken as estimates only.

Table 6. Catch and effort during 1987-88 seasons in Area 4C.

1987

	First Half		Second Half		Total Season	
	Loc.	Non-L.	Loc.	Non-L.	Loc.	Non-L.
Catch (C)	134721	130888	128685	483821	263406	614709
Days Open (DO)	4	2	2	1	6	3
C/DO	33680	65444	64343	483821	43901	204903
Boat-Days Open (BDO)	76	40	38	20	114	60
C/BDO	1773	3272	3386	24191	2311	10245
Boat-Days Fished (BDF)	55	13	28	20	83	33
CPUE=C/BDF	2449	10068	4596	24191	3174	18628
Participation=BDF/BDO	0.724	0.325	0.737	1.000	0.728	0.550

1988

	First Half		Second Half		Total Season	
	Loc.	Non-L.	Loc.	Non-L.	Loc.	Non-L.
Catch (C)	304360	52815	175711	162701	480071	215516
Days Open (DO)	11	6	6	3	17	9
C/DO	27669	8803	29285	54234	28239	23946
Boat-Days Open (BDO)	??	42	??	21	??	63
C/BDO	??	1258	??	7748	??	3421
Boat-Days Fished (BDF)	??	6	??	10	??	16
CPUE=C/BDF	??	8803	??	16270	??	13470
Participation=BDF/BDO	??	0.143	??	0.476	??	0.254

- Notes:
- 1) The first half of the season covers the first 50% of the catch limit; the second half covers the rest.
 - 2) "Loc." = local fishermen; "Non-L." = non-local.
 - 3) One result of the clearance requirement for non-local vessels is that those vessels are able to participate in only half of the scheduled openings. Hence, "days open" is different for local and non-local vessels.
 - 4) Individual vessel data for the local category in 1988 are unavailable.
 - 5) For interpretation of "boat-days open" and "boat-days fished," see Table 1. There were 19 local boats in 1987 and an unknown number in 1988, whereas the non-local numbers were 20 and 7, respectively.

Table 7. Catch impact scenarios for Alternative 2 in Area 4C.

Local Catch Rate	Non-Local Catch Rate		Season Length		Local Catch	Non- Local Catch
	Early	Late	Early	Late		
28,239	8,803	54,234	17	2	536,541	133,461
28,239	8,803	483,821	17	0	480,063	79,227
28,239	65,444	54,234	9	2	310,629	381,479
28,239	65,444	483,821	9	0	254,151	327,220
43,901	8,803	54,234	11	2	570,713	107,052
43,901	8,803	483,821	11	0	482,911	52,818
43,901	65,444	54,234	7	2	395,109	316,010
43,901	65,444	483,821	7	0	307,307	261,776

- Notes:
- 1) "Early" and "late" correspond to the portions of the season encompassing the first 80% and the last 20% of the catch limit, respectively.
 - 2) The local catch rates used in this table correspond to the 1988 and 1987 total-season average catch rates, respectively.
 - 3) The non-local catch rates used in this table correspond to the 1988 and 1987 partial-season (early or late, as appropriate) catch rates, respectively.
 - 4) Due to the vessel clearance requirement, it is assumed that the non-local fleet participates only in every-other opening.

By comparing results from Tables 6 and 7, Table 8 summarizes the possible range of harvest impacts resulting from Alternative 2. For example, if local fishermen fish each opening at a rate equal to their 1987 total-season average (43,901 lbs./day) while non-local fishermen fish every-other opening at rates equal to their 1988 early- and late-season averages (8,803 and 54,234 lbs./day, respectively), this alternative would add 90,642 lbs. (19%) to the local catch.

Table 8. Range of likely impacts in Area 4C (Alternative 2).

	1988 (Actual)		1989 (Projected)		Percent Change
	Catch	% of Total	Catch	% of Total	
<u>Most Favorable Local Impact</u>					
Local	480071	69.0	570713	84.2	+18.9
Non-Local	215516	31.0	107052	15.8	-50.3
Total	695587	100.0	677765	100.0	-2.6
<u>Least Favorable Local Impact</u>					
Local	480071	69.0	254151	43.7	-47.1
Non-Local	215516	31.0	327220	56.3	+51.8
Total	695587	100.0	581371	100.0	-16.4
<u>Most Favorable Non-Local Impact</u>					
Local	480071	69.0	310629	44.9	-35.3
Non-Local	215516	31.0	381479	55.1	+77.0
Total	695587	100.0	692108	100.0	-00.5
<u>Least Favorable Non-Local Impact</u>					
Local	480071	69.0	480063	85.8	0.0
Non-Local	215516	31.0	79227	14.2	-63.2
Total	695587	100.0	559290	100.0	-19.6

- Notes: 1) Catch is given in lbs.
 2) The "most favorable local impact" scenario does not correspond to the "least favorable non-local impact" scenario; neither does the "least favorable local impact" scenario correspond to the "most favorable non-local impact" scenario.

However, it is also conceivable that Alternative 2 could actually result in a net decrease in total catch taken by local fishermen.

In the worst-case scenario from Table 8, if local fishermen fish each opening at a rate equal to their 1988 total-season average (28,239 lbs./day) while non-local fishermen fish (or at least gear up to fish) every-other opening at rates equal to their 1987 early- and late-season averages (65,444 and 483,821 lbs./day, respectively), this alternative would result in a 225,920 lb. (47%) reduction in the local catch. The reason for this counterintuitive result is that the magnitude of the anticipated late-season non-local catch rate would likely cause the IPHC to close the season after the first 80% of the catch limit is taken, as any further openings would probably cause the catch limit to be exceeded.

The range of non-local harvest impacts resulting from this alternative may be even broader. Table 8 indicates that the impacts of this alternative on non-local catches could range from a decrease of 136,289 lbs. (-63%) to an increase of 165,963 lbs. (+77%).

By assuming an average Pribilofs price of \$1.00 per lb. and an average Dutch Harbor price of \$1.20 per lb., the range of harvest impacts shown in Table 8 can be converted into revenue impacts. This conversion gives a range of -\$225,920 to +\$90,642 for revenue impacts on local fishermen, and a range of -\$163,547 to +\$199,156 for revenue impacts on non-local fishermen. It should be stressed, however, that this juxtaposition of potential revenue impacts for local and non-local fishermen is not intended to infer that these impacts are strictly comparable. Rather, it should be remembered that the local fishermen are far more dependent on the Area 4C halibut fishery than are the non-local fishermen. Thus, a decision regarding Alternative 2 might appropriately give greater weight to impacts on local than non-local fishermen. Such a weighting scheme might bear in mind that in 1988, 100% of the halibut catch taken by local fishermen came from within Area 4C, whereas the 4C catch taken by non-local fishermen amounted to only 0.3% of the all-areas (i.e. coastwide) halibut catch limit.

(b) Vessels fishing in Area 4c will be limited to a maximum catch of 10,000 lbs. of halibut per fishing period until 80% of the catch limit for Area 4c specified in Section 301.9 (a) of this part has been taken, and thereafter will be limited to a maximum catch of 20,000 lbs. of halibut per fishing period.

Paragraph (b) in Section 301.10 Fishing Period Limits would be revised to read as follows:

4.4 Area 4c Alternative 2 - Extend 10,000 lb. trip limit.

No changes to the current regulations would be necessary.

4.3 Area 4c Alternative 1 - Status quo.

(1) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, the total allowable catch in Area 4b will be limited to 500,000 pounds (225 metric tons) for all fishing periods through July 30 specified for Area 4b in Section 301.6 of this part.

In addition, if the Council recommended the AFA-proposed early season catch limit to the IPHC and the IPHC followed that recommendation, then Section 301.9 Catch Limits would be revised by adding paragraph (1) to read as follows:

5/23-5/24	7/14-7/16
6/03-6/04	7/22-7/23
6/09-6/11	7/29-7/30
6/17-6/18	8/04-8/07
6/20-6/21	9/07-9/08
6/24-6/25	9/16-date to be announced by the IPHC
7/08-7/09	

Specific fishing periods for Area 4b under this alternative would be set by the IPHC. If the Council recommended the AFA-proposed fishing periods to the IPHC and the IPHC followed that recommendation, then Table 1 in Section 301.6 Fishing Periods would be revised in the column under 4b to read as follows:

4.2 Area 4b Alternative 2 - Early season openings.

No changes to the current regulations would be necessary.

4.1 Area 4b Alternative 1 - Status quo.

Regulations for managing the halibut fishery are found in 50 CFR Section 301. These regulations incorporate those developed by the IPHC and those developed by the Council in a single section of the Federal Code.

4.0 CHANGES TO THE REGULATIONS

5.0 EFFECTS ON ENDANGERED SPECIES AND ON THE ALASKA COASTAL ZONE

None of the alternatives described here would constitute an action that might affect endangered or threatened species or their habitats within the meaning of regulations implementing Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973. For this reason, consultation procedures, pursuant to Section 7, are not necessary.

None of the alternatives described here would be a federal action directly affecting the coastal zone of Alaska within the meaning of Section 307 (c)(1) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 and its implementing regulations. Each of these alternatives comply to the maximum extent practicable with the Alaska Coastal Management Program.

6.0 FINDINGS OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

For the reasons discussed above, neither implementation of the status quo nor any of the alternatives to that action would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, and the preparation of an environmental impact statement on the final action is not required by Section 102 (2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act or its implementing regulations.

Asst. Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA

Date

7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

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8.0 COORDINATION WITH OTHERS

The Halibut Management Team is comprised of fishery scientists and managers from the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the International Pacific Halibut Commission, and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. The Halibut MT also coordinated with other staff of those agencies.