



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

605 W. 4th Ave. Suite 306
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 271-2809
Fax (907) 271-2817

Action Memo

File Number:HAL 15-026

Agenda Date12/7/2015

Agenda Number:C6

Dan Hull, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:

Charter Halibut Recreational Quota Entity Program and Charter Halibut Permit Recency - Initial Review

STAFF CONTACT: Sarah Marrinan

ACTION REQUIRED:

Review analysis and take action as necessary

BACKGROUND:

The Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) was implemented in 2014 for two halibut users groups, the charter sector and commercial setline sector, in regulatory Areas 2C and 3A. The Council developed this management strategy in order to resolve conservation and allocation concerns that resulted from increased harvest in the charter halibut fishery in both Area 2C as well as 3A, and decreased catch limits in the commercial setline fisheries. The CSP establishes a process for determining the annual management measures for each regulatory charter area based on an annual Combined Catch Limit (CCL) for both the charter and commercial sectors in each area.

The CSP also details provisions for the lease of individual fishing quota (IFQ) from the commercial sector into what is known as guided angler fish (GAF), for use by individuals in the charter sector. While guided halibut anglers have seen recent increases in regulatory restrictions, this provision is intended to provide charter anglers additional opportunity to harvest halibut above the established annual management measures and up to the limits in place for unguided anglers (two fish daily bag limit). The CSP does not allow for the permanent transfer of halibut quota share (QS) from the commercial sector to the charter sector. Current provision provided under the CSP to temporarily transfer GAF may not be sufficient enough to ensure long-term planning and stability in regulations for all guided anglers.

Based on a charter stakeholder proposal presented to the Council in 2014, the Council took action to begin examining the impacts of allowing of a non-profit recreational quota entity (RQE) (or entities) to be established to represent the common pool of charter anglers in each regulatory Area 2C and 3A for the potential compensated reallocation of commercial halibut QS. In October 2014, the Council initiated this initial review analysis of an alternative to establish an RQE program. In this alternative, any halibut QS purchased by an RQE would augment the pounds of halibut for the charter catch limit for that area in that year. Underlying allocations to the charter and commercial halibut sectors would not change. In addition to establishing an RQE, a second alternative was added that also seeks to promote long-term planning and greater stability in the charter halibut fishery. The second alternative under consideration is a recency action that would retire and not reissue Charter Halibut Permits that have been latent according to one of two proposed thresholds. These two alternatives are not considered to be mutually exclusive.

In October 2014, the Council also established a committee workgroup consisting of charter operators, representatives from the commercial IFQ sector, and other knowledgeable stakeholders who can contribute to

Agenda Date12/7/2015

Agenda Number:C6

the development of a RQE program structure for analysis and review by the Council. The initial review draft analysis highlights the impacts of the alternatives and options as well as several other decision points the Council and its advisory groups should focus on if continued action is warranted.