



# NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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## Action Memo

**File Number:**BYC 16-002

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**Agenda Date**4/4/2016

**Agenda Number:**C6

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**Dan Hull, Chairman**  
**Chris Oliver, Executive Director**

**SUBJECT:**

Bering Sea Halibut Abundance-Based PSC Limit - Discussion paper

**STAFF CONTACT:** Diana Stram

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

Review discussion paper; action as necessary

**BACKGROUND:**

The Halibut Abundance-Based Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) Workgroup (Workgroup) comprised of Council, NMFS, and IPHC staff met on March 3, 2016 to consider the information and approach needed to establish abundance based halibut PSC limits. Based on Council guidance, the Workgroup focused on the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area (BSAI) and reviewed: (1) the current status of Halibut PSC limits and use in the BSAI; (2) indices that may be available to assess the abundance of halibut and the potential strengths and limitations of those indices to setting an abundance based halibut PSC limit; (3) general types, or models, that could be used to set abundance-based halibut PSC limits; (4) different types of control rules that could be used to establish halibut PSC limits (e.g., "stair-step" PSC limits with or without "floors" or "ceilings"); and (5) described the types of policy decisions that the Council would need to consider as this effort progresses. This paper identifies some areas where Council input would be helpful before proceeding, provides a preliminary work schedule, and presents some ideas and data evaluations that were further developed by individual Workgroup members after the Workgroup met.

The discussion paper and presentation will attempt to focus the Council on key decision points necessary to further an analysis, and to ultimately structure specific alternatives, elements, and options for such an analysis. Based on current schedules and Council agendas, October 2016 would be the next opportunity for Council review and direction.