

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members
FROM: Chris Oliver *CO*
Executive Director
DATE: March 16, 2011
SUBJECT: Miscellaneous Issues

ESTIMATED TIME
8 HOURS

ACTION REQUIRED

- (a) Receive Report on Halibut Bycatch Discard Survival EFP. *Todd Loomis*

BACKGROUND

This Final Report is intended to provide information on the experiment by the North Pacific Fisheries Foundation (NPF) to examine a proposed method of measuring the survival of Pacific halibut bycatch while participating in Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI) non-pelagic trawl flatfish fisheries during 2009 and 2010. The NPF experiment was approved under Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) 09-01. By regulation, trawl caught halibut must be immediately released with a minimum of injury after capture. The EFP was granted to allow holding of halibut onboard ship for the experiment. This research project was developed in cooperation with the Alaska Fishery Science Center and International Pacific Halibut Commission.

The F/T SEAFISHER, an Amendment 80 (A80) trawl vessel participating in cooperative quota and CDQ fisheries, served as the research platform during both years of the experiment. No additional halibut prohibited species quota (PSQ) was requested or used as part of this experiment. Halibut caught while conducting the experiment accrued against A80 cooperative PSQ in 2009 and CDQ PSQ in 2010.

The NPF survival experiment had three objectives:

1. Determine paired RAMP & IPHC viability assessment scores in individual halibut collected from hauls on board ship after capture by trawl during commercial fishing.
2. Calculate and calibrate a RAMP mortality curve for halibut.
3. Collect trawling, deck, and live tank environmental conditions data for determining fishing factors associated with halibut immediate, delayed, and total mortality.

This Final Report was sent out in a Council mailing on March 4, 2011.