

ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
Dec 3-5, 2025

C7 Charter Halibut Annual Management Measures

For the 2026 charter fishing season in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A, the AP recommends:

For IPHC Area 2C:

All allocations shown below include a daily bag limit of one halibut and a reverse slot size limit where the upper limit is fixed at O80 (halibut 80 inches or longer may be retained).

1) If the allocation is at or above 0.858 Mlb:

- Begin with a lower size limit of U37 (retained halibut must be less than or equal to 37 inches in length) and increase the lower size limit until the allocation is reached, as indicated in Table 2C.4 (page 19) of the ADF&G analysis.

As indicated in Table 2C.6b (page 22) of the ADF&G analysis:

2) If the allocation is less than 0.858 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.715 Mlb:

- Begin with a lower size limit of U37 closing Thursdays starting September 10 working to May 14 until the allocation is reached.

3) If the allocation is less than 0.715 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.691 Mlb:

- Begin with a lower size limit of U36 closing Thursdays starting September 10 working to May 14 until the allocation is reached.

4) If the allocation is less than 0.691 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.651 Mlb:

- Begin with a lower size limit of U35 closing Thursdays starting September 10 working to May 14 until the allocation is reached.

5) If the allocation is less than 0.651 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.626 Mlb:

- Begin with a lower size limit of U34 closing Thursdays starting September 10 working to May 14 until the allocation is reached.

6) If the allocation is less than 0.626 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.594 Mlb:

- Begin with a lower size limit of U33 closing Thursdays starting September 10 working to May 14 until the allocation is reached.

7) If the allocation is less than 0.594 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.566 Mlb:

- Begin with a lower size limit of U32 closing Thursdays starting September 10 working to May 14 until the allocation is reached.

For IPHC Area 3A:

All allocations shown below include, unless otherwise specified:

A daily bag limit of 2 halibut. One fish of any size and one fish with a maximum size limit of 28 inches. 1 trip per charter vessel per day with retention of halibut; and 1 trip per charter halibut permit per day. All Wednesdays to be closed to the retention of halibut.

- 1) If the allocation is greater than or equal to 1.772 Mlb, raise the size of the second fish until the allocation is reached with no Tuesday closures as indicated in Table 3A.13 (page 33) of the ADF&G analysis.
- 2) If the allocation is less than or equal to 1.771 Mlb, but greater than or equal to 1.430 Mlb: lower the size of the second fish to as low as 27 inches. Close Tuesdays as needed to keep charter harvest removals within the Area 3A allocation, as indicated in Table 3A.13 (page 33) of the ADF&G analysis.
- 3) If the allocation is below 1.430 Mlb, but greater than or equal to 1.403 Mlb: Lower the size of the second fish to as low as 26 inches, continue to close Tuesday as needed until the projected charter harvest removals meet the allocation, as indicated in Table 3A.13 (page 33) of the ADF&G analysis.
- 4) If the allocation is below 1.403mlb, but greater than or equal to 1.327mlb, in addition to all closed Tuesdays and a second fish of 26 inches, adjust the season start date to open between May 1 and May 29 to align with allocation (Table 3A.14).
- 5) If the allocation is below 1.327mlb, but greater than or equal 1.243mlb, in addition to all closed Tuesdays, a second fish of 26 inches, and a season start date of May 29, adjust the season close date between September 28 and September 1 to align with allocation (Table 3A.14).
- 6) If the allocation is below 1.243mlb, in addition to all closed Tuesdays, a season start date of May 29, and a season close date of September 1, implement a daily bag limit of 1 halibut of any size (Table 3A.17).

Motion passes 19-0

Rationale in Support of Motion

- *The measures for areas 2C and 3A attempt to represent a huge variance in operations – the charter halibut fishery include lodges, multi day live-a-boards, full and half day operators, inspected and uninspected passenger vessels, vessels launched daily from shore and departing from harbors, high volume cruise ship ports and areas both on and off the road system.*
- *The 2C motion reflects a status quo approach of reverse slot options, maximizing the lower size limit allowed by the allocation.*
- *Once the lower limit drops to 37", Thursday closures apply as needed to maintain fish 37" repeating for 36", 35" etc. as needed to remain within the allocation.*

- *The removal of a single trip per vessel per day limitation at the cost of inches on the lower spectrum is a notable change for 2026 recommendations, as the committee considered the needs of stakeholders at points of access who rely on multiple trips per day.*
- *The 2C committee representatives noted that the recent and anticipated harvest measures have become a big deterrent for repeat and new customers. Many businesses have come to rely on expensive GAF options to subsidize opportunity.*
- *The 3A motion considers consistency for anglers and operators as much as possible when making the range of recommended measures. These favor a status quo approach which prioritizes the potential to include fewer closed Tuesdays as a primary driver over a larger second fish. They also include measures down to a 25% decline in allocation as requested by the council in 2024.*
- *There are two newly explored management levers here that were expectedly contentious, which staff analyzed to meet the 25% decline request. One involved seasonal opening and closing dates, and another was a single fish limit. Neither had ever been implemented in 3A.*
- *The single fish analysis was done to the best ability given the data, though having nothing to compare it to, the ranges were largely estimated. The analysis illustrated a significantly larger mean fish with a single fish limit, and as the industry are not managing to individual fish but to mean weight, there was favor given to the second fish model which lowers the average weight and thus was put forward as the prioritized preferred option.*
- *Some 3A stakeholders express concern about these new seasonal levers, and ultimately having a conversation about a 25% reduction is consistently going to be a challenging one with negative impacts to all users.*
- *The ability to retain the core operating part of the season was prioritized in these measures, with a status quo approach for stability to the operators as well as end users.*
- *It is important to mention that these low abundance management measures for both areas 2C and 3A have an extremely imbalanced economic impact on stakeholders as well as all facets of their communities when compared against the impact to the halibut stock itself. In short, the cuts implied have no measurable effect on the spawning biomass, but are critical to the solvency of those participating in the industry.*