



C8 Unguided Halibut Rental Vessels

December 2019 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Council Staff: Sara Cleaver
Other Presenters: Kurt Iverson (NMFS AKR)
Action Required:

1. Review draft RIR
2. Review Charter Halibut Committee minutes, and Enforcement Committee minutes, AP report, as well as public testimony
3. If desired, identify preliminary preferred alternative(s)

BACKGROUND

In recent years, management measures have increasingly restricted the effort and harvest of the charter sector in response to declining halibut biomass. Currently, bag and size limits for unguided halibut anglers are less restrictive than those for charter halibut anglers in Areas 2C and 3A. Certain registration programs are required of charter vessels, but unguided rental vessels used for harvesting halibut are not specifically identified or accounted for in any of the existing registrations.

During the October 2018 meeting, the Council reviewed an expanded discussion paper to explore mechanisms to create a registry for motorized rental boats that are used by unguided anglers to harvest halibut in IPHC Regulatory Areas 2C and 3A. This was in response to concerns that differences in harvest regulations between charter (guided) and unguided recreational halibut anglers, and growth of the rental boat segment of the unguided sector, may negatively impact other halibut fishing sectors.

After review of the expanded discussion paper, the Council initiated an analysis of alternatives to require registration for unguided rental vessels used for harvesting halibut in IPHC areas 2C and 3A (Alternative 2), and align bag and size limits between charter anglers and anglers on unguided rental vessels by applying the charter angler daily bag limits and size limits to both groups (Alternative 3).

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to review the initial review draft of this analysis. This Regulatory Impact Review (RIR) highlights the possible social and economic impacts as well as the management and enforcement considerations of the proposed action. In addition to any public testimony at this meeting, the Council has/ will receive feedback on this issue from a number of advisory bodies; as this action is intended to be presented to and discussed by the Enforcement Committee, the Charter Halibut Committee, the Advisory Panel and the Council.