

ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
December 3-6, 2024 - Anchorage, AK

C4 2025 Charter Halibut Annual Management Measures

Motion 1

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), and a restriction of 1 trip per charter vessel per day with retention of halibut and 1 trip per charter halibut permit per day.

- 1) If the allocation falls within the range of 0.897 Mlb and 1.013 Mlb:
 - Begin with a lower size limit of U38 (retained halibut must be less than or equal to 38 inches in length) and increase this limit until the allocation is reached, as indicated in **Table 2C.7a** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 2) If the allocation is less than 0.897 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.752 Mlb:
 - Begin with a lower size limit of U38 (retained halibut must be less than or equal to 38 inches in length) closing Tuesdays starting September 9 working to May 13 until the allocation is reached, as indicated in **Table 2C.7a** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 3) If the allocation is less than 0.752 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.715 Mlb:
 - Begin with a lower size limit of U37 (retained halibut must be less than or equal to 37 inches in length) closing Tuesdays from Sept 9 to June 24, and closing additional Tuesdays working to May 13 until the allocation is reached, as indicated in **Table 2C.7a** of the ADF&G analysis.

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.

- 1) If the allocation is less than or equal to 2.079Mlb, but greater than or equal to 1.762Mlb, apply:
 - Close Wednesdays as needed to keep charter harvest removals within the Area 3A allocation, as indicated in **Table 3A.13** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 2) If the allocation is less than 1.762Mlb, but greater than 1.497Mlb:
 - In addition to all closed Wednesdays and a second halibut 28 inches or less, close as many Tuesdays as needed to keep the charter harvest removals within the Area 3A allocation, as indicated in **Table 3A.14** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 3) If the allocation is below 1.497Mlb:
 - In addition to closing all Tuesdays and Wednesdays, lower the size of the second fish to as low as 26 inches, until the projected charter harvest removals meet the allocation. This covers allocations as low as 1.425Mlb as indicated in **Table 3A.16** of the ADF&G analysis.

Motion passed: 18/1

Rationale in Favor of Motion

- *This is a part of the annual process of establishing regulations for guided-recreational anglers harvesting halibut on charter vessels in IPHC Areas 2C and 3A.*
- *The Charter Halibut Management Committee met in both October and December and this motion reflects the sector's preferred regulations that are most likely to meet IPHC allocations.*

These recommendations capture both increases in allocation and declines.

Specific to Area 2C:

- *These recommendations reflect a diverse set of angler expectations between ports and areas as well as low and decreasing allocations in a time of increasing effort in the 2C charter sector; which contributes to increased harvest. There was strong debate and diverse opinions within the committee itself. It took thoughtful and strong compromise to arrive at a vote to support these measures.*
- *Effort increases for the 2024 season showed largely in ports with cruise ships. With the amount of halibut allocation available to the 2C guided sport fishery, the Committee did not believe that there should be two halibut trips in a single day.*
- *While 2C Committee members recognized that these sets of regulations do not account for up to a 25% decline, they represent a significant decline in harvest and 2C committee members felt including regulations to account for further declines in harvest was not appropriate and something they could not support. The Council has the option to modify the motion to reflect greater declines.*

Specific to Area 3A:

- *These recommendations mirror the regulations of previous years and are aimed at providing a consistent regulatory scheme that may add stability to client experience and expectation year-to-year.*
- *The AP recommendations also represent up to a 25% decline in harvest opportunity, which reflects the request of IPHC for a large drop in allocation in the IPHC Risk Tables presented at the Annual Meeting.*

Rationale in Opposition to Motion

- *For Area 2C, no recommendations were made for harvest levels lower than 0.715 Mlb. With current conversations in IPHC noting cuts of 15-25%, motion 2C measures only account for cuts up to 12%.*
- *Understanding that NMFS will address issues of conservation if catch levels are set at lower levels than the measurements provided, it is still troubling that the committee was unable to accept the possibilities of lower catch rates nor consider measures that they deem appropriate for those harvest levels.*
- *Having NMFS make changes to the Charter Halibut Management Measures that are outside the scope of this motion leave out stakeholder input and participation through both the council and committee process.*

Motion 2

The AP recommends the Council initiates an analysis of CHP use of transferable, non-transferable, CQE, and Military permits for areas 2C and 3A.

Analysis would include separate data for Areas 2C and 3A of the following:

1. Trends in transfer (including lease transfer of transferable, non-transferable, and CQE permits), consolidation, and retirement since implementation;
2. Trends in usage since program implementation for each permit type (transferable permits only needed to hit a 15-trip threshold, and non-transferable permits a 5-trip threshold)
3. Trends and projections of latent capacity in terms of both permits and angler endorsements
4. Projections of the effects of latency by area with CHPs at low, medium and max usage on harvest measures, with and without RQE aggregate caps reached

The AP recommends the Council direct NMFS and RAM to address the issuance of Charter Halibut Permits (CHP) to Community Quota Entities that are no longer active and consider the issuance trigger for these permits to be based on:

- a. Reporting requirements and/or
- b. Demonstration of the CQE being an active entity. I.e. Non-profit in good standing

Amendment failed: 5/15 (strikeout second half of motion, starting with the AP recommends...)

Main Motion passed: 16/4

Rationale in Support of Motion 2

- *This motion is considering recommendations directly from the Charter Halibut Committee. This data could be useful in understanding disappearing angler opportunity in the charter halibut fishery and in projecting how latent capacity in the permit program might affect future angler effort and the resulting effects on harvest measures.*
- *At the onset of the CQE program many communities developed non-profit entities and applied to become CQE's. Most of these CQE's were dissolved and are no longer in good standing as non profit entities. There are currently 5 CQE's which are either dissolved or not in good standing that have been issued CHP's most recently in 2024. Hydaburg, Coffman Cove, Edna Bay, Point Baker, Whale pass. Without any reporting requirement it is unclear if these are being used and if they are, then it is not legal. An AP member has been helping with the development of a CQE in Southeast Alaska and has spoken to both RAM and NMFS about this issue. It is something they have noted as needing to be fixed and a request from the Council could help to address this issue or look into it in the same analysis as requested above.*

Rationale in Opposition to Motion 2

- *Including the second part of the request goes further than the Charter Halibut Committee recommendation and was not something that was actually brought to the AP in written or oral public comment or via the staff presentation.*
- *There are concerns about including the second part of the motion because the impacted organizations or individuals may not even be aware of what is being proposed or what actions could be taken related to CQE.*