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ATTENTION HALIBUT FISHERMEN!

September 3, 2008

At the October 2008 Council meeting, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council will take **FINAL ACTION** on a setline/charter catch sharing (**Allocation**) plan for halibut areas 2C and 3A. The Council may also take final action on GHL management measures for area 3A if preliminary 2007 harvest estimates indicate the GHL has been exceeded. Critical catch sharing plan decision points include:

- 1) The initial allocation to the charter fleet (**and they are asking for more that the existing GHL's**)
- 2) How much, **IF ANY**, of the charter allocation will be tied to halibut abundance
- 3) Which sector "pays" for future charter overages
- 4) If charter operators will be allowed to lease a limited amount of halibut quota share.

This decision will set the terms and allocation for the halibut fishery for years to come. The halibut resource, Alaska coastal communities, and you have everything at stake. Please invest the time to testify at the Council meeting and plan to write a letter to the Council at the Anchorage SHERATON August 29th through September 2nd. The Advisory Panel (AP) is scheduled for Sep 29 & 30. **The Council is scheduled to begin halibut charter Wednesday Oct 1 and conclude the afternoon of Oct 2 – however, we expect it may continue through Friday Oct 3.** If you are unable to attend the Council meeting consider sending a crewmember or other person who is affected by these decisions, or donate funds to the Halibut Coalition to provide travel funds.

In your testimony or letter, provide your personal background: years halibut fishing, your investment in halibut quota share, outstanding loans (NMFS or otherwise), collateral at risk, and, if you fish in 2C, the impact the 43% quota reduction has had on your business, family and community.

Emphasize that the catch sharing plan must establish a **charter sector catch limit**. The charter sector must be managed to stay below the catch limit. If the catch limit is exceeded, the charter sector must be shut down in season or **held fully accountable** for the overage the following season. It is important to stress that the setline sector should not be held accountable for charter overages.

Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association • Cordova District Fishermen • Deep Sea Fishermen's Union • Fishing Vessel Owners Association • Halibut Association of North America • Kachemak Bay Fisheries Association • North Pacific Fisheries Association • Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Sea Food Producers Cooperative • Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance • United Cook Inlet Driftnetters Association • United Fishermen's Marketing Association • United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters Association

The charter sector catch limit must be **no higher than the current GHL, expressed as a percentage, and must be tied to abundance.** Both commercial sectors, charter and setline, must share in conserving the resource.

The Council must commit to **verified, real-time catch accounting** for the charter sector.

Urge the Council to allow the charter sector to invest in the halibut resource, as you have done, by **leasing a limited amount of quota share.**

Remind the Council that the 2C setline sector accepted a 43% quota reduction from 2006-2008 to conserve halibut stocks and the charter sector went to court to stop harvest restrictions—basing their case on a deliberate misrepresentation of Council intent. This demonstrates the charter sector has little respect for the resource or fishery management, and has exceeded the GHL in 2C (for five straight years) and now possibly in 3A. The charter sector is driving localized depletion near coastal communities, pre-empting subsistence and local sport fishermen. The charter sector should not be rewarded by being given a higher allocation for undermining resource health, other fisheries and the Council process.

Address your letter to Council Chair Eric Olson. *The Council does not accept comments via email*, so either mail your letter to: NPFMC 605 West 4th Ave Ste 306 Anchorage AK 99501 or Fax it to 907 271-2817. **Letters must be received in the Council office by 5 pm on Wednesday September 24th.** After sending your letter to the Council, please fax or email a copy to the Halibut Coalition and let the Coalition know if you plan to attend the Council meeting. Coalition members will be on hand throughout the meeting to help with testimony. We recommend you make air and hotel reservations as soon as possible. Reduced room rates are available at the following hotels:

1. Extended Stay Deluxe (3 blocks from the Sheraton). \$69+tax. Call and ask for John; mention Halibut Coalition. (907) 868-1605. Address: 108 E 8th Ave. <http://www.extendedstaydeluxe.com/minisite/?Portal=1&hotelID=965>
2. Sheraton Anchorage. \$99+tax. Mention NPFMC to get this rate. (907) 276-8700 or (800) 325-3535. 401 East 6th Avenue <http://sheratonanchoragehotel.com/>
3. Days Inn Anchorage Downtown (2 blocks from Sheraton) call for rates. (907) 276-7226. 321 East Fifth Avenue. <http://www.daysinnalaska.com/>

Take time TODAY to write your letter and make reservations to Anchorage. Your future depends on it!! See you in Anchorage at our “War Room”, Board Room 305 at the Sheraton, Tue-Friday.

The Halibut Coalition still needs funds! We need all hands on deck and everyone pitching in. Please consider donating for our efforts on this important issue. We suggest .05¢ per pound for quota share holders. See attached donation form.

We urgently need your email address to better coordinate our efforts.
Please add our email to your address book.

DONATIONS ARE NEEDED TO SUPPORT THE HALIBUT COALITION

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Note: Credit cards will be processed by Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (SEAFSA)

Make checks payable to: Halibut Coalition

Use my donation for: General Expenses (DC Attorney/Lobbyist, Travel, Meeting Support, Mailing, Action Alert, and Administration) Legal Fund However the Coalition sees fit
[Preferred]

***Consider the impact on your business—every dollar helps in this campaign.
We need to fund trips to DC and Council, public relations, and for a legal fund.***