

North Pacific Fishery Management Council Action Response

Déjà vu all over again... As a result of a large charter outcry when the proposed Halibut CSP was published (July 2011), the North Pacific Fishery Management Council revisited its October 2008 CSP action. Last April the Council identified a new CSP preliminary preferred alternative for analysis as well as two additional reallocation options. Under these options, the Council could reallocate another 4-5% of the combined charter/commercial catch to the charter industry in both 2C and 3A.

The new CSP Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) is a stripped-down version of the October 2008 CSP. The PPA still sets the allocation between the charter and commercial sectors and still allows charter operators to lease a limited amount of quota from commercial QS holders through the Guided Angler Fish (GAF) program. The range around the charter allocations and the CSP management matrix have been removed. Annual management measures will be developed by the Council for adoption by the IPHC. These changes are acceptable and should improve charter management.

However, the new CSP PPA also includes three mechanisms for reallocating halibut to the charter sector: separate accountability (making each sector accountable for halibut discard mortality in their fishery— except discard mortality in the charter fishery has not yet been calculated), a correction factor for switching to the state logbook for monitoring charter harvest, and a reallocation factor to match the CSP allocations more closely to the GHLL at low levels of halibut abundance.

Relative to the 2008 CSP, all the options on the table allocate more fish to the charter sector, despite an economic analysis documenting that charter operators have increased revenues over the past six years while commercial fishermen have lost revenue and watched their investments in quota shrink to less than the balance on their loans.

The full Council motion options and brief analysis are at:http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc/PDFdocuments/halibut/HalibutCSP_912.pdf

THE BOTTOM LINE? In October, the Council is poised to reallocate up to 1.2 million pounds from the commercial to the charter sector. At current quota share prices, that reallocated quota is worth \$40-45 million dollars. *Stopping the reallocation will take every commercial halibut fishermen showing up to testify or submitting written testimony at the October Council meeting in Anchorage.* Please mark your calendar for the first week of October and watch for action alerts from ALFA and the [Halibut Coalition](#). If you can, please contribute to the longline groups that are working hard to protect your quota.