



National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region

NEWS RELEASE

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NOAA Fisheries publishes guided sport halibut fishing regulations for SE Alaska

NOAA Fisheries today issued new regulations for guided sport halibut fishing in Southeast Alaska (Area 2C).

"The new regulations keep the current sport fishing bag limit of two halibut per day but require that, if two fish are taken, at least one of them is no more than 32 inches long," said Doug Mecum, Acting Administrator for NOAA's Alaska Region. "Enforcement officers must be able to accurately measure the fish. It can be filleted, but the entire carcass, with the head and tail as a single piece, must be retained onboard until all the fillets are offloaded."

The new regulations apply only to halibut harvested by anglers fishing from a vessel with a hired operator in International Pacific Halibut Commission Area 2C. The complete new regulations will be published in the Federal Register on June 4, 2007 and posted at www.fakr.noaa.gov.

The new regulations, effective June 1, 2007, are designed to remain in place for the entire sport fishing halibut season, but may be superseded by charter halibut fishing management measures currently being considered by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. The charter halibut fishing season ends December 31.

The intended effect of the new regulations is a reduction in the number of pounds of halibut harvested by the guided sport charter vessel sector in Area 2C, while minimizing negative impacts on this sector, its sport fishing clients, and the coastal communities that serve as home ports for the fishery.

"The State of Alaska appreciates the efforts NOAA Fisheries has made to modify the one-fish bag limit that the Halibut Commission proposed," said Denby Lloyd, Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. "This new regulation will help stabilize charter harvests in Southeast Alaska without being as onerous as the Commission's proposal; it will retain domestic management of the fishery; and we are confident it will result in fewer negative impacts on state-managed species."

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game estimates that the 32-inch maximum size restriction for one of two potential halibut taken by charter vessel clients would reduce the overall harvest in Area 2C by the charter vessel sector by about 518,000 pounds (234.8 metric tons).

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources through scientific research, management, enforcement, and the conservation of marine mammals and other protected marine species and their habitat. To learn more about NOAA Fisheries in Alaska, please visit our websites at www.fakr.noaa.gov or at www.afsc.noaa.gov

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 60 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.
