

Marc Schmidt

06/09/2019 09:37 PM PDT

RE: Commercial Directed Fishery Transition Process and Workshop Planning

Councilmembers, I would like to comment in support of the directed pacific halibut fishery going to a limited entry permit as soon as possible based on landings of at least two of the last 5 years and in the interim; allowing permitted boats to select and declare a specific day within a larger time block (say a mon-fri period or any tues thru thurs any time in a given month) to run their halibut trip for each month of june, july, and august. Maybe allow a 12 hour period instead of 10 hours as well. Trip limits should be fair and equitable for all sized vessels. These suggested short and long term management changes would allow a safer approach then the current derby fishery, would prevent markets from getting flooded with halibut all at once, and allow them to be caught while targeting multiple species and catching throughout multiple block periods for retention of other open access species. I would like to see changes as soon as possible to the current structure as it is a tremendous hardship for the small boats in the fleet as I am always out in terrible conditions trying to catch pacific halibut on the given days each year it seems. The sooner stakeholder meetings I feel the better so there can be some serious direction put forth at the sept pfmc meeting. Many of us don't have much spare time till the fall, as we are fishing every day we can, so input may not be complete by sept from the actual fishermen but I think those of us that participate will make time to get our thoughts included. I am very much opposed to seeing this directed fishery be rolled into other incidental fisheries. With the uncertainty of salmon trolling in CA I have chosen to put my efforts into this directed fishery for many years and hope for one good paycheck per year to cover my operating costs for the year. I have been considering getting a different boat for a couple years but am hesitant to until there is direction on the future of this fishery and possibly losing any landings and qualifications based on my past history participating in this fishery with my existing boat. I feel there should be some urgency to get away from the status quo directed halibut season structure considering it has been talked about for two years now and nothing has changed. Thanks for your consideration, Marc Schmidt Eureka, CA