



Fish News

Dec. 3, 2010

IPHC Staff Recommends 19 Percent Cuts Across Pacific Coast for 2011 Halibut Catch



IPHC staff is recommending a catch of 7.52 million pounds in 2011 for Area 3B, down from 10 million pounds this year.

Scientists with the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) recommended this week that the halibut catch for 2011 be cut by 19 percent along the Pacific coast. That translates to 41 million pounds. Alaska fishermen would get 32.5 million pounds of that portion, down from 40 million pounds in 2010. If IPHC managers follow the recommendations, Southeast Alaska (Area 2C) would see the most drastic cuts. That area would be

down 47 percent, to just 2.33 million pounds. The recommended catch for the Western Gulf (Area 3B) would be 7.52 million pounds, down from 10 million pounds this year. The Central Gulf (Area 3A) would experience a 28 percent decline to 14.36 million pounds.

The IPHC will make final decisions on the 2011 halibut catches during its annual meeting January 25 - 29, 2011 in Victoria, British Columbia.

For more information, visit the links below:

[IPHC Website](#)

[Read more - Deckboss](#)

Governor Chooses Cora Campbell to Serve as Acting Commissioner of ADF&G

Earlier this week, Governor Sean Parnell named Cora Campbell to serve as his acting commissioner for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Campbell currently serves as fisheries policy advisor and special assistant to the Governor with responsibilities for fisheries, game, environmental conservation, natural resources and Arctic policy issues. She has served as the governor's representative to various boards and committees, including the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute Board of Directors. Campbell has served as executive director of the Petersburg Vessel Owners Association and was an advisory panel member of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the North Pacific Research Board.



Campbell received a bachelor's degree in education from Pacific Lutheran University. Campbell grew up in Petersburg, Alaska, where she spent her early years working in the seafood industry.

[Read more - press release from Governor's office](#)

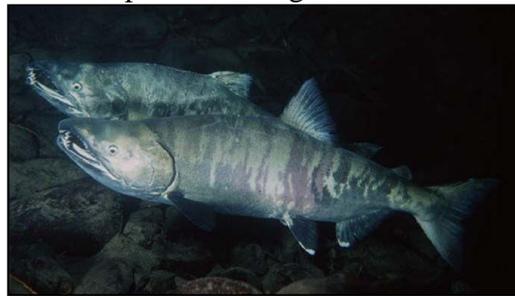
[Read more - Alaska Journal of Commerce story](#)

Progress on Fish & Game's Sampling Program, Tanner Crab Fishery & Chinook Bycatch Discussed at Fishermen's Meeting in Seattle

By Beth Stewart, AEB Resource Director

The Aleutians East Borough held its annual fisheries meeting with fishermen from Nelson Lagoon, False Pass, Sand Point and King Cove during Expo week (Nov. 18 - 20, 2010). This year's meeting included several ADF&G folks who were available to discuss a wide range of topics.

We led off with an overview of the Department's progress on WASSIP. Eric Volk gave an overview of the Department's sampling program, and the work to identify genetic markers that could allocate chum and sockeye stocks to specific management areas. As it turns out, sockeye are much easier to separate into discreet stocks than chum salmon. However, progress has been made in breaking out the large "Western Alaska" pool of chums so that we can see some separation between Bristol Bay and AYK stocks. The Department has put together a Technical Committee of salmon and stock assessment experts that will be assisting by reviewing the Department's methodology.



ADF&G's sampling program seeks to identify genetic markers that would allocate chum (shown above) and sockeye stocks to specific management areas.

Mark Witteveen then discussed issues related to obtaining genetic samples from the Southeast District Mainland (SEDM) fishery. Last year's efforts were only marginally successful, and the Department wants to work with fishermen to plan for a better

collecting effort this next summer. Unfortunately, there were not many set netters at this meeting, so additional work needs to be done. The borough will set up a meeting well in advance of the salmon season to assist the Sand Point set netters in coming up with an acceptable sampling plan.



ADF&G's Nick Sagalkin said the Department took a very conservative approach in coming up with this year's GHL for the Tanner crab fishery.

Nick Sagalkin discussed the upcoming Tanner crab fishery. Several folks asked questions about this year's GHL, and Nick explained how ADF&G came up

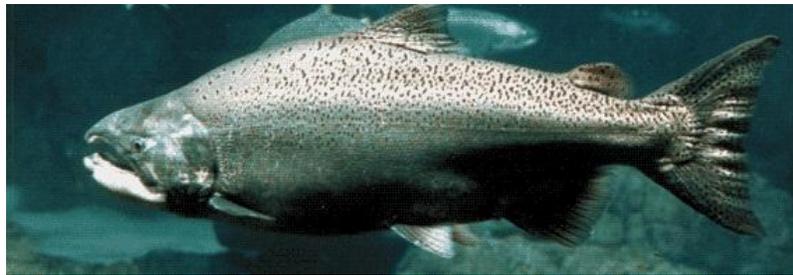
with the number. According to Nick, the department took a very conservative approach to this GH. As it frequently happens with Tanner crab, there is a very large year class of legal-sized crab that can be safely harvested. Nick stressed the importance of communication during the season. ADF&G will be setting up a meeting in King Cove to discuss this year's fishery just prior to tank inspections. A similar meeting was held in Sand Point last year. We will keep you posted on the actual date of this meeting.

We also had quite a bit of discussion about the salmon bycatch during the recent pollock D season. As most of you have heard, NMFS estimates of this bycatch were at an all time high. While adjustments are being made to the number, the current estimate is somewhere around 50,000 chinook. NMFS uses a rate of chinook to pollock catch that they establish, based on observer data, and then they apply that rate to the entire fishery. As far as we know, there were 3 vessels with observers on board during the D season, so their rate of chinook bycatch was applied to all pollock catch. Below are a number of important points:

1) The vast majority of vessels (and catch) in our area is taken by vessels under 60'. Under current rules, these vessels do not carry observers.

2) Salmon are a Prohibited Species (like halibut) and fishermen are barred from retaining them. However, the vast majority of our vessels cannot sort pollock catches on deck. Many years ago, NMFS accepted this and has not cited vessels for retaining salmon.

3) Our vessels deliver their pollock to the dock where any salmon are removed from catch and placed in a separate bin which is observed by the plant's federal observer.



The number of salmon is then recorded on each fish ticket.

Borough fishermen believe NMFS current methodology has resulted in overestimating the number of Chinook in the bycatch this year. AEB would prefer that NMFS use the actual number recorded on fish tickets to assess the Chinook bycatch for the under 60' fleet.

We have discussed this fact with NMFS in the past and suggested that they use the actual number recorded on fish tickets to assess the bycatch for the under 60' fleet. However, the agency prefers to use the methodology in all fisheries.

This hasn't created a problem in most years. This year, however, we believe that the NMFS methodology resulted in overestimating the number of chinook in the bycatch. Based on everything we've heard as well as reports from the hydro acoustic survey just prior to the season, there were definitely a lot of salmon in the area during the D season. However, we don't believe that the current reported number is accurate.

The council will be discussing Gulf of Alaska salmon bycatch during its December

meeting. The council will be looking at a salmon bycatch "white paper." This paper was scheduled before the alarming bycatch numbers came out. A white paper allows the council to decide whether they want to go forward with developing new regulations to manage bycatch. If the council decided to go ahead, then they will develop a problem statement and elements and options to begin the regulatory process.

We will be asking the council to require retention of salmon in the Gulf. We will also be asking the council to ask NMFS to take a good look at the methods for estimating bycatch by using the numbers actually reported on fish tickets.

I'd like to thank the fishermen who have worked with Peter Pan and Trident to obtain fish ticket totals so that we can demonstrate how many salmon were taken by the local vessels.

Local fishermen are encouraged to attend the December North Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting in Anchorage. A full report on Council action will follow after the meeting.

[Draft Agenda - NPFMC Dec. 6 - 14, 2010 meeting - Anchorage Hilton](#)

AEB Booth at Fish Expo Attracts Numerous Visitors



New promotional handouts drew additional visitors to the AEB booth at Fish Expo this year.

If the numbers of people stopping by at the AEB's booth at Fish Expo (Nov. 18 - 20, 2010) in Seattle were any indication, then the exhibit at the 2010 Pacific Marine Expo in Seattle was a success. The Borough displayed several new promotional items, including the 2011 AEB calendar, community harbor schematic layouts, a colorful and informative presentation folder and community flyers. Updated photos of community harbors and other infrastructure adorned a display board in the background. The AEB pens, calendars and community flyers are popular give-away items every year. This year, the Borough also offered flyers with harbor layouts.

Several Borough staff members, elected officials and others from the AEB communities manned the booth, including Borough Mayor Stanley Mack, AEB Administrator Sharon Boyette, AEB Finance Director Roxann Newman, Borough Assemblyman Paul Gronholdt, King Cove Administrator Gary Hennigh, King Cove Administrative Manager Bonnie Folz, King Cove Harbormaster Dave Bash and AEB Fisheries Consultant Sam Cotten.

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