



2017 Recreational fisheries: Halibut and Yelloweye Rockfish

Sport Fishing Institute Big Splash

23 Nov 2017

2017 Pacific Halibut fishery

- Management measures
 - Daily limit: 1; possession limit: 2
 - Only one fish > 83 cm
 - Size limit < 133 cm
 - Annual limit: 6 fish/ licence holder
 - April 1 – September 6
- Recreational fishery catch limit: 1,118,029 net lbs (507.1 tonnes)
- Recreational catch estimate: 1,138,894 net lbs (516.6 tonnes)
 - Estimate to be reviewed with Halibut Committee

Objective-setting and Management measures

- Objective is to provide stable and predictable fishing opportunities within allocation from February 1 – December 31
- Possible management measures evaluated
 - Next year's catch is projected under a range of management measures using previous years' data
 - Combination of size limits, daily limits, etc. most likely to meet objective is selected
- 2017 management measures developed in consultation with SFAB Halibut Committee

2017 in-season management

- In-season catch estimates are reviewed monthly with the Halibut Committee
- Estimated summer catch increased this year, with July catches 22% greater than last year's estimates
- By late August, recreational catch limit had almost been achieved
 - Projected catch to Labour Day indicated catch > catch limit
- Fishery closed September 6, 2017

Fishery Closure

- SFAB expressed concern about the hardship caused by closing the fishery before December 31
- Recreational harvesters expressed concern about insufficient notice of the closure, and sought clarification about catch data quality
- SFAB has stated a desire to provide more stability to the fishery, perhaps through a more flexible management regime

Next Steps

- Post-season catch data review with Halibut Committee planned for coming weeks
- Halibut Committee members have expressed a desire to brainstorm ideas to stabilize recreational fishing opportunities for Halibut
 - DFO and Committee to review options drafted during previous allocation discussions and consider alternatives through December-January
- 2018 catch limits determined at IPhC Annual Meeting, January 22-26

Yelloweye Rockfish

- Harvest advice delivered in 2015 indicates that Yelloweye Rockfish population is depleted
- The rebuilding plan includes a reduction in mortality to a cap of 100 tonnes
 - Recreational target mortality cap is 14 tonnes; an 80% reduction from 2014 levels
 - Recreational daily limits for Yelloweye reduced to 1 per day; Lingcod reduced to 2 per day
 - Commercial quota will be reduced by 82% by 2018

Yelloweye catch estimates

- 2016 rec catch estimated at 61 tonnes; 2017 catch estimates still being collated
- Catch monitoring and reporting programs for Yelloweye vary among areas of the coast
 - In some areas lodge logbooks provide catch, in other areas there is partial creel coverage, other areas have no estimates
- For these reasons, summarising recorded catch does not provide a coast-wide estimate of Yelloweye catch
- The only current coast-wide estimate of catch is the imputed catch estimation method used in the recent stock assessment

Next Steps

- Catch monitoring
 - DFO reviewing options to make best use of the available catch data
 - Communications materials developed with SFAB to increase profile and species ID of Yelloweye
- Recompression devices
 - Fall 2016 workshop reviewed the use of recompression/descender devices in other jurisdictions
 - Draft technical report from DFO Science anticipated by December 2017

Next Steps

- Communication
 - Additional recreational rockfish fishery and RCA communication materials being developed for 2018; will seek SFAB input on concept
- 2018 management
 - More restrictive measures may be required to reduce mortality
 - Consultations with SFAB to identify most effective measures required in January-March