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2022 Halibut and Pacific Cod CDQ Management Plan

WHO CAN FISH FOR CDQ HALIBUT?

Commercial fishing for CDQ halibut under Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation's (NSEDCC) fishery operations is open to all residents of NSEDCC's fifteen member communities who qualify to obtain a CDQ card.

CDQ halibut must be harvested using locally owned fishing vessels (see additional details on ownership requirements below) and legal hook and line and halibut pot gear as permitted by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for commercial halibut fishing.

WHO CAN FISH FOR CDQ PACIFIC COD?

Like halibut, CDQ Pacific cod is open to all member community residents who qualify to obtain a CDQ card, but there are varying regulatory requirements to fish cod depending on the size of vessel and the amount of cod that is delivered at the time of landing.

COMMUNITY CDQ ALLOCATIONS

NSEDCC has been allocated 82,800 pounds of CDQ halibut in Regulatory Area 4D, which includes waters in the Bering Sea north of Latitude 58 degrees N (including St. Lawrence Island). The halibut quota will be allocated to each fishing community based on the historical average utilization percentage for each community adopted in 2020 (31% in Savoonga and 69% in Nome). This results in 25,668 pounds allocated for Savoonga-based fishermen and 57,132 pounds for fishermen who deliver to Nome. Although no 4D IFQ has been leased in 2022 due to an increase in NSEDCC's CDQ and low regional harvest rates in 2021, there may be quota available for lease should in-season fishing dictate that it is warranted. These allocations are subject to change if more quota is leased.

Quota Type	Savoonga Quota (pounds)	Nome Quota (pounds)
4D IFQ	0	0
4D CDQ	25,668	57,132
Total	25,668	57,132

AREA 4D/4E FISHING ALLOWANCE

Although expressly allocated in Area 4D, Federal Regulations permit fishing of CDQ 4D allocation in regulatory Area 4E North, which is described in part as waters east of longitude 168 degrees W and north of latitude 63 degrees N. Area 4E quota must be fished in Area 4E.

NSEDC PACIFIC COD QUOTA FOR 2022

NSEDC has reserved 220,000 pounds of Bering Sea Pacific Cod CDQ for local fishery operations.

HALIBUT REGISTRATION DEADLINE (NOME FISHERY ONLY)

NSEDC will permit only one captain (permit holder) per vessel operating in the Nome fishery to register to fish for NSEDC halibut during the 2022 season (unless multiple permit holders intend to fish under a single vessel use cap). Fishermen must complete the attached registration form stating that they satisfy the residency requirements to participate in NSEDC fisheries and intend to fish for halibut during the 2022 season by 3:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 15th. Completed forms must be delivered to Wes Jones by this date to be added to the list of registered fishers. Email delivery is preferred but arrangements can be made to accept hard copies of registration if necessary (contact staff if this is needed). Registrations should be emailed to wes@nsedc.com. If you submit a registration by email you should expect a return email acknowledging receipt; if you do not receive one, please follow up to ensure your registration is completed.

MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Openings: The halibut fishery will open from mid-June in Area 4D with deliveries made to Savoonga. The directed Pacific cod fishery will commence June 15. Fishing in Area 4E with deliveries made to Nome will commence upon the close of the crab fishery or sooner at the discretion of NSEDC Management.

Trip Limits and Trip Limit Triggers: Starting trip limits for halibut in 2022 will be 5,000 pounds for deliveries to Nome and 1,500 pounds for Savoonga. The table below shows how trip limit adjustments will change as a function of remaining quota threshold levels. This schedule of trip limit measures may be adjusted in-season depending on the number of participating vessels and catch rates.

Remaining Pounds	Savoonga Trip Limit Size (Pounds)	Nome Trip Limit Size (Pounds)
≥ 40,000	1,500	5,000
≥ 30,000	1,500	5,000
≥ 20,000	1,500	3,500
≥ 10,000	1,000	2,000
≥ 5,000	750	1,000
≥ 2,500	375	Clean Up Measures
≥ 1,000	Clean Up Measures	Clean Up Measures

Trip limits will be strictly enforced. At the time of delivery, any legal-sized halibut in excess of the prescribed trip limit amount must be retained by the permit holder for subsistence. All sublegal halibut retained by the permit holder must be counted and weighed and recorded by NSSP personnel in accordance with IPHC regulations.

Trip limits are anticipated for fishers willing to target Pacific cod to ensure that processing capacity is not exceeded and will be determined at the season's start depending upon participation levels. Trip limits are subject to change at the discretion of NSEDC Management.

Individual Fisherman Use Caps: For the entire season, registered Nome-based halibut permit holders will be capped at a percentage of the allocation reserved for Nome that varies by the number of fishermen. A use cap will be established based on a formula of 1.6 divided by the number of fishermen to set the annual harvest limit for a single permit holder. For example, Nome's recent 5-year average number of halibut fishers (6 fishers), would result in a use cap of 26.6% ($1.6 \div 6 = .266$). Therefore, under this scenario and current quota levels, any single fisherman would not be able to harvest more than 15,197 pounds. However, depending on how the fishery develops in terms of quota levels, fishing effort, fishing conditions, etc., NSEDC management has the flexibility to lift or modify the use cap measure in season to facilitate quota being harvested in an efficient and orderly manner. These use caps apply to each fisherman and vessel (no more than one use cap may be taken on any vessel).

CDQ Halibut Clean up: Special management measures may be implemented when the remaining allocation is small enough to warrant such additional measures. Special measures include instituting a lottery to interested permit holders in each community and requiring fishermen to retain any halibut for subsistence purposes to prevent exceeding NSEDC's allocation of CDQ halibut. Please read the "Other Requirements" section on subsistence halibut fishing for more information.

Other Measures: In order to maintain a high-quality halibut product and mitigate against fishing grounds pre-emption conflicts among fishermen, permit holders are prohibited from leaving their fishing gear on the grounds while their vessel is making a delivery. Halibut caught on gear set on one trip may not be delivered on a subsequent trip, whether retrieved on that following trip or harvested and held by the fisherman.

Fishermen should exercise caution based on fishing conditions and catch rates on the grounds when determining how much gear to deploy in order to stay within current trip limits while also avoiding the stranding of long-line gear. If a trip limit is exceeded, the excess halibut can be retained by the fisherman legally as long as they have the required SHARC (Subsistence Halibut Registration Certificate) card in possession. Therefore, there really is no scenario in which gear should be stranded. Additionally, the practice stranding of gear increases fishing mortality by exposing ensnared halibut to sea lice and additional stress. NSSP reserves the right to refuse any halibut based on quality concerns, including a reasonable suspicion that the halibut in question originated from gear that was soaking for longer than 24 hours.

Quality issues are also a concern with cod deliveries. Pot cod fishing is different than crab fishing in that soak times must be kept short, preferably less than 24 hours to avoid bruising of confined cod, etc. Pot cod gear should be checked frequently to ensure a high-quality, bled-out fish is delivered to Nome's NSSP facility and as with long-line gear, pot cod fishermen need to stay on the gear while pots are baited and pursed.

FISHERY MANAGEMENT:

Any questions should be directed to the designated person at the processing facilities in Nome or Savoonga, or to CDQ Management (Wes Jones) at 907-624-3193.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

NSEDC Fisherman's Agreement: Fishermen wishing to participate in the CDQ fishery must sign an agreement to abide by specific management measures that NSEDC Management deems necessary to control the overall harvest. This agreement must be signed before a fisherman receives a CDQ Hired Master Permit and starts fishing. Violation of the terms of this agreement may be grounds for that fisherman losing their fishing privileges.

Required Permit Cards: Fishers participating in the CDQ or IFQ halibut fishery must have an appropriate Hired Master Permit, a Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP), a copy of NSEDC's annual CDQ or IFQ permit, and a CFEC halibut permit on board while fishing. Landings will be recorded using the Hired Master Permit, transmitted to NMFS, tabulated and then debited against the CDQ or IFQ allocation.

Pacific Cod Required Permits: Fishers intending to fish for cod in excess of the standard maximum retainable amount (MRA) are required to have an approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), FFP and a CFEC Miscellaneous Saltwater Finfish permit for vessels under 60 feet for longline gear (M06B), or an M09B if they intend to use pot gear to target cod. Additionally, NSEDC quota staff must add your vessel to the CDQ Small Vessel Fishery Management Program Group Vessel List prior to delivering CDQ cod in excess of the standard maximum retainable amount (MRA) amount of 20% during the directed halibut fishery. If your vessel is over 46 feet in length, you do not need to be added to the Small Vessel Fishery List. However, if your vessel exceeds 46 feet in length, you will need a Pacific cod LLP to fish for cod above the 20% MRA, and you are required to have an observer on board if you are fishing for halibut on that same trip.

The CFEC interim use permit fees are \$225 for the M06B, and \$1,575 for the M09B permit. The M09B permit is especially cost-prohibitive for our resident fishermen considering the relatively small volumes of cod that are expected to be delivered. In an effort to promote the fishery's development, NSEDC continues to work with CFEC to establish new, reduced fees that are less cost-prohibitive for small vessel operators that intend to fish for Pacific cod for CDQ communities. The hope is to have a new reduced fee structure in place in the future. However, for the 2022 season, NSEDC will reimburse fishermen for the cost of the M06B or M09B permit fees once they have delivered 3,000 pounds of cod to NSSP.

Subsistence Halibut Registration Certificate Required: Rural residents that subsistence fish for halibut are required to have a subsistence halibut registration certificate (SHARC) in their possession. SHARC cards can be obtained from the National Marine Fisheries Service. SHARCs are free and good for 3 years. Any fishermen intending to fish for NSEDC CDQ halibut is required to have a current SHARC card on file to ensure that CDQ allocations are not exceeded and fishermen comply with federal regulations. Permit holders must provide proof to NSSP or NSEDC quota management staff that they, or a crew member have a SHARC in their possession before making their first halibut delivery of the season.

Fishermen may apply for a SHARC card at the following website:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/sustainable-fisheries/subsistence-halibut-fishing-alaska>

Residency Verification Forms: The NSEDC Board of Directors has mandated that fishers participating in local fisheries must submit a NSEDC Residency Verification Form.

Halibut and Cod Delivery: Fishermen are required to deliver their halibut and cod to Norton Sound Seafood Products' processing facilities in Nome or Savoonga. All fish must be reported to NMFS within 6 hours of landing via the internet.

HALIBUT CATCH MONITORING

CDQ halibut harvests will be monitored daily. NSEDC will designate personnel at the plant to record and transmit catch information to NMFS which will be debited from NSEDC's quotas and incorporated into the NMFS database. Fishing will cease before reaching IFQ and CDQ catch limits.

OWNERSHIP OF VESSELS

To qualify for a CDQ hired master permit, the fisherman must own at least 50% of the fishing vessel to be used, or fish with a vessel that is 100% owned by a resident of the region.

SEABIRD AVOIDANCE

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council has mandated that all boats 26 feet (LOA) or greater use seabird avoidance gear when fishing for halibut.

LOGBOOKS

Per federal regulations, any vessel fishing for halibut that has an overall length of 26 feet or greater shall maintain an accurate log of halibut fishing operations. Copies of the required Catcher Vessel Daily Fishing Logbook form will be available at the NSSP Nome facility or can be downloaded at: <https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/groundfish-cv-longline-pot-df-logbook.pdf>

RETENTION OF SUBSISTENCE HALIBUT

A fisherman may retain both sublegal and legal halibut taken with setline gear in Areas 4D and 4E commercial CDQ fisheries for subsistence purposes, provided that no person sell or barter such halibut, and record the retained catch on a subsistence halibut registration certification (SHARC) (previously obtained by the permit holder). NSEDC is required by the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) to count and weigh all halibut, including any retained for subsistence purposes, regardless of size. Halibut retained for subsistence purposes will not be subtracted from NSEDC's allocation. In the IFQ halibut fishery, no halibut may be retained, regardless of size, for subsistence under any circumstances, and any commercial cod delivered must remain under the MRA of 20% of the delivered weight.

PRIOR NOTICE OF LANDING

The permit holder or skipper of the boat must report to NMFS the intent to land halibut at least 3 hours prior to offloading (see landing time restrictions below). A toll-free telephone number is listed on the CDQ or IFQ fishing permit to use for this purpose. Landing report must include vessel identification, estimated date and time, name and location of registered buyer, and estimated weight of landing (if possible).

LANDING TIME RESTRICTIONS

Halibut landings may only be made between the hours of 6 AM and 6 PM Alaska Time. This timing requirement will be enforced through the registered buyer by NMFS enforcement. Halibut deliveries may continue after 6 PM if they began during the legal period. Contact the buying station or processing plant for their hours and to notify them of your intention to deliver.

OTHER GEAR REQUIREMENTS:

Pursuant to 5 AAC 28.050, If fishermen are intending to use pot gear to target Pacific Cod, the required maximum entry size of pot triggers or individual tunnel eye openings is 9" x 9". Plastic trigger openings typically come in lengths divisible by 9" so that excluder dividing bars can be installed with plastic zip ties to create multiple 9" x 9" openings. All pot and hook and line gear buoys must be legibly marked with the appropriate CFEC permit and ADF&G vessel license number.

DRESSING REQUIREMENTS

IPHC regulation requires that all halibut must be gilled and gutted before being delivered to the processing plant or buying station.

Cod can either be delivered bled-out in the round or delivered gutted, head-on in order to obtain a better dock price, improve quality, and reduce the possibility of the Nome plant having processing capacity issues. The dock price for dressed, head-on cod will be pro-rated to account for recoveries and to compensate skippers for performing the extra work at sea.

NMFS OBSERVER PROGRAM

Fishermen participating in the longline fishery with vessels 40 feet or greater are **required to register for** and may be selected to carry a NMFS Observer through its Observer Declare and Deploy System. It is the responsibility of each participant to understand and comply with federal observer program requirements. Additional information can be found online at: <https://odds.afsc.noaa.gov>. As referenced under Pacific Cod fishing requirements, if a participating vessel is over 46 feet in length and is either targeting cod in a directed fishery OR is fishing for halibut and exceeds a 20% rate of Pacific cod, an NMFS Observer MUST be carried (full coverage category).

VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM

To participate in the directed CDQ cod small vessel fishery, NMFS requires that vessels carry a functioning Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). VMS units transmit information such as location and vessel speed to federal managers to ensure compliance with area restrictions. The installation and monthly service charges for VMS units are the responsibility of the fisherman, however most of the initial costs may be reimbursed by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission through their rebate program. More information can be found online at: <http://www.psmfc.org/program/vessel-monitoring-system-reimbursement-program-vms>

FISHERMEN RESPONSIBILITIES

Fishermen are reminded that it is ultimately their responsibility to ensure they have all the required federal, state, and NSEDC permits in their possession and paperwork completed. While NSEDC staff can assist with paperwork submission and any related questions, it is the responsibility of the permit holder to follow up with NMFS and CFEC concerning the status of federal and state permits, respectively.