

Ocean Angling

International Pacific Halibut Commission

The IPHC met the week of Jan. 14th- 18th, 2008, in Portland. The Proposal that got our attention was a staff recommendation that Oregon and Washington's halibut quota would be reduced by 50% over the next 2 years. The intent was to transfer that poundage to Western Alaska in the Aleutian Islands to be caught by the commercial long-liners. The worst part was that the IPHC had gone from an assessment by areas (Oregon and Washington's coast is area 2A) to a coast wide assessment, and had data to support the transfer. THIS WAS NOT FOR CONSERVATION PURPOSES, AND STOCKS OFF OUR COAST ARE INCREASING, NOT DECREASING.

Our task to preserve our sport catch was a long shot. We contacted many interested groups and started organizing. By conference time Oregon Anglers and our partner clubs had 4 accredited delegates. No other group had more than one. It took a lot of private meetings and a few bought drinks, but in the end the quota was saved. Our 2008 allotment is 1.22 million pounds for area 2A. This comes to 1% higher than we would have had under the old assessment system. Lobbying and hard work saved the day. many thanks to John Holloway and the Oregon Angler Ocean Team.

BUT, the threat is not over! This next winter the Halibut Commission meets in Vancouver B.C., and the Alaskans are still trying to take quota from our area, which includes Washington and Northern California. We are adamantly opposed to ANY cut in our halibut quota. Oregon Anglers is planning on having a team of accredited representatives at the week long meeting. All our volunteers are doing so at their own expense.

It will take forming a coalition of interests including tribal (primarily the Macaws) to override the clout the Alaskans have with the Commission staff.