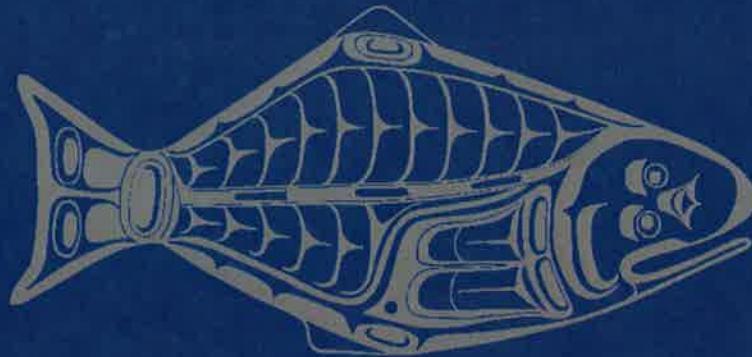


Halibut Catch Sharing Plan



Glenn Merrill, NMFS
Rachel Baker, NMFS
David Witherell, NPFMC

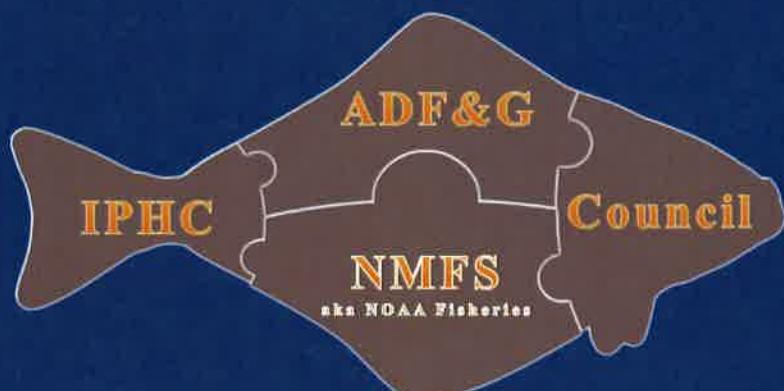
House Committee on Fisheries
Hearing on Halibut Catch Sharing Plan, September 1, 2011

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Presentation Outline

- Halibut management
- Council Development of Catch Sharing Plan
- Catch Sharing Plan overview
- Public comment process
- Questions?

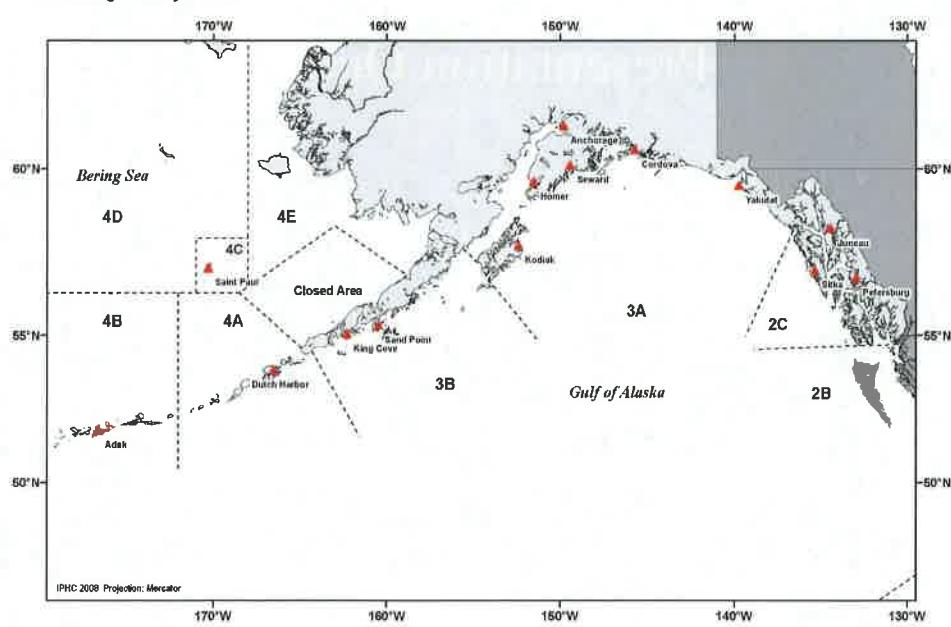
Halibut Management - Who's who ?



Proposed Rule - Catch Sharing Plan

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IPHC Regulatory Areas



North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Structure: 11 voting members (7 fishing representatives and 4 agency representatives): AK (6), WA (3), OR (1), and 1 from NMFS; and 4 non-voting members (USFWS, USCG, PSMFC, State Dept.).

Function: The Council develops plans and regulations for U.S. fisheries off Alaska. Approval and implementation of these plans is effected through partnership with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

Process: Council meets 5 times per year, concurrent with its advisory groups, the Advisory Panel and Scientific and Statistical Committee. Numerous other committees provide advice. Public testimony is taken at all meetings, for all issues.

Council Process

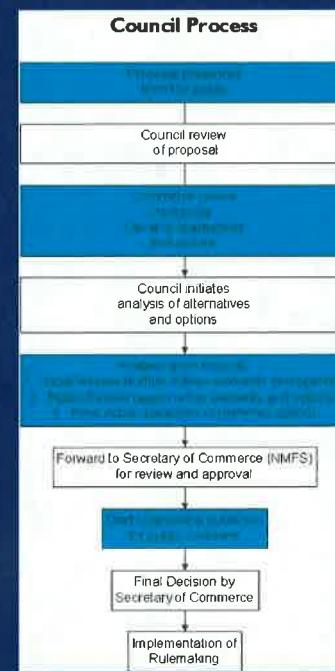
- Development of options by stakeholders and advisors.
- Environmental and Economic analysis with scientific review and public input.
- Council deliberates and votes on decisions in public.
- After Council takes action and submits final package, then Secretarial review process.

CSP Development:

10 Council meetings

7 Committee meetings

100's of public testified



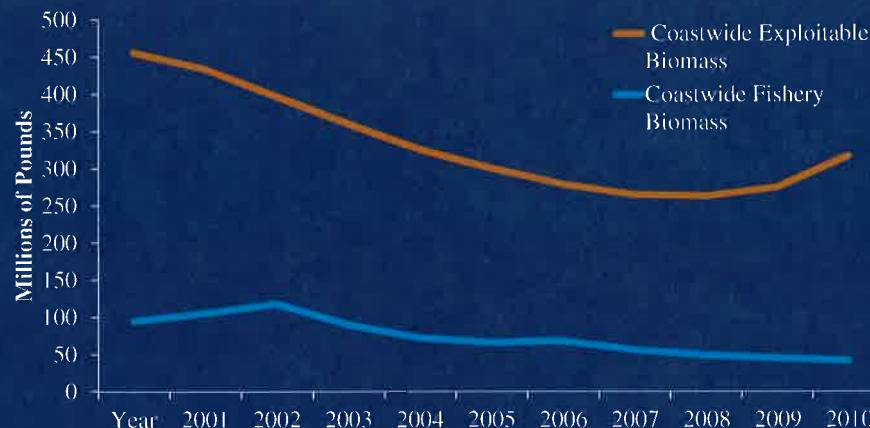
A Brief History

1991	Council adopts the commercial IFQ Program (implemented in 1995).
1993	Council appoints committee to explore options to limit increasing charter halibut removals.
Mid-90s	Council reviews many possible charter harvest restrictions.
2003	Guideline Harvest Level (GHL) implemented, based on 125% of average 1995-1999 charter harvests (which equated to 13.05% of the combined commercial/charter halibut quota in Area 2C, and 14.11% in Area 3A).
2000s	Council adopts more restrictive limits each year to reduce charter removals to GHL in 2C. Catch share program adopted but withdrawn. Committee develops CSP and CHP alternatives.
Apr 07	Council adopts permit program (CHP) based on vessel participation in 2004 or 2005, and 2008.
Oct 08	Council adopts catch sharing plan (CSP).
2011	Limited license program implemented. CSP proposed rule published. <small>7</small>

Why is CSP needed?

- Limited and valuable resource; allocation among users highly contentious.
- Fluctuations in resource abundance cause unbalanced use among sectors.
- GHL system didn't prescribe regulatory measures to control charter catch, causing delayed feedback loop for regulations and pre-season uncertainty for charter bookings.
- No mechanism for transfer between sectors, continuing instability and conflict.
- The halibut charter GHL was exceeded in Area 2C every year despite restrictions.
- Limited entry program was not anticipated to limit total catch by charter fleet. [transferability]

Coastwide Halibut Biomass Estimates

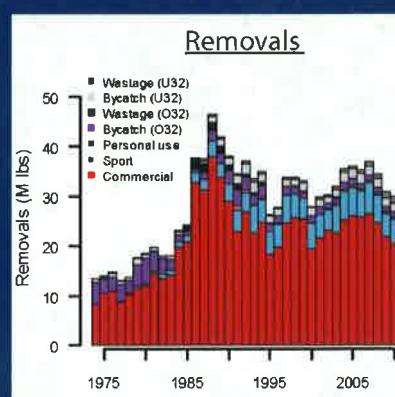


Proposed Rule - Catch Sharing Plan

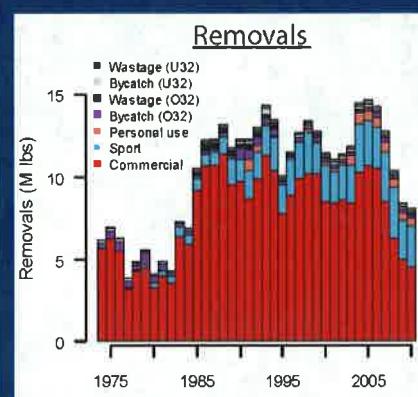
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Halibut Removals

Area 3A



Area 2C



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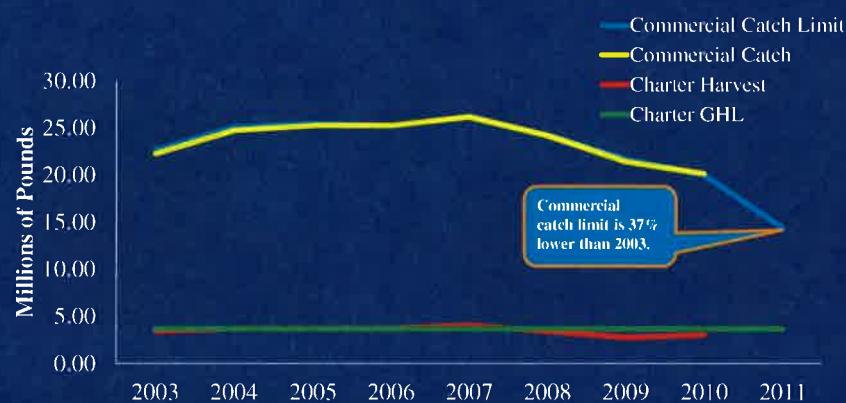
Charter Harvests in Area 3A



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Commercial and Charter Harvests in Area 3A



Proposed Rule - Catch Sharing Plan

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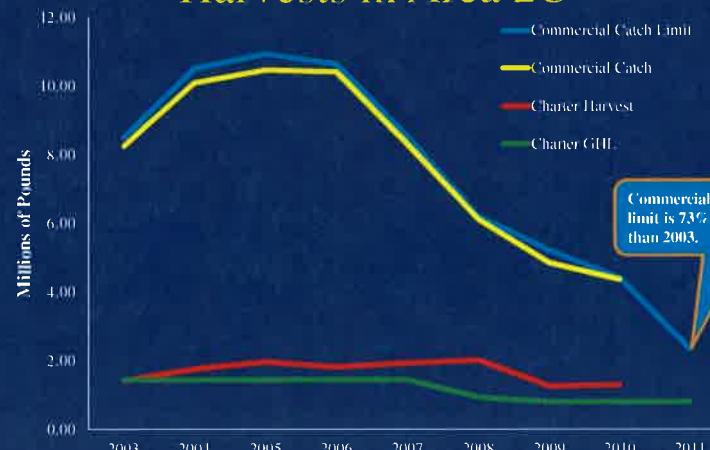
Charter Harvests in Area 2C



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Commercial and Charter Harvests in Area 2C



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Catch Sharing Plan Overview

- ❖ The Council recommended a new catch sharing management approach for southeast Alaska and southcentral Alaska to:
 1. Establish allocations of halibut for the charter and commercial fishing sectors;
 2. Annually implement harvest restrictions for charter anglers that are intended to limit charter harvests to the annual charter catch limit; and
 3. Authorize annual transfers of commercial halibut IFQ to charter halibut operators to provide charter anglers additional harvest opportunities.

Proposed Rule - Catch Sharing Plan

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Area 3A Catch Sharing Plan Matrix

Combined catch limit (million lb)	Allocation	Preferred Alternative: Area 3A		
		Charter Fishery Bag & Size Limit Regulations		
Tier 1 <10	Comm alloc = 84.6% Charter alloc = 15.4% Charter range = 11.9-18.9%	One fish	Maximum size limit imposed that brings harvest to <15.4%	One fish
Tier 2 ≥10 but <20	Comm alloc = 86.0% Charter alloc = 14.0% Charter range = 10.5-17.5%	One fish	Maximum size limit imposed that brings harvest to <14.0%	Two fish, but one must be less than 32" in length
Tier 3 ≥20 but <27	Comm alloc = 86.0% Charter alloc = 14.0% Charter range = 10.5-17.5%	Two fish, one must be less than 32" in length	One fish	Two fish
Tier 4 ≥27	Comm alloc = 86.0% Charter alloc = 14.0% Charter range = 10.5-17.5%	Two fish	Two fish, but one must be less than 32" in length	Two fish

Proposed Rule - Catch Sharing Plan

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Area 2C Catch Sharing Plan Matrix

Combined Fishery CEY (million lb)	Allocation	Charter Fishery Bag & Size Limit Regulations		
		If charter harvest within allocation range	If charter harvest projected to exceed allocation range	If charter harvest projected to be below allocation range
Tier 1 <5	Comm alloc = 82.7% Charter alloc = 17.3% Charter range = 13.8-20.8%	One fish	Maximum size limit imposed that brings harvest to <17.3%	One fish
Tier 2 ≥5 - <9	Comm alloc = 84.9% Charter alloc = 15.1% Charter range = 11.6-18.6%	One fish	Maximum size limit imposed that brings harvest to <15.1%	Two fish, but one must be less than 32" in length
Tier 3 ≥9 - <14	Comm alloc = 84.9% Charter alloc = 15.1% Charter range = 11.6-18.6%	Two fish, one must be less than 32" in length	One fish	Two fish
Tier 4 ≥14	Comm alloc = 84.9% Charter alloc = 15.1% Charter range = 11.6-18.6%	Two fish	Two fish, but one must be less than 32" in length	Two fish

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Guided Angler Fish (GAF)

- ❖ Annual transfer of halibut IFQ to charter halibut permit holder for harvest in charter fishery
- ❖ GAF transfer limits
- ❖ Unused GAF – voluntary and automatic return to IFQ permit holder
- ❖ Electronic and logbook reporting requirements for GAF
- ❖ IFQ permit holder responsible for cost recovery fees on harvested GAF

Proposed Rule - Catch Sharing Plan

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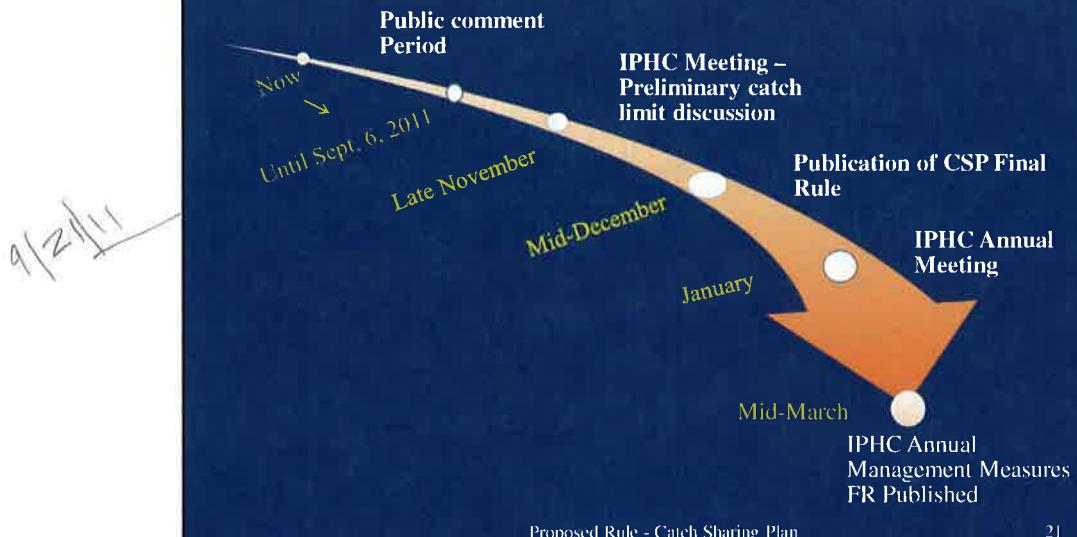
Other Catch Sharing Plan Components

- ❖ Restrictions on filleting halibut onboard vessel
- ❖ Prohibition on retention of halibut by operators, guides, and crew on charter vessel fishing trip
- ❖ Prohibition on commercial and charter halibut fishing from same vessel during the same day
- ❖ Prohibition on subsistence and charter halibut fishing from same vessel during the same day

Public Comment Process

- On September 1, 2011, NMFS announced an extension of the comment period through September 21, 2011. There are four methods to submit comments to NOAA Fisheries:
 - Electronically by midnight on September 21, 2011; Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking website at <http://www.regulations.gov>.
 - Mail postmarked by midnight on September 21, 2011; P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668.
 - Fax by midnight on September 21, 2011; 907-586-7557.
 - Hand delivery by 5:00pm on September 21, 2011; 709 West 9th Street, Room 420A, Juneau, AK.

What's Next?



Questions?



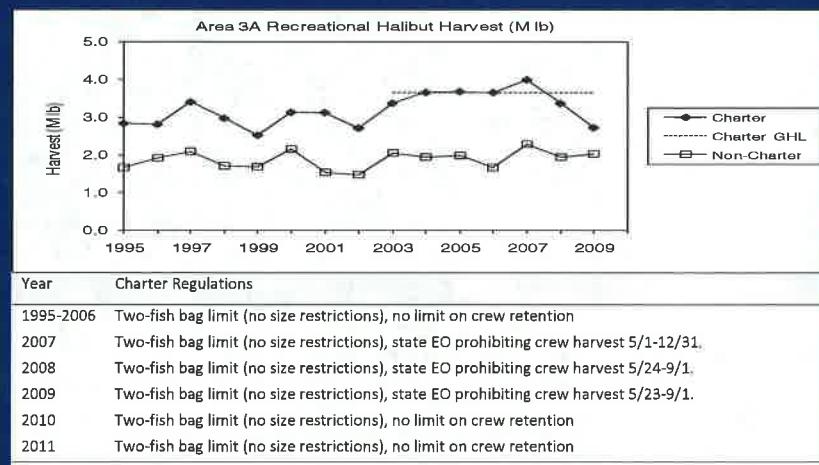
For more information contact
NOAA Fisheries
907-586-7228
rachel.baker@noaa.gov

The following are extra slides that may be useful in answering questions from the Committee.

Proposed Rule - Catch Sharing Plan

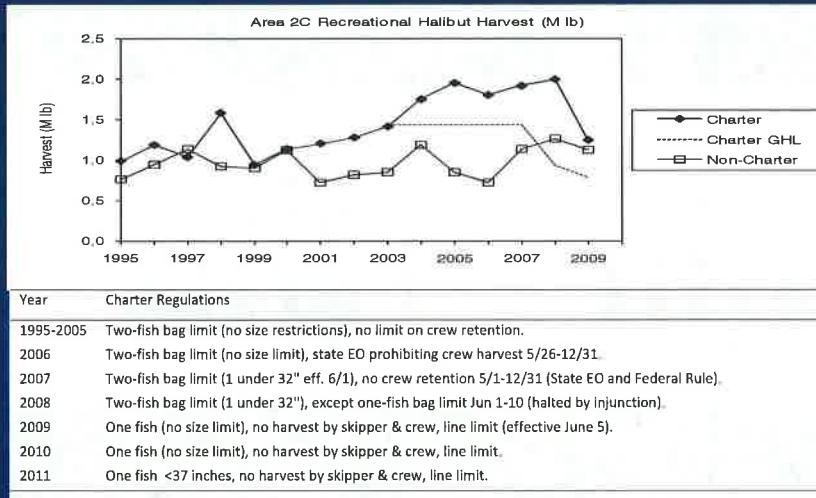
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Timeline of Management Measures



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Timeline of Management Measures

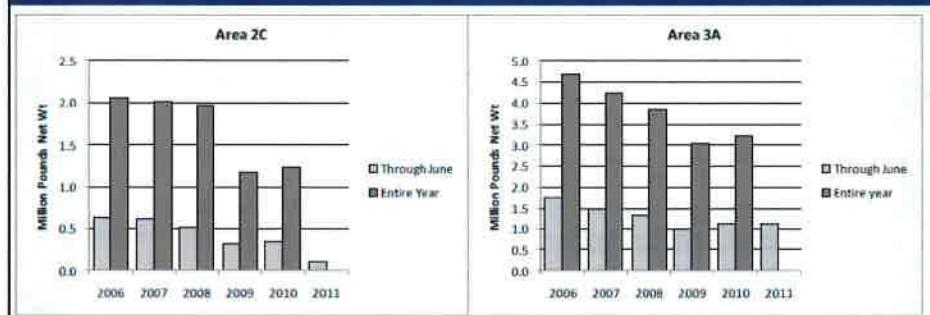


Charter Harvests 2006-2011

Table 1. Comparison of Area 2C and 3A reported charter harvest (logbook data), average net weight, and harvest biomass during the period February-June and for the entire year. 2006-2011.

Estimate	Area 2C						Area 3A					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Through June:												
Harvest (no. fish)	34,234	35,240	30,154	14,580	12,718	12,502	98,231	87,314	77,516	61,352	67,787	70,478
Average Weight (lb)	18.62	17.48	17.30	22.66	27.17	9.18	17.95	17.01	17.07	16.57	16.42	15.83
Std. Error (avg. wt)	0.62	0.50	0.47	0.71	0.95	0.11	0.45	0.50	0.47	0.37	0.45	0.35
Harvest Biomass (M lb)	0.64	0.62	0.52	0.33	0.35	0.12	1.76	1.49	1.32	1.02	1.11	1.12
Std. Error	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.03
Entire Year:												
Harvest (no. fish)	110,968	120,385	106,645	51,058	47,574	NA	265,887	258,424	232,621	192,032	216,399	NA
Average Weight (lb)	18.59	16.74	18.51	23.24	26.21	NA	17.64	16.36	16.62	15.85	14.96	NA
Std. Error (avg. wt)	0.47	0.23	0.24	0.44	0.49	NA	0.27	0.23	0.27	0.29	0.29	NA
Harvest Biomass (M lb)	2.06	2.02	1.97	1.19	1.25	NA	4.69	4.23	3.87	3.04	3.24	NA
Std. Error	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02	NA	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	NA
Harvest through June as a Percentage of Year												
No. Fish	31%	29%	28%	29%	27%	NA	37%	34%	33%	32%	31%	NA
Harvest Biomass	31%	31%	26%	28%	28%	NA	38%	35%	34%	33%	34%	NA

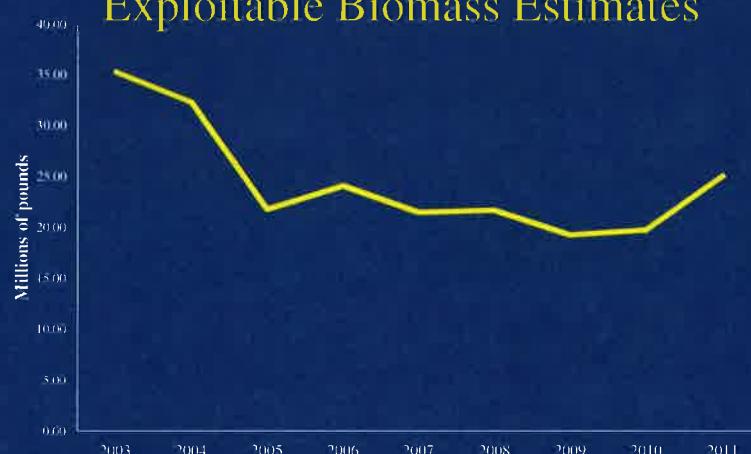
Charter Catches Through June



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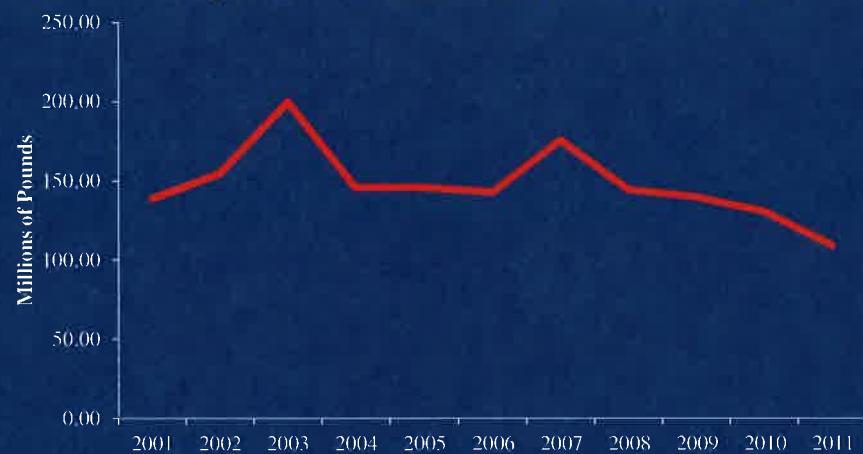
Southeast (Area 2C) Halibut Exploitable Biomass Estimates



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Southcentral (Area 3A) Halibut Exploitable Biomass Estimates



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