

RC on 276 and 143 and 144

I facilitated the Sitka LAMP for halibut and guided our way through the the maize of NPFMC, IPHC, National Standards, and Alaska BOF regulatory processes in the mid 90's as staff for the Alaska Marine Conservation Council. National standards prohibited different harvest rules for residents versus non-residents but not for guided versus non-guided fishermen. It was a huge problem as we addressed the problem of local residents not being able to catch halibut in their traditional halibut holes near Sitka because non-residents, mostly guided, were harvesting 93% of sport caught halibut in the Sitka area in the mid-90's. On our task force were two tribal/subsistence representatives, a resident sport fish rep, a large longliner representative, two guide/charter reps, and a skiff longliner rep. All work was done by consensus. Our proposal to set up the LAMP to restrict guided and longline halibut fishing in Sitka Sound to protect subsistence and local resident sport fish harvest of halibut were adopted unanimously by the task force, the Sitka AC, the BOF, the AP to the NPFMC, and the NPFMC.

Non-resident non guided sport-fishermen were not restricted because of national standards and have become a problem as the bare boat rental largely non-resident businesses have proliferated. Before we can take action to minimize halibut sport fishing in the LAMP area we would like to have the data from 144 to guide our decision process. Without good data I think we are headed to completely closing halibut sport fishing in Sitka Sound and forcing locals to harvest halibut in their traditional areas under subsistence instead of sport fish regulations. As we looked into the issue we found that this is a problem throughout SE Alaska. Thus, the region wide scope of 144.

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