SUBSISTENCE HARVESTS OF PACIFIC HALIBUT IN ALASKA, 2007

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Through a grant from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Division of Subsistence conducted a study to estimate the subsistence harvests of Pacific halibut in Alaska in 2007. The full results of the study appear in the Division's Technical Paper No. 342, "Subsistence Harvests of Pacific Halibut in Alaska, 2007" (December 2008). Key points in the report include the following:

- In May 2003, the NMFS published final federal regulations for a subsistence halibut fishery in Alaska. Residents of 117 rural communities and members of 123 tribes are eligible to participate. Fishers must obtain a subsistence halibut registration certificate (SHARC) from NMFS before fishing (www.fakr.noaa.gov/ram/subsistence/halibut.htm; 800-304-4846).
- 2007 was the fifth year in which subsistence halibut fishing took place under these regulations. Information about subsistence halibut harvests in 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 is reported in Division of Subsistence Technical Papers 288, 304, 320, and 333, respectively.
- To estimate the 2007 harvests, a one-page survey form was mailed to SHARC holders in early 2008 or administered in person. After three mailings and a series of community visits, 8,682 of 15,047 SHARC holders (58%) responded. Participation in the survey was voluntary.
- An estimated 5,933 individuals subsistence fished for halibut in 2007 (Figure 8, below).
- The estimated subsistence harvest was 53,697 halibut for 1,032,293 pounds net weight.
- Of this total, 69% was harvested with setline (stationary) gear (longline or skate) and 31% was harvested with hand-operated gear (handline or rod and reel).
- The largest subsistence harvests occurred in Southeast Alaska (Halibut Regulatory Area 2C), at 51% of the total, followed by Southcentral Alaska (Area 3A) at 36%. Table 6 and Figure 17 (below) from the final report give more details on harvests by gear type and area.
- Based on place of residence of SHARC holders, communities with the largest subsistence halibut harvests in 2007 were Kodiak and Sitka (the eligible communities with the largest populations) (Figure 22, below).
- An estimated 15,266 rockfish were harvested by 1,568 fishers in the subsistence halibut fishery in 2007. Most (68%) were harvested in Southeast Alaska.
- An estimated 3,402 lingcod were harvested by 959 fishers in the subsistence halibut fishery in 2007. Most (66%) were harvested in Southeast Alaska.
- Based on preliminary data from the International Pacific Halibut Commission and this study, the estimated halibut removal in Alaska in 2007 was 74.389 million pounds, net weight. Subsistence harvests accounted for 1.4% of this total (Figure 30, below).
- The report concludes that the project was, overall, a success, with good public outreach, good response rates, and a reliable estimate of subsistence halibut harvests.
- The report recommends that monitoring of the Alaska subsistence halibut harvest continue in order to evaluate trends in the fishery.

For a copy of the full report, go to www.subsistence.adfg.state.ak.us , or call the Division of Subsistence of ADF&G at 907-267-2353 (Anchorage) or 907-465-4147 (Juneau).

Table 6. Estimated Alaska Subsistence Harvests of Halibut by Halibut Regulatory Area and Subarea Fished and by Gear Type, and Estimated Sport Harvests by SHARC Holders, 2007.

Subarea	Halibut Regulatory Area	Number of SHARCs Fished[3] (any halibut fishing)	Estimated Subsistence Harvest by Gear Type[1]									Estimated Sport Harvest		
			Setline (fixed) Gear			Hand-Operated Gear			All Subsistence Gear					
			Estimated Number Fished	Estimated Number Harvested	Estimated Pounds Harvested[2]	Estimated Number Fished	Estimated Number Harvested	Estimated Pounds Harvested[2]	Estimated Number Fished	Estimated Number Harvested	Estimated Pounds Harvested[2]	Estimated Number Fished	Estimated Number Harvested	Estimated Pounds Harvested[2]
Southern Southeast Alaska	2C	1,772	1,382	10,121	213,808	858	4,212	69,614	1,772	14,333	283,422	926	3,481	59,806
Sitka LAMP Area	2C	913	828	4,893	105,616	288	1,007	26,574	913	5,900	132,190	340	1,029	15,744
Northern Southeast Alaska	2C	807	700	4,125	84,798	342	1,384	24,488	807	5,509	109,286	312	941	16,403
Subtotal	2C	3,349	2,781	19,139	404,221	1,423	6,604	120,676	3,349	25,743	524,897	1,504	5,452	91,953
Yakutat Area	3A	84	75	734	13,222	36	235	4,293	84	970	17,516	17	102	1,814
Prince William Sound	3A	401	342	2,048	43,728	177	556	8,678	401	2,604	52,407	174	367	6,151
Cook Inlet	3A	296	139	1,727	34,897	230	2,684	40,725	296	4,411	75,623	146	613	10,404
Kodiak Island Road System	3A	762	597	4,458	93,650	386	1,997	36,889	762	6,455	130,538	556	2,422	47,121
Kodiak Island Other	3A	627	437	2,891	61,023	356	1,635	35,183	627	4,526	96,206	350	1,590	30,836
Subtotal	3A	1,917	1,387	11,858	246,521	1,060	7,107	125,768	1,917	18,965	372,289	1,050	5,094	96,327
Chignik Area	3B	80	57	439	9,254	55	277	6,144	80	717	15,397	10	27	528
Lower Alaska Peninsula	3B	190	78	862	16,626	155	890	15,724	190	1,752	32,351	39	195	3,785
Subtotal	3B	266	131	1,301	25,880	208	1,168	21,868	266	2,469	47,748	49	222	4,313
Eastern Aleutians - East	4A	87	63	490	7,667	45	358	5,086	87	848	12,753	31	109	2,327
Eastern Aleutians - West	4A	13	5	50	704	11	76	1,489	13	126	2,193	7	41	881
Subtotal	4A	99	67	540	8,372	55	435	6,574	99	974	14,946	38	151	3,208
Western Aleutians - East	4B	22	16	62	1,224	17	40	774	22	102	1,997	4	15	338
Western Aleutians - Other	4B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	4B	22	16	62	1,224	17	40	774	22	102	1,997	4	15	338
St. George Island	4C	14	6	133	2,217	14	129	1,519	14	262	3,736	0	0	0
St. Paul Island	4C	17	15	887	11,030	3	14	311	17	901	11,342	0	0	0
Subtotal	4C	31	22	1,020	13,247	17	143	1,830	31	1,162	15,077	0	0	0
St. Lawrence Island	4D	10	7	110	2,915	4	6	289	10	116	3,204	0	0	0
Area 4D, Other	4D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	4D	10	7	110	2,915	4	6	289	10	116	3,204	0	0	0
Bristol Bay	4E	30	30	88	2,015	12	4	100	30	92	2,116	3	0	0
Yukon/Kuskokwim Delta	4E	362	87	995	9,950	331	3,078	40,069	362	4,073	50,019	5	24	60
Norton Sound	4E	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Subtotal	4E	393	118	1,083	11,965	343	3,082	40,170	393	4,165	52,135	9	24	60
Grand totals[1]	Alaska	5,933	4,405	35,113	714,344	3,031	18,584	317,949	5,933	53,697	1,032,293	2,566	10,959	196,198

[1] Setline = longline or skate. Hand-operated gear = rod and reel or handline.

[2] Pounds are net (dressed) weight. Net weight = 75% of round weight.

[3] Because fishers might fish in more than one area, subtotals for regulatory areas and the state total might exceed the sum of the subarea values. Includes subsistence and sport fishing.

Source: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence, SHARC Survey, 2008.

Figure 8. Estimated Number of Alaska Subsistence Halibut Fishers, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007 by Regulatory Area of Tribe or Rural Community

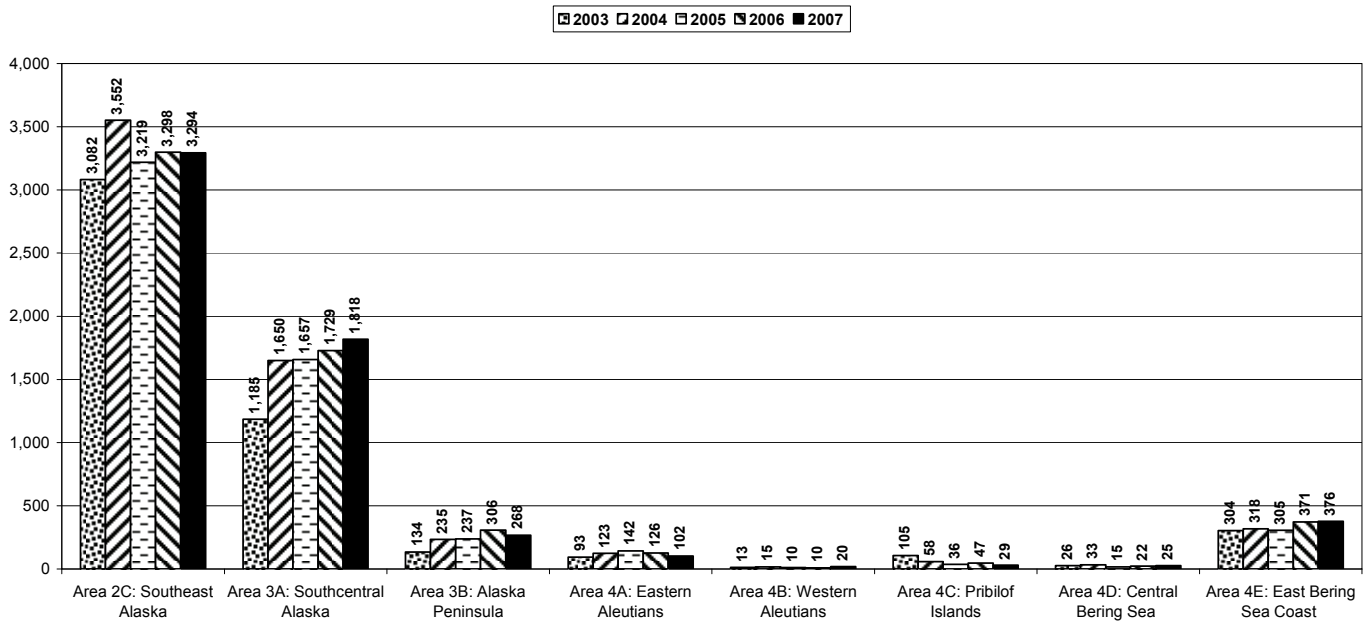
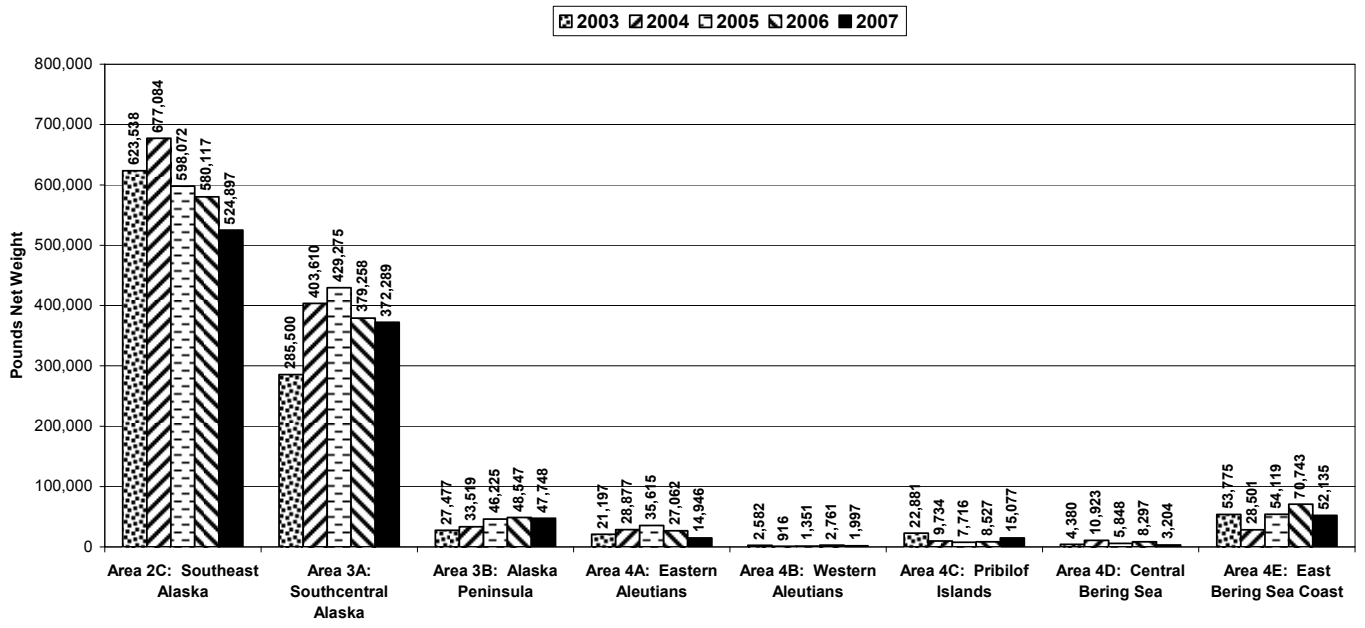
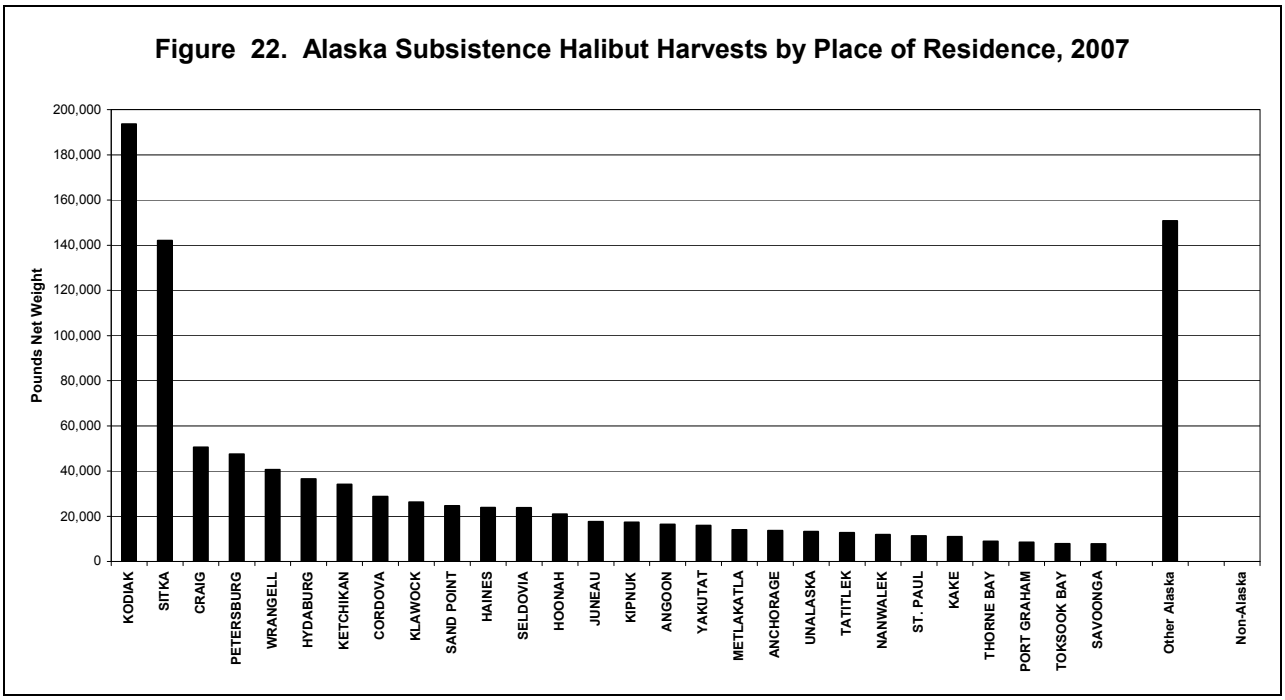
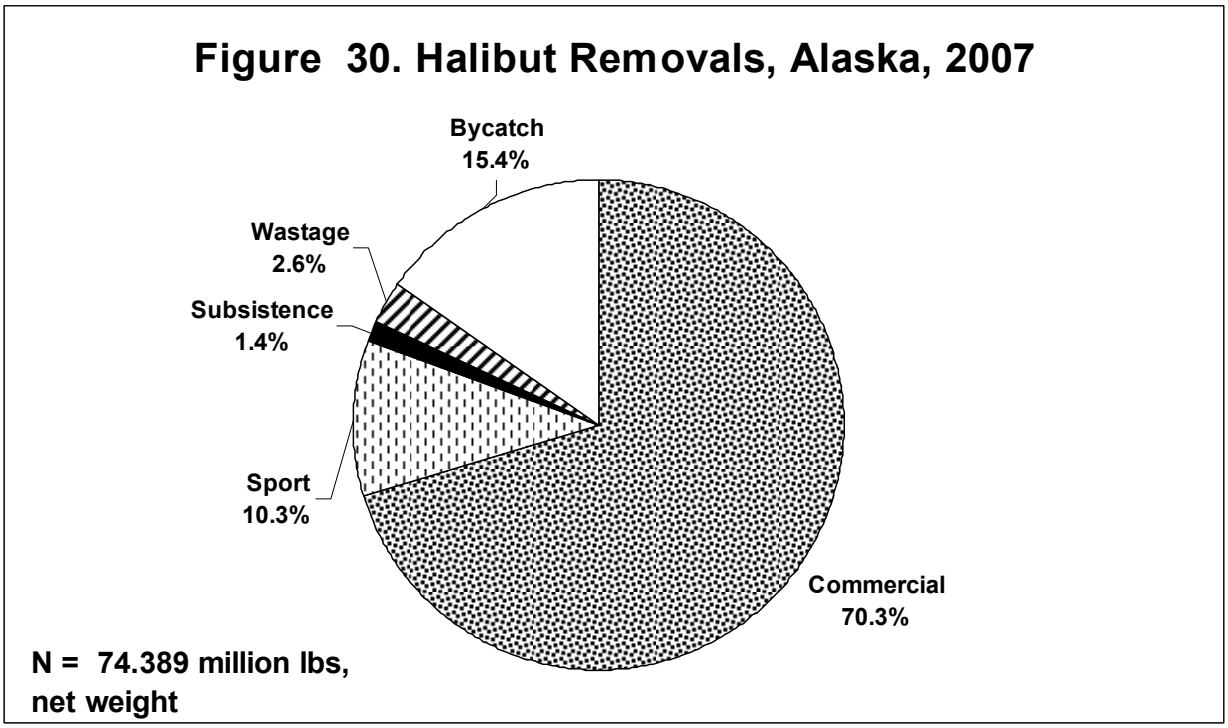


Figure 17. Estimated Subsistence Halibut Harvests, Pounds Net Weight, by Regulatory Area Fished, 2003 - 2007







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